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Friday, November 5, 1999

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, November 5, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*English*]

MUNICIPAL GRANTS ACT

Hon. Don Boudria (for the Minister of Public Works and Government Services) moved that Bill C-10, an act to amend the Municipal Grants Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House on Bill C-10, the payments in lieu of taxes act. I am speaking on behalf of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services in support of this important legislation which will go a long way toward strengthening the relationship between the federal government and municipalities across Canada. As a former municipal politician, it is a real pleasure for me to speak to this bill in the House.

Before I address the legislation I would like to congratulate the minister for his dedicated and constructive approach to this issue. His efforts to improve the fairness, equity and predictability of federal payments in lieu of taxes are truly commendable. In particular, I underline the minister's decision to directly involve local officials in developing these changes to the Municipal Grants Act and program. An obvious sensitivity to the opinions of municipal politicians by the minister is reflective of his own years in municipal politics.

In his speech to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in June of 1998, the minister made it clear that municipal input was

absolutely essential if we were to find the best possible structure for municipal payments in lieu of taxes. He also made a commitment at that time to hear the voices of those who represent Canadians at the municipal level.

Throughout the summer of 1998 the minister presided over 11 round table discussions in major centres from coast to coast to obtain firsthand views on the municipal grants program and to gather advice on how to make it work better for local communities and citizens. These meetings gave mayors, municipal officials and appraisal professionals the opportunity to have a direct say in modernizing Canada's payment in lieu of taxes system.

I know for a fact that the minister's round tables were greatly appreciated by municipal officials. His face to face meetings were a gesture of solidarity between the two levels of government, a sign of respect and a clear recognition of the challenging work undertaken by municipal governments.

The minister's undertaking and the enthusiastic participation of municipal officials demonstrate that much can be achieved through dialogue and co-operation. Indeed, the minister's consultation tour has led directly to some important changes in the way the renamed and reformed municipal payments program will be managed.

Two examples come to mind. First, the minister has undertaken to establish a municipal payments program advisory council of stakeholder representatives to give advice on administrative and policy issues relating to the management of the program. This advisory council will carry on the constructive dialogue initiated by the round table consultations.

• (1010)

As we learned during those discussions, issues that arise must not be allowed to simmer for years until they begin to adversely affect relations between governments, as has happened in the past. They must be dealt with expeditiously and the advisory council will play an important role in this regard.

The second ministerial initiative is the decision to engage national professional appraisal associations to draft best practices for unique types of properties. As the minister has noted, problems

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often arise when federal and municipal appraisers cannot agree on the value of certain types of federal properties such as penitentiaries and airports. There are simply no equivalent assets in the private sector against which these properties can be compared.

By developing best practices through a co-operative process involving municipal and federal stakeholders the government will ensure consistency in the treatment of these properties across Canada. We will also avoid unnecessary and acrimonious disagreements with municipal officials and improve the predictability of payments to municipalities. These administrative issues can be addressed without legislation; however, some of the changes included in the package proposed by the Minister of Public Works and Government Services do require amendments to the Municipal Grants Act, which is the purpose of Bill C-10.

During their meetings with the minister, municipal officials made it clear that the Government of Canada must behave in a manner similar to other property owners. This is what Bill C-10 aims to achieve. The underlying objective of the proposed legislation is to make federal payments in lieu of taxes as much like the taxes levied against private landowners as is possible, while still recognizing the government's exemption from local taxation under the Constitution Act, 1867.

Complicating this balancing act is the need to account for the uniqueness of certain types of federal properties, as I mentioned a moment ago.

The way the government has pursued these objectives is by strengthening the principles of fairness and equity that have guided the municipal grants program since its inception some 50 years ago. Let me give the House some examples.

Bill C-10 will require the federal government to pay a supplementary amount equivalent to interest when payments in lieu of taxes are unreasonably delayed. It will make the disputes resolution process more accessible to municipal governments and make the objectivity of the disputes advisory committee more apparent.

Bill C-10 will empower the minister to make payments in lieu of taxes on tenanted federal property when these tenants default on their tax obligations. Under the current regime municipal governments often have little recourse when a tenant in a federal property defaults on taxes.

The proposed legislation will also remove limitations on payments in lieu of taxes to first nations governments. It will change the reference in the legislation from the word "grants" to the word "payments" in lieu of taxes. This change will reflect the fact that the government receives valuable direct and indirect services from local governments for its payments in lieu of taxes.

Bill C-10 will expand the definition of federal property contained in the legislation to put the government on a more level playing field with taxable property owners.

In his speech to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities the minister also indicated that a primary goal of the consultation and reform exercise would be to improve the predictability of payments in lieu of taxes. I might add on a personal note, as a former school board chair, that knowing how much money we could budget for each year was a very important issue with which we had great trouble.

Again, several measures in Bill C-10 are designed to achieve this goal. For example, the government has undertaken to make payments according to the municipally established schedule, assuming information from assessment and taxation authorities is received on a timely basis, equivalent to that accorded other taxpayers. As mentioned earlier, the government will pay supplementary amounts equivalent to interest when these payments are delayed.

The government will also work with assessment authorities to attempt to finalize federal property values prior to the close of the assessment roll. This will reduce the number of disputes and improve predictability for municipalities when they set their tax rates and when they set their budgets.

The government will be working with tax appraisal professionals to arrive at an acceptable and balanced means of valuing certain types of property. The government will also clarify the process to be followed when a taxing authority is unwilling or unable to provide a service to federal property which it customarily provides to taxable property.

This is the first comprehensive review of the municipal payments program in 20 years.

• (1015)

Given this fact, I am pleased to inform hon. members that these proposed changes will have a minimal impact on the cost of the program. In fact, the cost increase will amount to less than 1% of a \$400 million program, a total of about \$1.7 additional millions, which will be distributed among departments.

As elected representatives, we are all mindful of the need to control the cost of government. However, I believe the movement of the federal government toward a more equitable position in relation to taxable property owners will provide more protection from large increases in costs by aligning the government with the common interests of the taxable community.

Let me reiterate that Bill C-10 strengthens the fairness, equity and predictability of federal payments in lieu of taxes. It achieves a balance between ensuring that Canada pays its fair share of the cost of municipal services while protecting the broader interests of all Canadian taxpayers. It deserves the support of hon. members on both sides of the House and I would ask them to join me in supporting the bill.

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Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I want to express to the House my pleasure in being able to rise to the discussion on this particular bill.

It is, in many respects, a very good bill. As has been pointed out by the hon. parliamentary secretary, it follows the 11 round table discussions where representatives got together from all the provinces and a variety of municipalities, large and small, and had their input into this particular bill. While the bill does in many ways meet some of the discussions that took place and some of the requests they made, there are some areas where the bill falls short and where the suggestions made were not accepted.

I want to address the House in a way that suggests we ought to look at this not as a *fait accompli* or something that is finished but rather as something that is in the process of being put together.

We will have to recognize that it does improve the equality, fairness, equity and predictability of payments to municipalities and other taxing authorities in terms of the taxes that might otherwise be paid by people who own property in those particular taxing authority jurisdictions.

It gives the minister the right and power to pay those taxes and to make those payments in lieu of taxes, and also to make payments in case those taxes are late for whatever reason that might be. It also adds to the provisions of the act a predictability factor in the sense that very often the assessment authority does not have its final number complete. The government has always had the practice in the past of withholding at least 5% of that amount. That will now be brought forward. If it is not, then the interest, or the amount of interest that might have been calculated out of that amount, will be paid. That is a good provision within the bill.

The bill also allows the federal government to collect from third parties if they do not pay their rent or taxes to make sure that the proper taxing authority gets that particular payment. That is a desirable thing as well.

It establishes an advisory panel, or council as the hon. parliamentary secretary has indicated, which is designed to resolve disputes between taxing authorities and paying authorities, in this case the Government of Canada. At the same time as it does that, the advisory panel also has absolutely no teeth connected with it. This then raises some concerns that we have.

The first concern is that the advisory panel really has no teeth. It may make recommendations at the point of the assessment. It may make recommendations about whether the payment was late and was unreasonably withheld at the usual time or on the amount of money that should be paid. It can make recommendations but there is absolutely no provision in the bill that suggests that the minister may not unreasonably withhold approval of these recommendations. As a consequence, the minister's discretion is complete. He or she may accept the recommendations, amend them, reject them

or simply ignore them. The interesting thing is that the panel has no real authority.

• (1020)

The panel is also to help resolve issues with regard to disputes when it comes to crown corporations, especially agents of the crown corporations that really exist for the creation of profit for the Government of Canada. In this case too, the panel may make recommendations but there is absolutely no obligation on the part of the corporation to accept those recommendations. The corporation may amend them, reject them or simply accept them, but it is totally at the discretion of the corporation to do so. I think that is a shortcoming within the bill.

The other point within the bill is that the minister's discretion is so complete that the apparent willingness or direction from the municipalities and taxing authority is that he actually pay these amounts and that he do so at a predictable time and so on. This discretion is totally his. As a consequence, he has an authority that no other property taxpayer in Canada has. When we get our tax notices, we must pay our taxes. If we do not pay them we get taken to court and our property is eventually confiscated. The minister has total and complete authority and discretion as to what he will and what he will not do. I think that is a shortcoming.

The other aspect to the bill is that it totally ignores the recommendations from the committee. This was a joint technical committee on payments in lieu of taxes. This particular group made a representation to the minister saying that when it comes to schedule 4, these are agent crown corporations which are supposed to make money, should all be included under schedule 4, and that is what schedule 4 actually says. Specifically they recommended that Canada Post and the Royal Mint be added to schedule 4.

Since then, we have had the amendment of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Act. The act clearly indicates that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation may make a profit and that the profit ought to accrue and will accrue to the shareholder, which is the Government of Canada, and it should be paying a business tax when and if the taxing authority taxes businesses that are in the business of making profit. There is this a very startling omission in the bill by not including under schedule 4 these corporations.

Some may wonder why it matters. It matters a lot because there are taxes here that are due and should be paid, and payment should have been made in lieu of those taxes. This is particularly evident when one looks at that particular list of corporations. Under schedule 4, we find the Business Development of Canada, which is clearly a profit making corporation and these others should be added in exactly the same way as that one is.

We want to be very careful how we examine the bill because we need to recognize that the bill has within it some very, very positive things, but it also has some negative things in it and we need to recognize what they are.

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One area in which I have a special concern has to do with clause 3(6). This clause reads as follows:

“For the purposes of the definition “federal property ” in subsection (1), federal property does not include

(d) any Indian reserve, or any land referred to in any of paragraphs (c) to (e) of the definition “taxing authority” in subsection 40 2(1), except for the part

(i) that is occupied for residential purposes by an employee of Her Majesty in right of Canada who would not, but for that employment, live on that reserve or land, or

(ii) that is occupied by a minister of the Crown;

● (1025)

That sounds very good, particularly when one reads the explanatory notes as to the purpose of this particular change in the bill. The purpose is:

To ensure that First Nations governments have the same access to federal payments in lieu of taxes as do other “taxing authorities”.

When the First Nation government is granted the status of a “taxing authority” as defined in section 2(1) of the Municipal Grants Act, they are entitled to the same payments in lieu of taxes as “federal property” as all other taxing authorities.

Under subsection 2(3)(c)(ii) of the current Act, the definition of “federal property” on Indian reserves is limited to property occupied by departments for providing service to the off-Reserve population, a restriction that does not exist for other taxing authorities.

That seems fair and equitable and really sounds great, but let us take a closer look at the Municipal Grants Act definition of taxing authority. I want to warn our observers that this will be a significant bit of reading and may very well cause some of them to ask themselves exactly what is going on here.

I will read the definition of taxing authority from the Municipal Grants Act. It states:

“taxing authority” means

(a) any municipality, province, municipal or provincial board, commission, corporation or other authority that levies and collects a real property tax or a frontage or area tax pursuant to an Act of the legislature of a province,

(b) any council of a band within the meaning of the Indian Act that levies and collects a real property tax or a frontage or area tax pursuant to an Act of Parliament,

(c) any band within the meaning of the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, chapter 18 of the Statutes of Canada, 1984, that levies and collects a tax on interests in Category IA land or Category IA-N land as defined in that Act,

I will quote from subsection(2):

(2) For the purposes of the definition “taxing authority” in subsection (1), where one authority collects a real property tax or a frontage or area tax that is levied by another authority, the authority that collects the tax shall be deemed to be the authority that levies and collects the tax.

(3) For the purposes of the definition “federal property” in subsection (1), federal property does not include

(a) any structure or work that is not a building designed primarily for the shelter of people, living things, plant or personal property or, for greater certainty, any structure, work, machinery or equipment included in Schedule II,

(b) any real property developed and used as a park and situated within an area defined as “urban” by Statistics Canada, as of the most recent census of the population of Canada taken by Statistics Canada, other than any real property acquired pursuant to the National Parks Act or the Historic Sites and Monuments Act or any real property that is occupied or used as a park and has been prescribed to be included in the definition “federal property” pursuant to paragraph 9(1)(d),

(c) any Indian reserve, except for that part of the reserve (i) that is occupied for residential purposes by an employee of Her Majesty in right of Canada who would not, but for that employment, live on that reserve and that is prescribed

The act makes some changes in this area but the real issue goes back to the first part of this, which states:

any council of a band within the meaning of the Indian Act that levies and collects a real property tax or a frontage or area tax pursuant to an Act of Parliament,

(c) any band within the meaning of the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, chapter 18 of the Statutes of Canada

The issue here is whether Bill C-9, which numerically precedes Bill C-10, creates a new kind of taxing authority, a taxing authority that is the result of amendments to the Constitution of Canada. I would suggest to the House that to change the Constitution of Canada is not something that can happen in a piece of legislation in the House.

● (1030)

However it appears as if Bill C-9 creates under the Nisga’a treaty a level of government that is not recognized in the Constitution of Canada. The Constitution of Canada clearly recognizes the federal government, provincial government and municipal government. That is where it ends. Somehow another level of government has been created under Bill C-9 which, according to the act that I just read with regard to a taxing authority, leads into some difficulties.

Some may ask what the complication is. I ask, what other level of government can override provincial and federal laws? There is not one. Under Bill C-9 and the Nisga’a treaty it is possible that a new kind of government structure can override federal and provincial laws. It is clearly stated that it does so in 14 areas. It says that the Nisga’a government can override federal and provincial laws in 14 areas.

I will read those areas into the record: Nisga’a citizenship; structure, administration, management and operation of Nisga’a government; Nisga’a lands and assets; regulation, licensing and prohibition of businesses, professions and trades; preservation, promotion and development of Nisga’a language and culture; direct taxation of Nisga’a citizens; adoption; child and family services; preschool to grade 12 education; advanced education; organization and structure of health care delivery; authorization

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and licensing of aboriginal healers; Nisga'a annual fishing plans for harvest and the sale of fish and aquatic plants; and Nisga'a wildlife and migratory birds entitlement.

Those are areas in which the federal and provincial governments may make laws and the particular government structure created under Bill C-9 allows this group to override these provisions. How can that be when the constitution clearly does not recognize this form of government?

This bill allows payment in lieu of taxes to a government that is neither fiscally nor democratically accountable. That is the other part of Bill C-9 which I take strong exception to. We would think that this was a simple matter but it is anything but simple.

Bill C-9 creates three levels of government within the Nisga'a treaty. There is the central Nisga'a Lisims, then four village governments and three urban local governments. Most of the individual Nisga'a will be dependent upon that government structure. It is as if this government is somehow going to be independent and able to provide and have the resources to allow its citizens to make a living and create the kind of successful and healthy environment for themselves and their families.

From the provisions of that particular treaty, it is pretty clear that that is very doubtful. There will be a concentration of power in this group of government structures at three different levels. The Nisga'a citizens will be largely dependent on either the government largesse or will be employed by certain government corporations. It is concentrating power into a small group and giving it big powers.

Gordon Gibson is a very strong scholar of democratic processes. He was the leader of the Liberal Party in British Columbia and is now a fellow of the Fraser Institute in British Columbia. He has done a lot of research on the business of power and how democracy actually allocates power to certain groups. He made the observation: "Small governments with large powers may acquire the ability to control the citizens rather than vice versa".

That is absolutely critical to the success of a democratic system of government. The people ought to be in control of the government, not the other way around. That is an abuse of the basic principles and philosophies of a democratic form of government.

I suggest that not only has a new form of government been created under the Nisga'a treaty, but it has also created power in that group which really is too great in order to manage in a truly democratic fashion.

• (1035)

There is another significant part. This particular government will not be spending its own money. It will be sitting there spreading

largesse to its citizens, but it will not be money collected from the citizens given back to them in one program or another. No, it will be money collected from taxpayers across Canada. That is the money it will be spending.

Some people argue that it is not really all that much. The minister of Indian affairs told us it would only cost us \$500 million. It is pretty clear that is the absolute minimum amount and if we analyse what some of the costs will be, it will be closer to \$1.3 billion. Talk about a change. We should take cognizance of that.

Another point to recognize is that with the new government created under Nisga'a, the act does not allow non-Nisga'a people to vote for that government. They can pay taxes to it. That government has the right to assess their property and force them to pay taxes but in no way are they represented on the group that actually makes the decisions about how their property should be assessed, how much the mill rate should be and the payment that should be made. These are serious shortcomings and should not be allowed.

We need to recognize that there are some very serious problems. A taxing authority has been created. Is this really a taxing authority in terms of the provisions and definition in the Municipal Grants Act as currently written, and the Constitution of Canada itself which overrides all these considerations? What ought to be done?

There ought to be some equality created. The kind of government structure that exists within the Nisga'a and the government structure that exists in other provinces and municipalities ought to be the same. The rules governing the election of these people ought to be the same. Everybody ought to be allowed to vote for those people who will ultimately decide how the money will be spent, how they will be taxed and things of that sort.

The equality principle is absolutely fundamental in order for us as democratic citizens to feel that we have some equal opportunity to influence what is happening in government. Instead of doing that, Bill C-9 builds another brick in the wall of separation between ethnic groups. For that reason I have some serious difficulties with it. But that is only one part of it.

The other part is that there is no equality among Canadians generally, and even among those people who live on the Nisga'a lands. There are those who are Nisga'a and those who are not. There is also a lack of accountability. There is no clear statement about how this group shall be accountable.

We can read the provisions of the treaty and say some of that is provided for. I will read some of things that should be provided for, and to a degree are, but not completely or enough.

With the procedures and processes for the election of local aboriginal governments on reserves whether it be Nisga'a or elsewhere, the services of Elections Canada should be made

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available to deal with allegations of vote rigging and intimidation. That provision is missing. It is important that Elections Canada have something to say about that.

The fiscal accounting procedures of local aboriginal governments, including the provision of the services of the Auditor General of Canada to ensure fiscal responsibility, should be made available and should apply in this case.

The direction of a greater portion of Indian affairs funding, or Nisga'a funding, should go directly to aboriginal persons on the reserves. Then local aboriginal governments would have to tax it from its own people in order to get access. That would put the purse strings of local aboriginal governments in the hands of the people to whom the governments should be accountable. This is the essence of responsible government that non-aboriginals have enjoyed for 150 years, but which our aboriginal people are still waiting for on reserves.

● (1040)

We need to have democracy. We need to have equality. We need to have accountability. We all need those things. For some reason, those fundamental principles are missing in Bill C-9 in the Nisga'a treaty.

Now we are creating a situation where we put into doubt all of those things. What are our children and our grandchildren going to think? What are people going to think 14 years from now? It is serious stuff.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): In fairness to the member for Kelowna who very cleverly and I thought with great ingenuity managed to bring the Nisga'a treaty into the Municipal Governments Act, my signal was that it might be time to make that linkage again.

Perhaps I was alone, but I am sure other members were wondering what bill was being debated. As I said earlier this week, the responsibility rests with the member not to challenge the Chair on relevance. I thought that the member for Kelowna had done a very good job in linking the two, but once that link has been severed, it is the responsibility of the member to bring it back again.

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, with pleasure I will bring it back to Bill C-10.

Bill C-10 clearly indicates that it is to meet three principles: equality, fairness and predictability. Those are the three principles that are supposed to be evident in Bill C-10. To a degree they are in Bill C-10, but to a degree they are not. It is the degree to which they are not that I wish to address and illustrate through the provisions of the Nisga'a treaty. It is a very practical example of how this works.

I want to go further than that and indicate clearly how we would establish the business of becoming accountable and more equal in terms of the treatment of people, not only of Nisga'a but of all people across Canada, in particular people of ethnic origin that might be called aboriginal.

The Reform Party's ultimate goal is that all people be full and equal participants in Canadian citizenship, indistinguishable in law and treatment from other Canadians. What could be more fair than that kind of a statement with regard to Bill C-10 which talks about taxation and payment in lieu of taxes?

The Reform Party maintains also that any form of Indian self-government will be a delegated form of government, and all land within the borders of Canada will remain part of Canada. The laws of Canada and the charters, including the Canadian constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, will apply to Indian government. Any laws enacted by Indian governments must conform with the laws of Canada.

That is precisely the point we want to make. This is another law that should be applied in detail here.

The Reform Party also supports that the Auditor General of Canada has full authority to review the management of federal funds by Indian governments and all governments. We want that to happen.

The Reform Party supports the right of individuals living on reserves and eligible for government benefits to choose and receive those benefits either directly from the federal government or through the Indian government. That is a very significant issue and deals directly with payment in lieu of taxes. Why would the government make payment in lieu of taxes if it was not to make sure that the people got the necessary services from government and the taxing authority?

I want to ask specifically whether or not this issue is a significant one for us to consider in great detail.

I wish to draw to the attention of the House exactly where some of the people sit with regard to this issue.

Eighty-nine per cent of the people in British Columbia believe that they did not have an adequate opportunity to provide input into the Nisga'a treaty. Ninety-two per cent believe that they should have the right to vote on the principles of the treaty. The respondents want their member of parliament to vote against the treaty.

● (1045)

This includes Vancouver Centre at 81.5%, Vancouver South at 92.2%, Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam at 94%, Richmond at 92.3%, Vancouver—Kingsway at 82.1% and Vancouver

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Quadra at 91.5%. That is how their constituents want them to vote, but how will they vote?

Not only do we have constitutional and potential legal problems but we also have a political problem. Will the Liberal government continue to blatantly show contempt for democracy and ignore what the people want? Will the government continue to show spite and disdain for the people of Canada and the democratic process and not allow its political people to reflect what people want?

I have attempted to show that the consecutive bills, Bill C-9 and Bill C-10, are related in effect and to each other. Both fall short of what people want. Both should be amended to more accurately reflect what people want.

The advisory panel created under Bill C-10 was created at the advice of the municipal councillors, and rightly so, but the bill does not go far enough to give these people any kind of authority so that their recommendations will be treated seriously.

The minister's discretion with regard to whether he accepts, amends or rejects their recommendations should be tied up. His discretion should be limited much more than is the case. That is what the people want. That is not what the minister has given us.

It was also clearly suggested that money making crown corporations, which are set up to make money for the Government of Canada, should be included under schedule 4. Again these corporations are not talked about at all.

This is not listening to the people. It is saying to the people that it does not matter what they recommend. There is already evidence that it will not listen. How can we believe that it will now listen when the panel makes a recommendation?

We need included in the bill that the recommendations of the advisory panel not be unreasonably refused by the minister. Finally, schedule 4 must include corporations that make money. There are three specifically. Two were named by the joint technical advisory committee on payment in lieu of taxes and another I have added. They are Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canada Post Corporation and Royal Canadian Mint.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the member who spoke before me spent a good half hour using Bill C-10 as an excuse to introduce the Reform Party's objections to the Nisga'a treaty. I, however, am going to try to get the debate back to Bill C-10, back to the municipalities and to federal-provincial relations.

This bill is going to have a title that is far better adapted to reality—for which I congratulate the minister. It will no longer speak of grants. I am going to read its official full title—an act respecting payments in lieu of taxes to municipalities, provinces

and other bodies exercising functions of local government that levy real property taxes.

I trust then that there will be no more talk of grants, for a grant is a gift, and that means that the recipient, the grantee, is receiving a present. The federal government is very big on giving gifts. Moreover, in this bill, as my distinguished colleague from Vancouver Quadra has indicated, the minister's discretionary power is omnipresent.

That is the point. It is the minister who will be going about distributing largesse. That is one thing we can say about the Liberals: they are past masters at this kind of disguised gift and at ministerial interference. If an MP from their party asks the minister to exercise his discretionary power on behalf of a municipality in his riding, it is a rare thing for the minister to refuse.

● (1050)

However, if someone from another political party is facing the same problem, the minister rarely has the funds. He is rarely able to comply and to exercise this discretionary power, which he has obtained under just about all the laws passed in this parliament since 1993. I have been in this House since October of that year.

We can congratulate the government on the new title. However, it is not accurate when it comes to legislation on payments made in lieu of taxes to municipalities.

There is a difference between income tax and property tax. But this is a minor fault that will not be held against the government. What we can criticize it for, however, is paving the way for discretionary action, petty political jockeying, under the table arrangements, as well as unjustified and unjustifiable gifts. We are not happy about this aspect of the bill. The minister's discretionary power is really exorbitant.

There is also something of grave concern to municipalities, in particular to the Union des municipalités du Québec, which we contacted. The bill was introduced here on October 27, 1999 at first reading, that is, only a few working days ago. Municipalities were not given much time to examine the bill carefully and assess its real impact. The government is pressing us to adopt this bill immediately but, frankly, municipalities are not pleased with this legislation.

If we look at the substance of the bill and draw a parallel between this piece of legislation and other ones, we see a constant. It is always the same thing when the government tables any bill. With all its bills, the government has this annoying propensity, this bad habit of targeting the poor and making them pay because they form the largest group.

The Employment Insurance Act is a case in point. Today, we are told that the minister—who is using very conservative figures—will amass a surplus of some \$95 billion over the next five years.

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But where does he take all that money? He gets it through cuts in transfers to the provinces, which are directly accountable to people. The provinces are on the front line when it comes to dealing with the public. So, the federal government makes cuts affecting hospitals and many other services, uses its tremendous taxing power to get more money, and then its spending power, all this with a cavalier attitude, bragging all along about having money and being able to interfere in just about any area.

This often creates false hopes, false expectations or even real expectations. However, when the time comes to meet these expectations, the federal government passes the buck to the provinces.

In Quebec, we have a pharmacare program. It cost Quebecers a lot of money to establish that program. All Quebecers are paying for it. I am told that the program is working well. Fortunately, and thank goodness, I am not sick and I do not really use that program. But everyone says that it is working well. When the federal government noticed how successful the program was, it hastened to step in.

• (1055)

In the budget speech, the government mentioned the possibility of launching a pharmacare program. Once the program is up and running, once people have come to trust it and rely on it, the federal government will pull out, as it always does and leave people stuck with a program that they will then have to begin supporting themselves.

It is the same thing with employment insurance. This government does not have the courage to bring in tax increases, but it knows that most of those with jobs pay taxes, since all of those with jobs are subject to tax. So, by keeping EI premiums high, the government can count on those with jobs paying premiums and will be able to rake in \$95.5 billion over the next five years, which is shocking and scandalous.

When I say this bill is no different, or that the attitudes are the same as in the past, I mean that when a municipality wants to build a road, water or sewer infrastructure, the cost of laying down a bed so that lines do not shift, crack or break through freezing and thawing is extremely high. Taxpayers figure that the cost of bringing in a line, or building a road or sidewalks will be shared among users, those who will benefit from the infrastructure.

This holds for everyone except the government. In my riding, for instance, there is a rehabilitation centre for young offenders with about 800 feet in frontage.

The Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He has a little over 30 minutes remaining, but it being 11 o'clock, the House will now proceed to Statements by Members. When we resume after question period, he will have the floor.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE ON CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week 70 outstanding educators from across Canada are attending the third annual Teachers' Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy on Parliament Hill. This initiative, launched by the Library of Parliament in collaboration with the Senate and House of Commons, is an important and unique professional development opportunity.

The program is designed to provide educators with valuable knowledge regarding parliament, legislation and democracy in Canada. It also offers them the chance to meet individually with parliamentarians to learn about parliamentary procedure and to view this institution through the eyes of those who work here.

The Teachers' Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy has become a great tool for teachers across our country who want to further their knowledge about the Parliament of Canada. I salute everyone involved in the Teachers' Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy for the support of this important and useful educational experience.

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ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the many volunteers and veterans who perform such valuable work for the Royal Canadian Legion.

In particular, I draw special attention to my constituent, Mr. Roy Frisken, the current president of the Red Deer Legion who has volunteered thousands of hours to both the legion and other community organizations.

In 1943 Roy joined the Canadian army and in 1945 he was a participant in the heavy fighting that occurred in northern Holland. Roy has been instrumental in supporting local youth activities that occur in our riding. They all know they can count on Roy. It is this kind of leadership that shows continuous dedication to our nation.

Roy Frisken and many other volunteers across the country have played a crucial role in shaping the fantastic communities we now enjoy. With Remembrance Day next Thursday, I ask members to take the time to thank veterans for their sacrifices and to support their local legions so that they can continue to provide important services to the community. We will not forget.

VETERANS WEEK

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks the beginning of Veterans Week, a week when we remember the sacrifices of all those who served for Canada.

This year I would like to pay tribute to our Canadian war artists. Through Max Aitken's efforts during the first world war, over 850 works including paintings, sculptures and prints were brought together in the Canadian War Memorial's collection.

During the second world war, Vincent Massey and the director of the National Gallery, H. O. McCurry, compiled a collection of over 1,000 creations. The entire collection from both world wars was transferred to the Canadian War Museum in 1971.

• (1100)

This museum presently displays only a fraction of the collection.

One year and one day ago the Minister of Canadian Heritage announced that a piece of land near CFB Rockcliffe would be held for a new facility. It is time that we honour all those who served this country of ours and especially our Canadian war artists by displaying their works with dignity and pride in a new home worthy of their sacrifices.

* * *

EAST ASIAN FESTIVAL

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this month in Kitchener-Waterloo at Renison College we are celebrating the annual East Asian Festival.

This multicultural event is a wonderful celebration of the heritage of East Asian Canadians. The cultures of Taiwan, Japan, Korea and China are each represented throughout the four day festival.

This event gives members of our local community and students at the University of Waterloo the opportunity to experience and learn about East Asian traditions. Guests to the festival have the opportunity to experience lion dancing, East Asian foods and martial arts demonstrations, and to participate in business and educational workshops.

I would like to extend my congratulations to all of the volunteers who have given so much of their time to make this festival the great success that it is. In particular, I would like to commend Dr. Gail Cuthbert-Brandt, principal of Renison College, for her commitment to this very worthy project.

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THE LATE GREG MOORE

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, thousands of people attended a memorial service in Maple Ridge in my riding to honour the life of our hometown hero, Indy CART racer, Greg Moore.

Greg's accomplishments on the racetrack have been well documented. He was the youngest racer to ever win the Indy Lites championship at age 20 and the youngest to win an Indy CART race at age 22.

The greatness of Greg Moore lay not only in his racetrack performances, but in the fact that he remained a regular guy. Although he had become a star in his chosen profession, he still had time for his fans, charity work and his hometown. He never forgot his roots.

Greg was an ambassador for auto racing, for Maple Ridge and for Canada. Many dream but few dare to take action to attain that dream. Greg pursued his dream of racing with persistence and passion.

Today, together, we continue to mourn the loss of a great young man. On behalf of all members of the House, we extend our deepest sympathies to Greg's family and friends and offer our prayers of support at this very difficult time.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning Statistics Canada announced some good economic news: in October, the unemployment rate dropped 0.3% to 7.2%, which is the lowest it has been since March 1990.

This economic indicator shows us that our economic and financial policies have been effective. The conditions created by the Liberal government are contributing to the economic growth of Canada and to improving Canadians' quality of life.

Without getting hung up in a lot of numbers, let us simply say that, this year alone, 253,000 new jobs have been created.

While the opposition parties have been wasting their time tilting at windmills, 253,000 more people have found dignity in employment. While the opposition acts up, we have been acting.

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[*English*]

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, as we look ahead to a new millennium Canadians have a great deal to

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look forward to and be thankful for. We owe a great deal to those Canadians who fought and gave their lives for freedom and the quality of life we now enjoy.

To honour our Calgary veterans, I am sponsoring one veteran from both the Forest Lawn Legion and the Ogden Legion to attend the Remembrance Day ceremonies on Parliament Hill.

I would encourage all Canadians to participate in the final Remembrance Day of this century and to honour those who fought and gave their lives for us.

* * *

[Translation]

QUEBEC THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on November 10, the curtain at the National Arts Centre will rise on a Ghislain Filion production of Cervantes' "Interlude".

First performed in May 1998 by students specializing in theatre at Cegep Lionel Groulx, "les intermèdes" is a french adaptation by Ghislain Filion of Cervantes' work. News of its enthusiastic reception in Quebec so impressed the NAC French theatre that it has included it in its 1999-2000 "Découvertes" series.

The Bloc Québécois parliamentary group is proud to salute the new generation of Quebec theatre companies, whose talent, originality, perseverance and dynamism is brilliantly illustrated by the "Capharnaüm" company.

In these days where virtually everything is focussed on sacrosanct economic values, for a young person to choose to earn a living from cultural pursuits is a bold decision. Opting for difference, for beauty, for universal values is, as Jacques Brel put it "to reach the unreachable star".

To all these young people, we say thank you and bravo.

* * *

• (1105)

[English]

SOHEIL MOSUN LIMITED

Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many companies strive to be world class players in their industry, many companies strive to be excellent.

Let me today acknowledge a company for which these are not just distant goals, a company for which these ideals are part of everyday reality. Let me today introduce Soheil Mosun Limited, a custom architectural fabrication firm that I am proud to say is located in my riding of Etobicoke North.

Recently its excellence was again recognized when it was granted a contract worth \$7 million to participate in the refurbishment of the Renaissance Centre in Detroit. This project to upgrade GM's headquarters is touted as the world's largest renovation project. I am glad to see that a Canadian company and Canadian employees will be participating.

Many thanks also to Canada's crown corporations, the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Business Development Corporation, for their assistance in bringing this transaction to fruition.

I welcome Soheil, Darius and Cyrus Mosun. Congratulations to Soheil Mosun Limited.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Tony Ianno (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, six years ago today the Canadian people gave our Liberal Party a mandate to concentrate on economic growth and job creation. We embarked on a strategic plan to reduce the staggering 11.4% unemployment rate. Taking a balanced approach we worked with various sectors of our economy, such as those involved in trade, research and development, tourism, youth employment and, of course, the small business sector.

As the member for Trinity—Spadina, it gives me great pleasure to stand today and say that the unemployment rate in six years has moved from 11.4% to 7.2%. In 1993, 13 million Canadians were working. Today 1.8 million more Canadians have joined the workforce, a 14% increase, bringing the total to 14.8 million Canadians.

With our policies we are helping more Canadians achieve a higher standard of living with the dignity of work.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the fall of unemployment to 7.5% is good news as far as it goes, but our rate of unemployment remains staggeringly high when compared to earlier decades.

In the 1950s 4% unemployment marked the depths of the recession. Today 7.5% is also staggeringly high when compared to other countries, such as Austria, the Netherlands, the United States and Norway. All of these countries have reduced their unemployment to less than 5%.

Let us not kid ourselves. Everyone here knows the 7.5% figure is not accurate. It does not count those who find themselves on the welfare rolls. Incredibly, it does not even count aboriginal people on reserves where unemployment could be 95%.

Whether the real figure is 7% or 17%, the question remains, why do we continue to tolerate chronic long term unemployment? What

ever happened to the goal of full employment for this country? Are there still people out there who are perverse enough to think that if unemployment drops too low it will spike the rate of inflation?

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government took office in 1993 Canada was saddled with a \$42 billion deficit. Four years later that deficit was gone. Achieving it was not without significant sacrifice by all Canadians.

However, that sacrifice led to back to back surpluses for the first time in the last 50 years of \$3.5 billion in 1997 and \$2.9 billion in 1998.

Continued responsible government and prudent fiscal management have also created another 600,000 jobs since 1998 and our unemployment rate, as announced today, has fallen to 7.2%, its lowest level in nine years. That is good news.

Based on the economic statement of November 2 delivered by the finance minister, our strong performance is also forecast to continue for the next five years. Canadians can now expect more tax cuts, greater support for children and families and more help for education, knowledge and skills.

This is all good news for Canadians. As we enter the new millennium Canada is the place to be.

* * *

[Translation]

APEC INQUIRY

Mr. Paul Mercier (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a few hundred years ago, there lived in Provence a greedy judge who decided one fine morning to lunch at an inn recommended to him. What should he see on arriving, there waiting for him, smiling, wearing his hat and carrying the spit? A litigant. The innkeeper was none other than one of the parties to a proceeding that he would hear. So, with a heavy heart and an empty stomach, the judge turned on his heel and got himself a sandwich somewhere. The judiciary, which does not associate with just anyone, will soon have to appear before it.

• (1110)

This is clearly not the opinion of the prosecutor at the commission of inquiry into the APEC summit, who is not afraid to be seen at a funding dinner along with the Prime Minister, whom he might call to testify at the inquiry. It appears that this is not the opinion either of the said Prime Minister, who saw nothing wrong with having the prosecutor contribute to his election fund the \$400 cost of the dinner.

I recommend the Prime Minister and the prosecutor read this tale by Paul Arène. It will provide both with a practical lesson in professional ethics.

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[English]

WAR VETERANS

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with humility and great pride that I stand today to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served in our armed forces in various capacities with distinction. It was their valour, their commitment, their dedication and, yes, their sacrifice which permit us today to not only live in a free society but also to live in the best country in the world.

As this century comes to a close, it is fitting that with the help of the Royal Canadian Legion and the support of the federal government we are starting a new tradition. Beginning this year the legion will lead the nation in setting aside two minutes of silence in every town and city across our country. Given the magnitude of the sacrifices of our veterans, many of whom did not return home, it is only fitting that we pledge to continue in the new millennium not only to honour and remember them but to continue to support them.

I want to say to all Canadians, especially our youth as we move into the 21st century, we must never forget.

* * *

DOWN'S SYNDROME

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, this week is national Down's syndrome awareness week. The exact causes of the chromosomal rearrangement and primary prevention of Down's syndrome are still unknown.

Down's syndrome is the most common chromosomal abnormality, affecting one in every 700 live births. Individuals with Down's syndrome experience delayed development, both physically and intellectually. Down's syndrome is one of the leading clinical causes of mental disability in the world. It is not related to race, nationality, religion or socioeconomic status.

Research is the key to conquering this devastating disability. Let us all pray that our researchers are successful in their efforts and that all Canadians continue to generously support their efforts.

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[Translation]

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as October was women's history month, it gave us an opportunity to pay special tribute to francophone women in Canada. I would like to add my voice to those who have already spoken on this subject.

In 1912, the Ontario provincial government adopted Regulation 17 prohibiting the teaching of French in the province's schools. In spite of that, two sisters, Béatrice and Diane Desloges, who were

Oral Questions

teachers at Guigues school, in Ottawa's lower town, kept teaching in French.

They were punished by first being deprived of their salary and then the provincial government forced them to leave Guigues school. In January 1916, accompanied by mothers and grandmothers, and armed with fearsome pin hats, they challenged policemen and stormed Guigues school.

The Desloges sisters never gave up the fight for Ontario's francophones—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Acadie—Bathurst.

* * *

SEASONAL INDUSTRIES

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the concerns of seasonal industry workers will finally be voiced here in the House of Commons.

Making Motion M-222 a votable item means that we can have a constructive debate, during which everyone will be able to put forward short, middle and long term solutions to address the issue of seasonal workers and employment insurance.

The debate will also allow us to debunk several myths regarding seasonal work. The issue of seasonal workers affects every single region of the country and particularly rural areas.

I hope members from all parties will join me and will take part in the debate and in the development of solutions.

Communities all over the country that depend on seasonal industries are turning to us, so that we can all work together to find feasible solutions. Let us not disappoint them.

* * *

[English]

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, last year a member of this House said publicly that we should do away with Remembrance Day. When I heard that I decided to send a letter to the natural resources minister of New Brunswick asking him to ban hunting on November 11 to remember the supreme sacrifices made by our veterans so that we can enjoy the freedom which today we sometimes take for granted.

• (1115)

It really does not matter whether they ban hunting for a whole day or for a half day until noon, our hunters can take to the woods but at the 11th hour on that day the intent is to lay down the weapons and pause for two minutes to remember those Canadians

who did so much for us. Without them, we might not have the hunting season at all and we might not have a country called Canada.

From the goodness of my heart I hope that all Canadians, young and old, will not forget to take two minutes just to remember. We will not forget.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a near bankrupt company in the Prime Minister's riding was up for sale. He urged the human resources department to sweeten the deal with a \$1 million subsidy.

Quelle surprise, Placeteco's buyer turned out to be a friend of the Prime Minister, the friend who bought land from his golf course, gave his campaign \$10,000 and got a CIDA contract for \$6 million. When the Prime Minister was pressuring HRD to sweeten the Placeteco deal, did he know that the interested buyer was his friend, Claude Gauthier?

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me again confirm to the House that the appropriate approval process was undertaken on this project.

The department of human resources analysed the opportunity, the information was provided to the stakeholders, the stakeholders agreed that the investment should be made, and no moneys flowed until that appropriate approval process was completed.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I notice that the question was not answered. The government's idea of appropriate certainly would not be that of taxpayers.

Human resources documents confirm the Prime Minister's direct intervention to sweeten the Placeteco deal. There is a clear history of business and political links between the Prime Minister and Placeteco's buyer. An illegal trust fund was used to deliver the cash to the Prime Minister's friend.

Now we find out that still another friend and patronage appointee of the Prime Minister, Gilles Champagne, administered the trust fund for a handsome fee. Do the Prime Minister and the government see nothing wrong with such blatant pork-barrelling?

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me say again that the appropriate approval process was undertaken. Indeed an administrative error was made by the department in administering the funds.

Oral Questions

In May of this year that was recognized. In June a directive was issued to deal with it and the trust funds have been closed.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is amazing how the stars line up for the Prime Minister's friends: illegal trust funds administered by old buddies and a \$1 million grant to boost the value of a company which ends up being bought by another buddy, a business associate.

This is public money we are talking about. Does the minister care enough to get to the bottom of this and clean up this mess by an independent inquiry?

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed we have responded to the issue. The appropriate approval process was undertaken. The administrative error has been identified and has been dealt with. The trust funds have been closed.

What we are very proud of is today's labour numbers which indicate that Canada's unemployment rate is at 7.2%, the lowest in a decade. That is because of the approaches of the country to the issue of employment in Canada.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there is a very disturbing pattern here. Illegal trust funds administered by the friend of the Prime Minister, millions of dollars of public money funnelled to people with close business ties to the Prime Minister, government contracts given to a man who bought the Prime Minister's land, a trust fund administered by the friend of the Prime Minister, and an RCMP investigation into an unregistered lobbyist who is a friend of the Prime Minister. All roads lead to the Prime Minister's riding.

Why will not the human resources minister do the right thing and launch an independent inquiry to look into the mess that is happening in the Prime Minister's office?

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have done the right thing. The appropriate approval process was undertaken. We identified that there was an administrative error and that has been dealt with.

Most appropriate, we are happy with the reduced unemployment rate in Canada of 7.2%, the lowest in a decade.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Ref.): Is that not nice news, Mr. Speaker? An illegality becomes an administrative error.

The Prime Minister says he is just the little guy from Shawinigan and he is just doing his job as a regular MP, but these sorts of things do not happen in my riding. They do not happen in the Deputy Prime Minister's riding. They happen in one place and one place only, the Prime Minister's riding.

It is not about jobs because 53 jobs disappeared after this deal went through. It is not about helping out businesses; it is about helping out friends.

• (1120)

The minister should be more worried now about her implication in this deal as well. Why has she been called in to justify what is going on in the Prime Minister's office? If she will not do it for taxpayers, why does she not call an inquiry—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister for Human Resources Development.

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am here to confirm, not justify, that the appropriate approval process was undertaken. I am here to confirm that, yes, there was administrative error and it has been dealt with.

I am here to confirm that the trust funds have been closed. I am also here to confirm that there are people working in this riding who would not be working without the support of this government.

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[Translation]

AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a number of people working in the audiovisual sector have revealed that, in addition to the use of other people's names, the practice of overbilling is very widespread. This information is coming out in dribs and drabs because those who know about these deplorable practices are afraid to speak out.

What does the government intend to do to give witnesses the protection they are asking for?

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the members opposite know very well that the Minister of Canadian Heritage has asked the RCMP to look into this matter.

For the umpteenth time, if they have any information, we urge them to pass it on directly to the RCMP.

Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Mitis, BQ): Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that tape is getting a bit worn.

Honest craftspeople have said that only an independent investigation will shed light on the dubious practices they have witnessed in their industry. They are the ones with the facts. They are the ones who want to testify.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether the government intends to respond to these people's concerns and launch an independent investigation into the audiovisual industry throughout the country, yes or no? That's it, that's all.

Oral Questions

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the investigation being done by the RCMP is an independent investigation. I hope that the member opposite will agree.

The members opposite, or anyone with information can feel perfectly comfortable passing it along to the RCMP, which will see that this investigation is properly handled.

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AGEISM

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a federal court judge ruled that the Old Age Security Act discriminates against women.

However, the judge refused to eliminate this discrimination, saying that this was up to the lawmakers.

My question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development. What is she waiting for to assume her responsibilities and eliminate this discrimination?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the judge in this case concluded that the exclusion of separated spouses from the spousal allowance benefit is a reasonable limit on the constitutional equality rights of the charter. He has left further action to parliament.

I am looking forward to reviewing in detail the judgment and we will move from there.

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government routinely refuses to assume its responsibilities, preferring to hide behind the courts. This time, the judge himself has thrown the ball back into parliament's court.

How will the minister defend these women, who are victims of discrimination?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, as I said, I will review the judgment that has come out in this case and we will take steps from there.

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Y2K

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

I am sure he will know that one of the more overriding concerns of people about the Y2K problem is not the fact that their water or

hydro might be shut off, but whether or not we risk the possibility of an accidental nuclear war thanks to a malfunctioning of nuclear systems or computer systems that regulate nuclear weapons systems.

Could the minister tell the House whether he is aware of any attempt through NATO, or any other organization, to achieve a de-alerting of nuclear weapons for the new year that would prevent this problem?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada does not have that kind of weaponry so we are not directly involved, but, yes, there have been numerous discussions at NATO over the last year to two years with respect to this matter. I know that extra precautions have been taken in this regard for all systems relevant to the military.

• (1125)

The United States has particularly paid attention to the nuclear systems possessed by the Russians. I know that extra precautions have been taken in that regard. I think we can be fully confident of these efforts. They are not de-alerting, per se, but they are ensuring that—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona.

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Canadian government would be prepared to take the position that de-alerting would be a good thing to do. In fact some groups have called for the removal of nuclear warheads as a further precautionary measure.

Could the minister tell us what precautionary measures have been taken and why de-alerting is unacceptable to the Canadian government?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is raising another issue of nuclear disarmament. Of course we all want to work ultimately toward nuclear disarmament. I think that is what a lot of people are continuing to be concerned about.

In terms of Y2K I believe from the information that is available to me that certainly the Canadian government has wanted to ensure, through its membership in NATO where these discussions have come up, that all these systems are safe. I believe they are.

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AIRLINE INDUSTRY

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is now clear that since February Kevin Benson has been a registered paid lobbyist for Onex and that he met with the Prime Minister's chief of staff, Jean Pelletier. He also met with the Minister of Transport to discuss the airline takeover.

Oral Questions

Could the Minister of Industry now confirm that Kevin Benson, the Onex lobbyist, also met with his own deputy minister, Kevin Lynch, to discuss the suspension of the Competition Act?

Mr. John Cannis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been informed that the deputy minister of industry has never met with representatives of Onex or Canadian, neither before nor after the government decision of August 13, to suspend section 47 of the Canada Transportation Act.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is curious because Kevin Benson appears to be the link between Onex and the federal government, and the Prime Minister conveniently cannot remember whether his own chief of staff met with Mr. Benson. Surely the Minister of Industry can tell us whether he did or members of his staff did.

The trail of direct contact between Onex and the Prime Minister goes through Kevin Benson. Why is the government showing such blatant favouritism toward one of the proponents of the Onex merger?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's assertion is totally wrong. The government is not showing favouritism to Onex or any of the proponents. We are only ready to act and are acting in the interest of all Canadians.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, by the year 2000 Canada will have the second highest corporate income tax rate in the world. Only Japan's will be higher. Besides high corporate taxes, Canadian businesses face increasing contributions to CPP and the great rip off of excessive EI contributions.

Why does the finance minister not take for once the advice from his own advisers, do what is wise and prudent, and reduce corporate tax rates to keep industry, companies, professionals and workers in Canada?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has been reducing taxes and is focused on the needs of individual Canadians.

If the Reform Party wants to serve the interests of big business it can do that, but we will act for all Canadians, including small and medium size business and business generally.

Our focus is on individual Canadians. I am sorry the Reform Party has forgotten that priority and does not care about it any more.

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister's own advisers are telling him to cut taxes for businesses. Canadians are calling out for tax relief as well. Yet the government continues to refuse to listen.

What is it that the government does not understand about reducing taxes for businesses to help the economy? Why does it not just go ahead and do that?

Mr. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just last week the finance minister prepared the economic and fiscal update projecting surpluses over the next five years. In terms of corporate taxes he has asked the public to comment on what we should be doing with business taxes.

In terms of taxes on small businesses, Canada has the lowest taxes on small businesses in the G-7.

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[Translation]

THE DISABLED

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a few months ago, half of the Liberal cabinet paraded before the subcommittee on the status of the disabled to convince us of its good will.

• (1130)

Yet in Quebec close to 300 disabled people will be losing their jobs this week because of a \$3 million shortfall in the opportunities fund for the disabled.

In light of the huge government surplus, will the minister commit to immediately taking the necessary steps to enable the disabled to continue their integration into the work force?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize and thank the members of the subcommittee of the standing committee for the work that they have done in bringing all government departments together to appreciate the role that they can play in helping to reflect the needs of Canadians with disabilities in our policies and in our services.

I am looking forward to responding to the recommendations of the particular subcommittee in the near future. I hope the hon. member will continue to work with us as we focus on Canadians with disabilities ensuring that we have policies of inclusion and not of exclusion.

[Translation]

Mrs. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are in the process of doing. There is an urgent problem in Quebec at the present time.

CAMO has applied for funding for the opportunity fund on several occasions, but the answer that was due in mid-October has still not been given.

Oral Questions

Is the minister aware that, if the government does not come up with the required funding in the very near future, it will be responsible for the demise of a number of organizations devoted to integrating the disabled into the work force because of its carelessness?

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to look at any particular issues the hon. member wants to bring forward with particular projects. I do want to recognize the support that the Bloc is giving for the opportunities fund. It is a fund that has been established to support Canadians with disabilities. It is nice to hear that the Bloc feels that this is a wise investment for all Canadians including those in Quebec.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, farm families in my riding of Dauphin—Swan River continue to call me to say they are going broke. Banks are foreclosing on farms daily in western Canada.

The new money unveiled is nothing more than an attempt to save face. Fifty-nine per cent of Manitoba farmers who applied for AIDA were rejected. Close to 3,000 claims remain unprocessed.

How can the minister of agriculture assure farmers that the new money will get off the cabinet table and on to the farm kitchen table?

Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that all of the money will go through the process and the farmers will get it. I also remind the hon. member that the 1998 and 1999 AIDA program with the contributions of the federal and provincial governments will bring \$580 million to Saskatchewan farmers in addition to the safety net dollars that are there and some \$220 million to Manitoba farmers.

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government is responsible for the RCMP funding crisis. The government ordered the long overdue RCMP pay raise to be taken from an existing limited budget and the RCMP had to cut service in a number of essential areas to compensate. We have now learned that a lack of funding is preventing the annual testing of members in the proper use of their firearms.

The largest RCMP detachment in Canada is in my riding and my constituents are fed up with this.

My question is for the solicitor general. How much longer is the government prepared to jeopardize the safety of police officers and Canadians?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe anyone in the House would question the competence of the RCMP. For my hon. colleague's information, 94% of the officers who were involved in the test passed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUDGET SURPLUS

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, between now and 2003, the federal government will be slashing over \$30 billion in transfers to the provinces to fund higher education, health care and income security.

Now that he has surpluses coming out his ears, will the Minister of Finance make a commitment to reinstate the social transfers so the provinces may provide their residents with proper services?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to listen to the Bloc Quebecois critic today, in the light of what Mr. Bouchard said.

This summer, at the first ministers meeting, Mr. Bouchard joined with the other premiers in supporting our 50:50 formula. If Mr. Bouchard supports this formula under which we agreed to cut taxes, reduce the debt and invest in the interests of all Canadians, why does the Bloc Quebecois persist in asking such questions?

• (1135)

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, why is the Bloc Quebecois persisting? Because this government does nothing, and there are problems in the schools, in the hospitals and in the most disadvantaged families.

Will this government understand that this would take less than a fifth of the huge surpluses expected over the next five years to turn the situation around in the hospitals, in education and with those who are most disadvantaged in society? Do they understand that, or are they going to continue to play deaf?

Mr. Roy Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is incredible that the Bloc Quebecois is talking about news like that, when new jobs were created in Quebec in the month of October.

[*English*]

There were 33,000 new jobs in October in the province of Quebec.

If we want to talk about transfers, let us talk about the \$1.8 billion additionally for Quebec via the CHST, \$2.7 billion in the additional CHST transfers, \$750 million a year in tax point increases and \$2.8 billion in additional equalization payments.

PORT OF VANCOUVER

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the lumber industry in British Columbia has been told by its Asian customers that if shipments are delayed out of the port of Vancouver for more than one week, they will find suppliers elsewhere.

By the time the House sits again, the lumber industry's Asian markets may have disappeared. All the labour minister is prepared to do is to sit on the sidelines and watch to see what happens.

Why is the minister gambling with the future of Canada's lumber industry?

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government takes this issue very seriously.

I would tell the member opposite that the employer has invited the employees back to the table. This is a very sensitive situation. To deal in speculation at this point is not productive.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the export of petrochemicals, sulphur, potash, coal and the entire forest industry in B.C. depend on access to our ports.

Clearly the port closure will have a devastating impact on western and national economies. Foreign buyers will be forced to look elsewhere for suppliers. The Canadian consumer will pay the price for additional shipping charges from American ports.

Will the Minister of Labour act to develop a contingency plan, or will Canadian exporters and consumers be left to pay the price?

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is still time for a negotiated settlement.

I would remind the members opposite that 95% of labour disputes in the last year were settled without work stoppage and without back to work legislation.

This is a sensitive issue. Give the parties time to work it out.

* * *

[Translation]

FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS

Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while Canada, through the Minister for International Trade, wants to champion the participation of civil society in the negotiations on the free trade area of the Americas, we noticed that, at the end of

Oral Questions

the Toronto meeting, NGOs had only had 90 minutes to express their views, while the business sector had had two days.

Why did Canada, which presided the meeting, not deem appropriate to give more time to NGOs and to civil society?

[English]

Mr. Bob Speller (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that Canada was the first country in these meetings to push hard for civil society to be involved. In fact, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, which held hearings across the country over the past couple of years, met with civil society and made strong representations to the Government of Canada, which listened.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Last year less than 14,000 business immigrants came to Canada, yet the minister's projection for this year is even higher. How does the minister intend to attract more skilled business immigrants to Canada?

Ms. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and proud to answer the question.

In the response to the Speech from the Throne, the Prime Minister said that Canada should be the destination, the place to be, in the 21st century.

We are committed to achieving the levels announced, to encouraging the best and brightest from around the world, to streamlining our processing, to using resources and information management. We want to look at innovative programming like temporary workers and foreign student visa programs to encourage them to come to Canada and ultimately decide to emigrate here and help us build a better and more prosperous life for all Canadians.

* * *

• (1140)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the minister of Indian affairs says that new treaties are a better option than court fights when he talks about the Nisga'a.

The neighbouring Gitanyow and Gitksan bands are now claiming that 80% of the 1,930 square kilometres of B.C. given to the Nisga'a under the treaty is their traditional land. They have started legal action against both the government and the Nisga'a.

Oral Questions

How can the government claim success with the Nisga'a treaty when all that it has started is a new round of legal battles?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government stands by the Nisga'a agreement. We have tabled it in the House. The hon. member knows there will be hearings in British Columbia in only a few days and people can make representations on the agreement. The British Columbia legislature has voted on it. We are committed to passing the legislation.

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the supreme court ruling regarding Donald Marshall and native fishing rights has led to chaos on the east coast and uncertainty across the nation.

That is because the judicial ruling is unclear regarding the geographical limitations of the treaty, and rich resources will be affected. The Liberals refuse to ask the courts for clarity. The government chooses not to ask for clarification. It prefers to introduce uncertainty. One has to ask why?

Is it the government's agenda to give natives unlimited access to all natural resources in the country? Is that the agenda?

[Translation]

Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the treaty was properly negotiated and all its clauses were clarified. There was extensive consultation. It is pointless to raise fears that are totally unfounded.

* * *

[English]

HIGHWAYS

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal red book promised to invest in highways but western Canada has hardly seen a cent of federal money. Some 38% of the national highway system is substandard, mostly in the west. Bringing it up to standard would save 247 lives and prevent 16,000 injuries each year.

Every dollar spent fixing the national highway system would save \$2 in health care costs. Surely the Liberal government has a moral obligation to invest in highways so Canadians can drive home safely. Will it commit now to a serious investment in the national highway system?

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two points. First, I point out to the hon. member that the deputy minister of the transportation department has been meeting with counterparts from all the provinces and is working on a national highway policy. The second and most important point is that in the throne speech we indicated

our commitment to the enhancement of the infrastructure in the rural and urban areas of the country.

Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians want more than words from the Liberal government. Even when the government says it will do something, it never follows through. It has not come through with enough emergency aid for farmers. It has not come through for homeless Canadians or children in poverty. It has not come through on cutting the GST.

The Liberal government has neglected the national highway system for so long it will now cost \$13 billion to bring it up to standard. Will the Minister of Transport commit today to invest at least that much? Surely the lives of Canadians are worth it.

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the hon. member that negotiations are progressing. Progress is being made. The future looks very, very bright as far as the infrastructure of our communities is concerned.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, the general manager for CMHC in British Columbia says the corporation knew in 1992 that there was a problem with leaky condos but the corporation still continued to insure leaky condo mortgages which thereby exposed taxpayers to risk. It did not inform consumers who were seeking CMHC backed mortgages.

CMHC has admitted guilt. Is the minister ready to compensate leaky condo owners for this government wrong?

Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the provincial building code sets the standards for proper construction practices that are enforced within provincial jurisdiction. I would like to see which provinces would like all the building codes set by the federal government in Canada. I do not think any province would go along with that.

CMHC provides mortgage insurance to its lenders, not construction advice, nor inspection services.

• (1145)

We have offered \$75 million in loans which Mr. Barrett has not taken up. We have offered a series of RRSP loans, which information has been disseminated very carefully. We have also offered RRAP funds for eligible homeowners in those areas. We have done all that we can do.

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, the \$75 million is at the same rate as a bank loan and they cannot afford that. CMHC knew years ago that consumers in British Columbia were purchasing condominiums that would be worthless in five years but it continued to take money from young families

buying their first homes and from seniors who are now faced with retirement, in poverty and have tens of thousands of dollars in repair bills.

When will the government compensate those victims?

Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the blame where the blame exists. The B.C. government was warned by its own bureaucrats in 1987.

Jim Curry, then the director of the B.C. Building Standards Branch, wrote to different provincial ministers saying "My concerns stem from what appears to be a blind pursuit of energy conservation to the complete exclusion of all else, jeopardizing both the health of occupants and the structural integrity". Mr. Curry wrote this in a 1991 letter to then housing minister, Robin Blencoe.

Why is it that when the provinces get into trouble they go to the government with the deepest pockets and the best management of their budget?

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources has said that with the advance in scientific research and with the introduction of new technologies that Canadians can take advantage of those advances as we face the issue of climate change.

What is the minister doing in practical terms to help Canadians take advantage of these technologies while we face the climate change situation?

Mr. Brent St. Denis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, science-based innovation is a big part of the climate change solution. Canadians are world leaders in making things possible. This is why the federal government has created the technology early action measures or TEAM component of the climate change action fund.

Fifty-six million dollars of seed funding has already leveraged \$433 million of investment, an incredible ratio of 9:1. Companies like Iogen Corporation, Stuart Energy Systems Inc., Powerbase Inc, Hydro-Québec, Arenda Aerospace, B.C. Gas International and many others have taken up the challenge.

There are many good news stories—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lakeland.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Lakeland, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of immigration.

Oral Questions

"Canada's revolving door refugee system is a charade, puts an undue strain on Canadian taxpayers and constitutes a scandalous abuse of our border". These are not my words but the words of federal court judge Donna McGillis. This judge is only telling the minister exactly what she has been told before by many Canadians. Why will she not listen?

Ms. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while not perfect, the refugee determination system in Canada is not charade. I think most Canadians are proud of the fact that we have due process in Canada and that we protect individual rights.

The issue of multiple refugee claims is one that I hope will be discussed and addressed during the legislative review process that parliament is undertaking right now. If the member opposite has any positive ideas I would be happy to hear them.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Minister of Finance announced that employment insurance premiums would be lowered by 15 cents.

I did not see a single Canadian protesting because of employment insurance premiums, but I did see some protesting against Liberal cuts.

My question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development. Will changes be made to the employment insurance program, yes or no?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, employment insurance benefits are a very important part of our infrastructure. They are there for Canadians who had been working and who find themselves temporarily without work. We on this side of the House are very anxious to work with Canadians to ensure that they have jobs, that they have employment.

Today we were very pleased to see that Canada's unemployment numbers are continuing to come down. They are the lowest they have been in a decade at 7.2%. I would also note that for adult women unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1975 at 5.8%.

* * *

● (1150)

FISHERIES

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, at a meeting this week with the legal advisor of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, MPs were told the aboriginal people of

Oral Questions

Atlantic Canada will lay claim to a 50% share of the Atlantic fishery. [English]

Is the minister aware of this position? If he is, does he support the position?

[Translation]

Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the Government of Canada is taking a very close look at these issues, and there is no reason for such fearmongering.

* * *

1906 CENSUS

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, an archaic law is still preventing the people of Quebec and of Canada from having access to the results of the 1906 census and is depriving the university community of historic data.

Will the minister promise to modify this act, already amended in 1918, and lift the restriction on the 1906 census so that historians can gain a better understanding of this period in our history?

[English]

Mr. John Cannis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a well known fact that Statistics Canada, which is an arm's length agency, has a well earned reputation.

In response to the question, we are considering setting up an expert panel of eminent Canadians who would review the implications of releasing historical records right now.

* * *

[Translation]

ELECTIONS IN HAITI

Mr. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Haiti will be holding democratic elections in March of next year. What will the federal government be doing to support this process?

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada, along with its friends in Haiti, is actively supporting the election process now under way. It is anxious to see a parliament restored to Haiti.

This week, the minister was in Haiti, where she announced \$1.5 million in support for the legislative, municipal and territorial elections to be held in that country on March 19 and April 30, 2000.

The minister has also conveyed Canada's encouragement to President René Prével and Prime Minister Jacques-Édouard Alexis during her visit.

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a \$1 billion betrayal of war veterans' trust. In 1990, the government legislated to deny interest on veterans' trust accounts which should have been paid from World War II to 1990. This is gross mismanagement and possibly negligence.

What is the minister going to do to investigate this and correct this wrong?

Hon. George S. Baker (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the bill in question was passed in 1990. There was a clause in the bill that prohibited payments from being made retroactively prior to 1990.

I will just remind the hon. member that in 1990 the party that the hon. member's party wishes to join under the United Alternative was the party in power.

* * *

[Translation]

POLLUTION OF DRINKING WATER

Mr. Ghislain Fournier (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 1998, the Minister of Transport acknowledged responsibility for the contamination of the water table supplying the Plages sector, in Sept-Îles. He indicated on several occasions that the situation would be corrected. Eighteen months have passed and we have yet to hear anything more from him.

My question is for the Minister of Transport. When does the minister plan to remedy the situation?

• (1155)

[English]

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we realize the seriousness of the situation there. It was the Department of Transport that identified it and started the whole process. Work has been done. There have been investigations, studies and commitments to clear up that situation.

We will continue with this progress until the entire problem is solved.

* * *

IMMIGRATION

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

It is really important to clarify why the government is actually condoning the smuggling of children into Canada.

During the gulf war, Masomé Aliabadi was separated from her children. It took her two years to find out where her children were. They had been smuggled into Canada and in fact were here on a minister's permit.

It has now been four years that Masomé has been in this country trying to be reunited with her family. She has refugee status in Denmark and her husband is there. She has been obstructed at every turn and she now has leukemia. All she wants is to be with her family and the minister will not allow this.

Since Masomé cannot be returned with her children to Denmark, will the minister at least let the father come to Canada to help her?

Ms. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, I cannot discuss individual cases as a result of privacy laws. If she would like to give me a written consent that will allow me to answer those questions in the House of Commons then I would be happy to discuss it here.

I would suggest to her that there are often many details which are unknown to the member. When cases are raised, the whole story is often not told.

I would encourage her to work with the department so that we can explain those issues to her, but I cannot comment on them publicly.

* * *

FISHERIES

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal front benches look like the old Abbott and Costello routine "Who's on First?"

When I asked the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans a question he sat on his hands, kept his mouth shut and did not stand up to answer the question.

Does he support the aboriginal claim to a 50% share of the Atlantic fishery? I will remind him that he is meeting at 12.30 with the leadership of the Atlantic fishery. Who is going to represent him there, the Minister of Health or somebody else?

Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty obvious that if the hon. member would put his questions clearly we would know who he was talking about. His question was so murky that nobody understood what he was talking about.

If he is talking about the aboriginal fishery, the hon. member clearly knows that we have set up a federal representative. They are talking to him. The only solution we have heard from members of the Conservative Party is to go back and use the notwithstanding clause. That is the most ridiculous thing I have heard. They should go back and learn that we cannot do that.

Oral Questions

THE SENATE

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Alberta government is preparing a referendum to mandate Senate elections.

Last year the supreme court ruled that the federal government must negotiate with a province that votes in favour of a clear constitutional question. We should keep in mind that the Prime Minister needs no constitutional amendment to appoint an elected senator.

When Alberta holds its referendum, will the Prime Minister respect Albertans and the supreme court by appointing our elected senator?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, the hon. member has not correctly stated what the supreme court held.

Second, I do not know why Albertans would want the Prime Minister to appoint somebody for life. The big flaw in the Reform position is that if the Prime Minister appointed somebody, that person would be there until age 75. That is not democratic.

We would have had a truly reformed elected Senate if members of the Reform Party had not caused the defeat of the Charlottetown agreement. If we do not have an elected Senate today, it is clearly on their shoulders. They ought to admit it and stop raising these weird questions.

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[Translation]

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Mrs. Madeleine Dalfond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today the employees of CAMO are getting their termination notices. The minister's compassion is not sufficient.

Can the Minister of Human Resources Development make an immediate commitment to put the necessary funding into the opportunities fund in order to keep these people employed until the next budget?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of this concern and the department is working on it.

* * *

● (1200)

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the hon. Clint Dunford, Minister of Human Resources and Employment for the province of Alberta.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[Translation]***WAYS AND MEANS**

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 83(1), I have the honour to lay upon the Table a notice of ways and means motion to amend the Excise Act and the Income Tax Act, along with explanatory notes.

I ask that you designate an order of the day for the consideration of the motion.

* * *

*[English]***COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 109, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, copies of the government's response to the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans entitled "The Seal Report", presented to the House on June 9, 1999.

INDUSTRY

Mr. John Cannis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 109, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the 19th report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, entitled "Research Funding—Strengthening the Sources of Innovation".

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Derek Lee (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 four petitions.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INDUSTRY

Mr. Ian Murray (Lanark—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Industry concerning its order of reference from the House of

Commons of Tuesday, November 2, 1999, in relation to Bill C-4, an act to implement the agreement among the Government of Canada, Governments of Member States of the European Space Agency, the Government of Japan, the Government of the Russian Federation, and the Government of the United States of America concerning co-operation on the civil international space station and to make related amendments to other acts.

The committee reports the bill with one amendment.

* * *

MANITOBA CLAIM SETTLEMENTS IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (for the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-14, an act respecting an agreement with the Norway House Cree Nation for the settlement of matters arising from the flooding of land, and respecting the establishment of certain reserves in the province of Manitoba.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill is in the same form as Bill C-56 was in the first session of this parliament. In accordance with a special order of the House of October 14, 1999, I request that the bill be reinstated at the same stage that it had reached at the time of prorogation.

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

[Translation]

The Speaker: The Chair is of the opinion that this bill is in the same form and at the same stage as Bill C-56 was, at the time the first session of the 36th Parliament was prorogued.

[English]

Accordingly, pursuant to order made Thursday, October 14, 1999, the bill is deemed read the second time, and referred to a committee, considered by a committee and reported without amendment.

(Bill deemed read the second time, referred to a committee, reported without amendment)

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● (1205)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS ACT

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-310, an act to amend the Statutory Instruments Act (disallowance procedure for statutory instruments).

He said: Mr. Speaker, this enactment would establish a statutory disallowance procedure that would be applicable to all statutory instruments subject to review and scrutiny by the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations.

In doing so, this enactment would ensure that parliament would have the opportunity to disallow any statutory instrument made pursuant to authority delegated by parliament or made by or under the authority of the cabinet. This would bring us in line with the standard practice used by the rest of the Commonwealth.

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

* * *

PLAIN LANGUAGE ACT

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-311, an act to promote the use of plain language in federal statutes and regulations.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that many members of the House, and perhaps all members of the House, have from time to time been asked by constituents to provide copies of bills. Some of them are very complicated and lengthy; for example, Bill C-2, which is presently before the House.

The purpose of this bill would be to get those bills into plain language that the folks who vote for us can actually understand, and which would make it clear to the courts that we do not want judicial activism.

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

* * *

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA ACT

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-312, an act to amend the National Archives of Canada Act and the Statistics Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this enactment is to mandate the chief statistician of Canada to transfer to the national archivist of Canada all census information that has been collected since the 1906 census and information that will be collected in every future census. Such transfer is currently prohibited. The national archivist of Canada may make such information available to the public for research and statistical purposes, provided that 92 years have elapsed since its collection.

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

* * *

VIA RAIL COMMERCIALIZATION ACT

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-313, an act respecting the commercialization of VIA Rail Canada Inc.

He said: Mr. Speaker, my bill is very simple. It concerns the privatization of VIA Rail. VIA Rail sold a part of its company to the private sector and then years later proceeded to try to compete

Routine Proceedings

with it. It is subsidized to the rate of over \$500,000 a day, 365 days a year.

If it is going to use taxpayer money, it is time it was privatized, met good commercial standards and either run on its own merit or, if necessary, shut down and other companies which are more equipped to deal with good private sector practices could take over, as has been done by the Rocky Mountaineer in British Columbia.

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

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• (1210)

FIREARMS ACT

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-314, an act to amend the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code (no registration of firearms that are not restricted or prohibited firearms).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the firearms registration legislation, when it was passed, had two parts. One was the registration of long guns, the other was new measures to deal with the criminal misuse of firearms.

My bill would simply deal with the first part, the registration of long guns. Few people see any advantage to this. It is incredibly costly. It is causing all kinds of bureaucratic problems. The money which the system costs could be more effectively spent on such things as better policing, better equipment for the police, DNA data banks and many other things.

It is a phenomenal waste of money. Let us spend taxpayers' money wisely. We cannot prevent crime by hassling law-abiding citizens.

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

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PETITIONS

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of a number of Canadians, including those from my riding of Mississauga South. The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that the consumption of alcoholic beverages may cause health problems, and specifically that fetal alcohol syndrome and alcohol related birth defects are 100% preventable by avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

The petitioners therefore call upon parliament to mandate health warning labels on the containers of alcoholic beverages to caution expectant mothers and others of the risks associated with alcohol consumption.

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THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Lakeland, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to present a petition on behalf of constituents who believe that the reference to God should remain in the preamble of the charter of rights and freedoms because the preamble acts as a foundation to the charter and subsequent sections are based on facts set forth in the preamble.

The petitioners therefore petition and pray that parliament oppose any amendments to the charter of rights and freedoms or any other legislation which would provide for the exclusion of the reference to the supremacy of God in our constitution or in legislation.

THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been very busy. I actually have 15 petitions. However, for the sake of brevity, I have grouped them into five groups. I will be extremely brief in introducing the petitions in their particular grouping.

The first group is similar to the petition just presented. My constituents ask that parliament not amend either the charter of rights and freedoms or the national anthem to remove the name of God.

MARRIAGE

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents have put together a petition which calls on parliament not to accept a redefinition of the term “spouse” that would lead to it including same sex couples.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the third group deals with the issue of child pornography. The petitioners call on parliament, at the earliest possible opportunity, to invoke section 33 of the charter of rights and freedoms, the notwithstanding clause, to overturn the ruling that has been very distasteful for many in British Columbia.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the fourth group of petitions is rather thick and deals with immigration. The petitioners call on parliament to enact changes to Canada’s immigration laws to allow the deportation of obvious and blatant abusers of the system. They also ask that claimants demonstrate through identification documentation or other means that they face genuine political persecution.

• (1215)

FIREARMS

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, ironically on the day that I put in my private

member’s bill that deals with the firearms requirements, the final petition I am presenting also concerns firearms. The petitioners call on parliament to repeal the act respecting firearms and other weapons and to replace it with legislation that deals specifically with criminals instead of law-abiding citizens.

The Speaker: As a normal rule, we only have a maximum of five, but the House seemed receptive today so I thought I would let the hon. member give all his petitions before the break.

THE SENATE

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, NDP): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is an honour to present a petition on behalf of a number of constituents who give a long list of reasons that they do not like the Senate. I will not go into the details as I have presented these in previous petitions. Basically they are calling upon the House of Commons to take whatever measures are necessary in order to abolish the present Senate.

* * *

[*Translation*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Derek Lee (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

MUNICIPAL GRANTS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-10, an act to amend the Municipal Grants Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was saying that in a civilized society, when a municipality develops an area or a street, or rebuilds infrastructures such as water or sewer pipes that are obsolete, blocked or broken, it is the abutting owners, that is the people living on either side of the street, who pay for such works.

However, the federal government is no ordinary citizen, even though it uses such infrastructures. Take, for example, a federal pier. Piers are huge things, even small ones. If a pier, a airport

facility or something similar is located across from a federal lot or on it, there are astronomical costs involved just to go by the government's facilities, but the government refuses to pay.

The government claims that these services are not for its servicing and does not want to contribute. In the bill, the government declines any responsibility regarding the payment of what is normally paid by abutting owners in the case of ports or national airports. As is always the policy with this government, the little guy the one who ends up paying. The little guy is the one who subsidizes the federal government and its facilities. And this is profoundly unfair.

Clearly this government is past master at the art of getting the most disadvantaged to pay. Employment insurance was mentioned earlier. This cannot go on indefinitely. As we say in more colloquial terms, "the government is fouling its own nest", and in the end, sooner or later, it will pay.

Let us take the example of its cutting its transfers to the provinces, notwithstanding the expected profits, the expected surpluses of \$95 billion in the next five years. The government cut transfers to the provinces for health care. In Quebec, we are told that the figures are hard to grasp, but over the past five years, it is something like \$7.5 billion or thereabouts. And it is the seniors who are suffering the most as the result of these cuts.

• (1220)

As we know, seniors tend to support the party currently in power. They are hurting themselves and do not seem to realize it. The time for the government to be taking people and seniors for granted because it is the federal government and Liberal to boot is past. It thinks everything is automatic, that seniors will vote for this government. Unfortunately for the government, this is not always true, and these people are beginning to realize that this government, with its policies, is picking on the neediest, and they are often seniors, unfortunately.

Bill C-10—we are not going to quibble about it—is even better than what we used to have, except that the minister should perhaps go back to his drawing board and, in so far as possible, try to eliminate the discretionary power he is being given. We know all about ministerial discretion—wisdom is not always the result when the minister exercises his discretion. The door is often opened to criticism and, even more often, to charges of political scheming.

We are told that our courts are backlogged. It is up to the lawmakers to do everything possible to ensure that laws are as clear as possible, so that challenges are kept to a strict minimum. Eliminating court backlogs and doing their job of drafting policies that are models of clarity, which Bill C-10 unfortunately is not, is how the lawmakers can help society. The Bloc Quebecois is still going to support this bill, however.

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The Minister of Public Works' press release put it this way "Modernized Municipal Grants Act Improves Fairness of Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes". I would have said the opposite.

The government has to realize that its very presence in a municipality generates costs for the whole community that it is not prepared to assume. Why do the federal government and Her Majesty not behave like good citizens?

It seems to me that their primary concern ought to be projecting the image of a good citizen, one that pays its way in society and gives the municipalities their due. Federal buildings on provincial land also benefit from services, particularly in recent years when the government emblazons every federal building or office with a huge Canadian flag. It is all very well to seek visibility, but the government should, in my opinion, start with paying its dues.

The Bloc Quebecois is probably going to vote for this bill, but we will have questions for the minister when it is referred to a committee.

Mention is made of extensive consultations, but the Union des municipalités du Québec, one of those consulted, complains of the very tight deadline. The bill was introduced barely a week ago, and its full impact cannot be gauged within a few days. Far more time than that is needed.

• (1225)

We ask the minister, when the bill goes to a committee, to show some public spirit and perhaps bring before the committee some amendments to take away the minister's discretionary power, which does not augur well.

[*English*]

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to enter into the debate on Bill C-10.

I know from the investigation I have done that this bill comes to us as a result of two years of exhaustive consultations with various parties, most significantly the Federation of Canadian Municipalities which is the organization that represents municipal governments. There were many compelling issues which it had to address. From what I can understand the consultation process went very smoothly and people were well satisfied.

That satisfaction ended rather quickly when the FCM felt quite strongly that this bill was introduced too quickly. The FCM was not given the time to review the contents of Bill C-10 and have further consultation with its members. In other words, we are dealing with this bill now without having given the FCM the opportunity to do a

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broad consultation with its membership to look at the actual document.

We would hope that after the FCM has had the time to open this document and look at the various clauses that it would meet many of the issues which were identified in the consultation process. I understand that there are many compelling issues because this bill deals with property taxes and we all know how critical property taxes are to municipalities. Taxes are really their only source of revenue. The way property taxes are levied on federal government properties and the way municipalities can collect those taxes is obviously of key and paramount importance to anyone involved in municipal governments.

Property tax is the basis for the major source of revenue for municipal governments. It is the tax base that provides for the provision of municipal services and amenities. It is the capital against which municipal government itself can borrow for various undertakings. Control over property tax and the authority to set taxes from year to year is the only thing which gives municipal councils the ability to function and to flourish and to do their job.

Obviously the FCM took a very keen interest in this issue when the Municipal Grants Act came up for amendment and the consultation period began. It is a mystery as to why we would jeopardize such a co-operative undertaking as the consultation period by bringing the bill forward now without giving the Federation of Canadian Municipalities time to consult one more time. We should have given it time to ask: Is the document the way we want it? Have all the bases been touched? Is the bill going to give satisfaction to the many concerns we have regarding municipal taxation et cetera?

The Municipal Grants Act and various other acts establishing crown corporations provide for federal payments in lieu of taxes. They are called PILTs, payments in lieu of taxes. They are based on local property tax rates and the assessed values of federal properties. That is pretty straightforward. I did not have too much trouble following up to that point. It does get rather complex though. We are dealing with a very complex set of issues when dealing with the assessment of property taxes on properties owned by the federal government.

Most people do not realize that the federal government only began paying property taxes to municipalities in 1950. Until 1950 the federal government did not pay property taxes to municipalities for the properties it owned. It was only after very aggressive lobbying and representation by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities that it undertook and finally succeeded in having the federal government pay its fair share for the properties which it owned within the municipal regions around the country.

The purpose in making PILTs is to ensure that the federal government meets its financial obligations to those municipal governments where federal properties are located. In this way the principles of fairness and equity can be upheld.

• (1230)

That is the goal. That is the objective. In my conversations with the FCM that is all it really wanted, to have the principles of fairness and equity upheld. I am hoping to demonstrate how the federal government breached that noble aspiration. It really failed to be fair and reasonable. The principles of fairness and equity were not upheld in 1992.

In 1992 the federal government paid \$426 million on departmental properties to the municipalities, a fair whack of dough by anyone's account. In addition, federal Crown corporations responsible to the treasury board paid another \$175 million.

It seemed all would be well with the land and people would be generally satisfied to receive payments to offset their own costs in running their municipalities. However, in the last month of 1992, the federal government imposed a two year freeze on property tax payments. This is a luxury the federal government has. Arbitrarily, out of the blue, the federal government simply said to the municipalities that it did not want to pay any more property taxes because it was in sort of a budget crisis or a deficit situation. As one way to reduce its deficit it said that it would not pay its taxes to them.

Now there is a concept. I wonder how long we would get away with making a statement like that to the federal government. If my personal household finances were in disarray, which in fact they are, I cannot say to the federal government that I will not pay my taxes for two years until I catch up on my other obligations. It would not work.

We can see why the municipalities were very concerned that the federal government had the control, power and authority to arbitrarily and unilaterally announce that it would not pay property taxes any more. When the Municipal Grants Act came up for review there was a great deal of attention paid from across the country.

There was no prior consultation with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities or with any municipal governments, many of which already had their budgets prewritten for 1993. They had already planned on a certain amount of money coming in during 1992 that they were to spend in 1993 when their intergovernmental partner arbitrarily announced it would not give them the money. Understandably it caused some furor across the country.

This freeze came just weeks after the Federation of Canadian Municipalities finished participating in a two year evaluation of the municipal grants program by the department of public works. It had just gone through a long, drawn out consultation with the municipalities. Again, much in the same way it happened here, the federal government arbitrarily stopped the consultations and did something that was entirely negative.

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The two year evaluation at that time concluded that federal property tax payments represented the government's fair share of local costs as property owner. The freeze was arbitrary. No concern over levels of property tax payments was expressed in the evaluation.

An important principle behind the federal payment of property taxes is that municipal governments and local ratepayers should not be at a disadvantage by having federal properties on land that could otherwise be taxed by a private sector owner at a better rate.

In other words, it should not be a liability to have federal government buildings within municipalities, but in fact it is if they have to forgo revenue. If they cannot charge the federal government tax at the same mill rate they would be able to charge a private sector company on that land, surely the municipalities are at a real disadvantage.

We must structure the Municipal Grants Act in a way that people do not view having the government department as a liability, especially one which takes up a large area. That is land which could otherwise be taxed at a reasonable rate of return and the municipality could prosper and function.

All properties should be taxed equally regardless of ownership. That is the principle we want to see reflected in Bill C-10. There is some concern within the Canadian Federation of Municipalities that may not be the case. It really has not had time to review Bill C-10 because it just showed up on its doorstep a few days ago and we are debating it in the House of Commons already. There is a great deal of concern out there.

As the largest property owner and taxing authority in the country, the Government of Canada set a dangerous example when it declared a freeze on property tax payments to some 2,200 municipal governments with federal properties in their municipalities.

I know the federal government owns 50,000 buildings across Canada. Actually I have heard a figure as high as 68,000 buildings across Canada. That is an awful lot of property on which it should be paying taxes at a normal mill rate to municipalities. They should celebrate when a government department wants to move to their area. They should not have to be suspect and worried about a net loss by hosting the federal government in their communities.

• (1235)

The FCM, Public Works Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat formed a joint technical committee on PILTs in the spring of 1993 to look at options for long term improvements in arrangements for federal payment of property taxes and to consider the implementation of the freeze.

Through its political and technical representations, FCM succeeded in having the federal government interpret the freeze on departmental properties such that it met all increases in PILTs during the first year of the freeze. There was some satisfaction. Some very in-depth negotiations went on and some very capable people on the part of the FCM came forward to represent, thankfully, the people who live in the municipalities.

We have to remember that municipal governments are really the level of government most close to us. They take care of our immediate needs in terms of road repair, garbage collection, fire departments and cats stuck in a tree. They are the ones who will help.

It is very important that they are adequately funded because people often question what gets done with the taxes they send to the federal government. Often the federal government is dealing with things that are at a level three steps removed from the ordinary Canadian. It is very important what happens to the PILTs. What the FCM does with its PILTs is very important to Canadians.

The FCM made federal property tax payments a major issue in its call to action during the 1993 election campaign. I dare say it played a big role in the 1993 election campaign.

We all know what happened in 1993. The government of the day was humiliated. It was absolutely dismantled. It went from a couple of hundred seats down to two. It was partly this campaign from municipalities, people who had direct contact with their people, that probably led to that. They were so dissatisfied, in fact so horrified by the arbitrary freeze of their property tax payments, that they were angry at the government of the day in such a way that I believe they did help shape the results of that 1993 election campaign.

As a result of the strong municipal support for FCM's 1993 election campaign on PILTs, the newly elected government committed that all increases on PILTs, on departmental properties, would be met for the second and final year of the freeze. They were getting some satisfaction from the newly elected government after the 1993 election.

They are disappointed now, though, that the newly elected government that took power after 1993 is acting in the same kind of arbitrary way. It is not dealing with the monetary issue, but it is arbitrarily ceasing the very productive consultation process and showing up with the document we call Bill C-10 without giving the FCM a real opportunity to screen it, to test it and to make sure the language is such that it will meet the needs and very real concerns we see in the position paper.

We all know that acts do not get opened for amendment every day. It is very difficult. Once we have an act open for amendment, that is the opportunity to amend any section of the act. We are not limited to the one or two specific reasons the government opened it

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up. We might want the opportunity to make an amendment to a completely different section. We want to make sure to get it right because we do not get chances every day to amend legislation.

I strongly voice my concern too. Why did the government stop listening? When things were going so well and it looked like some co-operative settlement might be arrived at on what to do with the Municipal Grants Act, why did it then begin to act with such a heavy hand and arbitrary way?

As a result of the strong municipal support for the FCM's campaign, again the newly elected government committed that all increases on PILTs would be met for the second and final year of the freeze. The freeze on crown corporations was lifted outright for the second year. Moreover, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and the President of the Treasury Board agreed in 1995 to negotiations with the FCM on longstanding municipal concerns respecting laws and regulations governing PILTs.

• (1240)

I will summarize what we have seen as the real concern through our research on this issue. The real concern is that there should be rules in place in the Municipal Grants Act to ensure that neither party can arbitrarily alter the terms and conditions of the relationship by simply backing out, as we saw in 1992. We also want to make sure the assessment on government buildings is no different from the assessment on private sector buildings.

The predictable consequence of that is that no municipality would want a government department to set up shop in its area because it would be forgoing revenue. Why on earth would a municipality want all that space occupied by a freeloader, one might say? I do not think any responsible municipal government would encourage that.

The rules governing federal payments of property taxes have long been an issue in relations between federal and municipal governments. There is a long history that goes back to 1950 when the federal government did not pay any taxes at all on its buildings. It was only after quite a brouhaha that the FCM got satisfaction and the federal government started paying any taxes whatsoever.

Under the Municipal Grants Act the government is able to set its own assessed values on properties and pay lower property taxes. That is a key point that we would like to see addressed in Bill C-10. The government should not be able to arbitrarily say what it will pay per year for occupying a couple of acres of land. That is a big brother type approach that is outdated and obsolete. It does not speak well of the type of intergovernmental relations we would want to see.

Currently federal reviews of property values frequently lead to the retroactive reduction of PILTs, causing severe financial disruption to municipal governments. I use the example of 1992 where

2,200 municipalities already had their budgets set for 1993 only to lose their main source of revenue, the federal government tax transfer or the payment of property taxes from the federal government to the municipalities. We cannot have that.

The only recourse of the municipalities is to the municipal grants review committee comprised of appointees of the minister. If they have a grievance about the way property tax values were assessed, their only avenue of recourse is to a group of the minister's own appointees. That is not in the interest of basic fairness or natural justice either. I cannot see how that is fair. I know that is one of the issues that is addressed in Bill C-10. They want an appeals board or an advisory committee that will be structured in a more fair and democratic way.

One thing I will certainly say about the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is that it is nothing if not democratic. It has great consultation with its people. It does not move forward on an issue until it has done broad consultation across the country. It truly builds consensus on issues before it makes an announcement. Hence its frustration that it is not able to have that level of consultation about Bill C-10.

After heavy and long drawn out negotiations in 1995 there was a consensus report of the joint technical committee on PILTs to which I referred. Many of the issues I started my remarks with stem from that report, such as the critical importance of having a guaranteed stream of taxation revenue that they do not have to worry about being arbitrarily interrupted by one party and the fact that property taxes should be set at the same level for government buildings as they are for private sector buildings to avoid the bizarre spectre of losing revenue by having a government department set up shop in a community.

With those few reservations and criticisms our party is reviewing Bill C-10 with the guidance and direction of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. If it is satisfied with the bill we will do what we can to help get it through to give the federation the security it wants on at least the issues addressed in Bill C-10.

• (1245)

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak on Bill C-10, the proposed changes to the Municipal Grants Act, or what will become the payments in lieu of tax act.

This might not be the most exciting legislation to be debated in the House this fall. Discussion of process and the internal mechanics of government are unlikely to make coverage of parliamentary debates one of the top rated shows on Canadian television, but it is certainly important legislation.

I will begin by bringing to the attention of members of parliament a concern expressed to me about the breakneck speed this

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legislation is being rushed through parliament. From there I want to review some of the history of the legislation, both the background and some of the most recent problems that have led to this new bill.

From there, I will present a brief overview of the bill from my own perspective and then dive into an analysis of some of the changes proposed, particularly with respect to the dispute advisory panel.

Finally, I will give hon. members my critique of the bill and I will try to persuade them that the legislation needs more work.

Yesterday, in conversations my staff had with representatives from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities or FCM, it was made abundantly clear that municipalities and their organizations do not appreciate having this legislation rammed down their throats.

Municipalities were not given any advance notice that this legislation would be introduced. No information, no background notes, no news releases, no summaries or other materials were sent out to municipalities. They have also not had time to study the bill and respond to it. In the case of FCM, it has not had time to consult its members on the bill.

This begs the question: If this is such a great piece of legislation, then what is the rush? We all know from experience that when legislation is rushed through the House, mistakes often get overlooked. Quick legislation is bad legislation.

As a member of the House and as a member of the committee that will attempt to clean up any mistakes in the bill, I call upon the government to allow more time for the House and the standing committee to work on the bill and more time for municipalities and other stakeholders to ensure the legislation will correct past problems without creating new ones.

Speaking of past problems, the very fact that we have a Municipal Grants Act is a bit of an absurdity of history in that the federal government does not officially recognize the existence of municipalities. Towns, cities and local service districts are not mentioned in the constitution. They have no official mandate. They are entirely creations of provincial governments. Furthermore, the federal government has a constitutional exemption from paying local taxes.

The problem is that the federal government, which owns property in almost 2,000 municipalities across the country, benefits from all kinds of municipal services such as water and sewage, roads and other infrastructure. Those services are not free. In spite of its constitutional exemption, the federal government should pay for those services like every other good property owner.

This paradox was resolved in 1950 with the passage of the first Municipal Grants Act, which has been updated and revised many times, most recently in 1980. Since 1980, there have been a number of issues pop up that the current legislation does not and cannot resolve. This is the basis of the bill we have before us today.

For example, a couple of years ago, I remember that there was a dispute between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and local municipalities as to whether the department had to make a payment in lieu of taxes on wharves.

Not too long ago, the federally owned Aeroports de Montréal protested a property evaluation by the city of Dorval. Ottawa re-evaluated the land at \$100 million less than the property assessment and told the city that if it did not like it, it could contest the figure before the federal government appointed tribunal.

In my own province of New Brunswick, the provincial department of municipalities estimates how much municipalities will receive from federal payments in lieu of taxes and pays them that amount. The department then goes about collecting the payments from the federal government. However, it is only some time later that the federal government actually pays the amount due and in some cases the payment has taken years.

In 1995 the city of Halifax yelled foul when after increasing the evaluation of the Citadel for \$15 million to \$36 million, the federal government reduced its evaluation from \$15 million to \$1.2 million. Short of going to court, the two governments had no way of resolving this dispute.

• (1250)

In 1992, the Government of Quebec gave municipalities the right to replace all or part of their business occupancy taxes with a new real property levy. The result was a sudden \$41 million increase in federal payments to Quebec municipalities.

In Ontario, the provincial government eliminated its business occupancy tax. To make up for lost revenue, Ontario municipalities increased their commercial real property tax rates by an average of about 45%. These reforms cost the federal government as much as \$100 million a year more in payments in lieu of taxes and in leasehold occupancy costs. Furthermore, crown corporations are paying approximately \$30 million more.

As well, a freeze on the payments from 1993 to 1995 made municipal governments distrustful of the federal government and made the current system unreliable.

Clearly, it is time to update the legislation to deal with these problems that have presented themselves in recent years.

The bill before us today proposes changes in a number of areas. The bill would change the name of the legislation from the

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Municipal Grants Act to the payments in lieu of tax act, while references in the legislation to “grants” will be placed with the word “payments”. This is to better reflect the nature of the program and the relationship between the Government of Canada as a property owner and Canadian and municipal governments.

The bill proposes introducing compensation for late payments by the federal government to municipalities. It would also give the authority to Ottawa to make payments when tenants on federal property default on their local tax bills. These are important changes under which the federal government accepts a position much closer to that of other property owners regarding its tax obligations.

It would establish a dispute advisory panel under the act with a minimum of two board members from each province and territory. The advisory panel would recommend solutions to the minister when disputes arise between municipalities and the federal government over the appropriate amount of payments.

Outdoor swimming pools, golf course improvements, outdoor theatres, residential driveways and employee parking improvements would be added to the definition of federal property and the bill would clarify the wording of the act as it relates to other non-building structures.

As well, Bill C-10 proposes to improve the predictability of payments for municipalities by clarifying how payments are calculated for federal farm property, how deductions are calculated when municipalities are unable or unwilling to provide the federal property with equivalent services to those received by similar private property or structures. It will also clarify the status of Parks Canada assets as federal property.

Although the bill does introduce some important changes, there is one important area where I have strong reservations. Other than in clause 4 of the bill, which states that the intent of the act, and which I think is a waste of space as it accomplishes nothing, I would say that 90% of the bill is an improvement over the existing legislation. The important exception is in clause 14, which would establish a new disputes advisory panel.

There are two major difficulties with this proposed new panel, the first being one of fairness and balance and the second being the composition of the panel.

Let us imagine a court trial in which the defendant got to pick his own jury, pay the jury and install himself as the final judge with no chance of appeal. How do we think the defendant would do? I suspect he would win just about every case. Would anyone describe the system as fair? I do not think so.

Yet this is exactly the kind of dispute settlement panel that the minister has proposed in Bill C-10.

Differences in opinion often arise between municipalities and the federal government over how much the crown owes for payments in lieu of taxes. These disputes are often based on the evaluation of a property or the definition and classification of a property.

What the minister has proposed is that he should establish an advisory panel composed of a minimum of 2 persons for each province and territory for a total of at least 26 members. The members would be chosen only by the minister. The minister will decide how qualified the members of the panel need to be. He will pay them \$125 an hour plus expenses and they will report only to him.

The minister can fire any or all members of the board at any time for any reason if, for example, he disagrees with their decision. He can completely ignore any decisions of the panel if it suits his purpose and his decision is absolutely final. There is no appeal.

• (1255)

Not a bad deal. So much for fairness.

On issues related to the composition of the panel, let us look at clause 14 in more detail. As I have said, subclause 1 proposes a panel consisting of no less than two members from every province and territory with relevant knowledge and experience. My first reaction was that once the bill passes, there are going to be 26 very happy Liberals across the country who will have brand new patronage jobs. After all, \$125 per hour plus expenses is a pretty good day.

At present, the minister has an informal advisory committee that has a chairperson and two members from the three provinces where there are currently outstanding disputes with municipalities, namely in Alberta, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. On any particular dispute, the two members from that province and the chairperson meet to resolve the dispute. Once all the disputes have been dealt with, the committee of three is disbanded. In other words, this is a temporary committee brought together and paid on an as needed basis, and when the job is done everyone goes home.

What the minister is proposing is that we will replace this as needed committee of 3 with a permanent panel of 26 members or better. My question is that, for example, if no payment disputes arise in the territory of Nunavut in the next 30 years, why do we need to have at least 2 permanent members from Nunavut on the committee before they have anything to do? The same is true of any other province or territory. Why should the government undertake a rigorous search process and ask professional people to serve on a panel and then never give them anything to do? Would it not be better to wait until a dispute arises?

It is interesting to note that there is no upper limit on the number of persons who can be appointed to this panel.

Subclause 1 also does not define what is meant by “relevant knowledge or experience”. I assume this is also left up to the

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minister. There are several professional bodies of appraisers in the country, such as the Appraisal Institute of Canada and L'Ordre des Évaluateurs agréés du Québec. I do not think it would be too much to require members of the panel to have some sort of professional designation. Otherwise, we leave the system open for abuse and we start to see such things as a panel full of members who have no qualifications to hold office other than the fact that they are Liberal Party members or once gave money to the Liberal Party.

Subclause 2 sets out the mandate of the panel as being to advise the minister on disputes over payments with municipalities. However, there is nothing in the bill to indicate how the minister would handle potential conflicts of interest where panel members are concerned.

For example, it is reasonable to assume that since many of the experts on valuation of property work for or with municipalities, that at some point there will be panel members who might be employed with municipalities. How is the panel supposed to conduct itself if a dispute arises with a municipality, and one or more of the panel members who will adjudicate the dispute actually works for that same municipality?

Similarly, under subclause 5, the bill indicates members of the panel may be employed in the Public Service of Canada. What would be the approach if a dispute arises concerning the same federal department? It is clear that the legislation must indicate how the panel would deal with conflicts and potential conflicts of interest.

Subclause 3 sets out the duties of the chairperson as supervising and directing the operation and functioning the advisory panel. It does not, however, give a clear indication of the workload of the chairperson. Is this a full time job? Apparently, if the chairperson picks up the phone to call a panel member for two minutes, he or she can then bill the taxpayers for \$125 plus expenses for an hour's work. These things need to be clarified.

Going back to subclause 1, it says that members of the panel serve at the pleasure of the minister. This is a legal term meaning that at any time and for any reason the minister can fire any or all members of the panel. As a result, panel members may be reluctant to give independent advice or to reach a decision on a dispute that they feel the minister might disagree with.

I would much rather see the phrase "good behaviour" used as it gives a much greater degree of independence to panel members to reach independent decisions without fear of repercussion from the minister. I feel that this would give better balance to the panel's decision and result in better settlements for taxpayers.

I will be working with municipalities and municipal organizations over the next two weeks in an effort to find areas where the bill needs to be fixed. I will also be looking for solutions to the problems I have enumerated today.

• (1300)

Looking at the bill in its entirety, it is generally an improvement over the present act, legislation of 1980. It goes a long way toward addressing some of the problems that have cropped up in recent years.

However, it is clear that this bill still needs a lot of work. I look forward to fixing the bill in committee. The bill should not be defeated at this point because it is imperfect. Nevertheless, the problems need to be dealt with.

My party and I call upon other members of the House to support the bill at second reading so that we can get it into committee and hopefully fix some or all of these problems. I also call upon the minister to be open to working with members of the committee to find ways to make the bill work better for him, for his government and for Canadian taxpayers.

Based on how well we do in committee, members of parliament can then decide at third reading if the bill in its final form is worthy of our support.

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to participate in the debate on Bill C-10 since I once held the position of president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

I would like to clear up a misunderstanding that has been presented to the House.

This legislation is something that the FCM has wanted since the arbitrary freeze and the 10% reduction the Tories brought in in December 1992. Two weeks ago federal officials briefed the FCM on the policy initiatives and proposed regulations in the bill. While it is true that the FCM general membership has not had a chance to review the details, the executive director of the FCM and the director of policy have reviewed it. I can say from long experience if there were problems in the bill, I for one would have received a call because I am in constant contact with my municipal colleagues.

This bill is something we have wanted for many years, particularly since the December 1992 announcement by the then Conservative Minister of Finance who brought in the 10% reduction. This is an extremely important bill for municipal governments.

To clarify in terms of how we got to this stage, the Municipal Grants Act and various acts establishing crown corporations provided for federal payments in lieu of taxes, PILTs, based on local property taxes in 1950 following years of persistent representations by the FCM. The purpose of making the PILTs is to ensure that the federal government meets its financial obligations to those municipal governments where federal properties are located. In this way we underline the principles of fairness and equity so that they are upheld.

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In 1992 the federal government paid \$426 million on departmental properties. In addition, federal crown corporations responsible to the treasury board paid \$175 million. In December 1992 the Conservative government imposed a two year freeze on property taxes without any consultation. This was done at a time when many municipal governments had already established their 1993 budgets. The freeze was clearly arbitrary. No concern for any of the levels of property tax payments was expressed when this was done.

An important principle behind federal payment of property taxes is that municipal governments and local taxpayers should not be at a disadvantage for having a federal property in the community which could otherwise be taxed at the applicable rate. All properties should be taxed equally regardless of ownership.

What happened in 1992? The Conservatives imposed a freeze on crown corporations with unfair tax advantages over the private sector competition, at the expense of homeowners and businesses. As the largest property owner and taxing authority in this country, the Canadian government set a dangerous example when it declared a freeze on property taxes to some 2,200 municipal governments with federal properties. This 10% reduction was unacceptable to the municipal leaders and to the general public.

• (1305)

Fortunately in 1993 this government came to power. It sent out an immediate note that it was prepared to work with municipal governments. I would point out that in 1993 it was this government which supported the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in its national infrastructure program. It was this government which supported and has promoted the 20% club, which is to reduce CO₂ emissions by 20% over 10 years. It was this government which supported municipal governments and provided the tools when it came to urban crime and safety issues.

This government has nothing to apologize for on this issue. This government clearly has worked every step of the way with municipal governments to make sure that the legislation which they have been asking for is before the House today.

After the 1993 election the newly elected Liberal government committed that all increases in PILTs on departmental properties would be met for the second and final year of the freeze. The freeze on crown corporations was lifted outright in the second year.

Moreover, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and the President of the Treasury Board agreed in 1995 to negotiations with the FCM on longstanding municipal concerns respecting laws and regulations governing PILTs. Rules governing federal payments respecting law regulations have long been an issue between the federal and municipal governments. 1996-97 was a watershed. The FCM and federal officials had intensive negoti-

ations. My colleague from the New Democratic Party referred to the technical steering committee that was set up. That culminated in an agreement in 1997.

I was present when that agreement was reached. My colleague from Dauphin—Swan River was one who was concerned as well when he was mayor. Issues such as the following ones were agreed to. Interest on late payments would come into effect. There would be improved assurance on payment amounts and greater timeliness of payments. The federal government and crown corporations would begin to make PILTs on property improvements subordinate to buildings commonly found in the private sector, including fencing, paving, sidewalks, et cetera.

I am very pleased that the government has now brought legislation to the House which will modernize the Municipal Grants Act to improve fairness and equity. What is very important to municipal leaders is that we now have predictability of federal payments in lieu of taxes to approximately 2,000 municipal governments.

I congratulate the minister of public works and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for the work they have done over the years which has led to this historic occasion. The legislation has been changed to payments in lieu of taxes. That in itself is an important recognition. The federal government is not giving out grants. It is paying taxes like everyone else. It is no different from anyone else and it is prepared to pay on time like everyone else.

A goodwill clause has been introduced to better reflect the nature of the program and the relationship between the federal government as a property owner and municipal governments. Of particular importance, and what highlights the very positive relationship which has developed since the coming to power of the Liberal government, is that despite recent increases in payments in lieu of taxes brought about by provincial assessment and taxation reform, there is nothing in this legislative package which causes a reduction in the payment to a single municipal government. The government could always appeal its assessment like we can, but it would go through the same process.

• (1310)

I had the opportunity to consult with municipal leaders in my riding during the summer last year. The feedback was extremely positive. Many of the issues raised are now contained in the legislation.

The Minister of Public Works and Government Services has clearly listened. The parliamentary secretary to the minister indicated the minister had 11 consultations around the country. The feedback was extremely positive. The government, rather than imposing freezes or reductions, has been working co-operatively and constructively with municipal governments, particularly with

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the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. I am very delighted to note that many of the issues have been addressed.

The legislation empowers the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to pay at his discretion supplementary amounts when payments are delayed. A dispute advisory panel can be established under the act with expert representation from all provinces and territories to recommend to the minister appropriate solutions for disputes by municipal governments and the department concerning payment accounts. It also commits to meeting municipal payment schedules when information is provided on an equivalent basis to that accorded to taxable persons. There is the introduction of compensation for late payments and authority to make payments when tenants on federal properties default on their tax obligations.

These are important changes under which the government accepts a position much closer to that of other property owners regarding its tax obligations. What a difference seven years makes. This bill marks a turning point in the federal government's relations with municipal governments through co-operation, consultation and respect. These changes confirm a new era.

If there are concerns by the opposition or if some municipal governments look at the bill and want to slightly change it, after this bill is passed at second reading it will go to committee. I presume that is where, if needed, any *i*'s will be dotted or *t*'s will be crossed.

Canada's largest urban centres such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal will benefit significantly from these changes. There will be no more unilateral tax freezes, no more tax reductions by the federal government and no more changes without consultation.

We have to work together remembering that there is only one taxpayer. The goal of the government is very clear. For federal leaders and municipal leaders, it is the same. We have the common goal to serve the taxpayer best.

This bill fulfils the commitment which the government made when it came to power in 1993 having been part of the negotiations from 1993 to 1997. It is a commitment I am very proud of. The government has this legislation before the House.

The FCM was very anxious that this legislation came before the House because it provides the predictability. It provides the fairness. It provides the equity. These are things which those of us who have been involved in this issue for some time have wanted. This legislation recognizes the realities of the 1990s. It is legislation that is modern and reflects the desire of governments to deal with each other in a fair and clear manner.

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from the Liberal Party had a very nice speech. I

have the utmost respect for this gentleman but I have one question. I listened to his speech. He said that this bill will be fully debated in committee. That is exactly what I said in my speech. He is just repeating what I said. I said that our party will support the bill at second reading. We hope that in committee we will be able to bring about the necessary changes so we can support the bill at third reading. If we are not allowed to bring about changes in committee, we will not have a choice but to vote against the bill at third reading.

• (1315)

I was surprised to learn that the hon. member opposite was a former president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. My staff was in contact with people in that organization just yesterday. They are very upset that this bill is being rammed through the House at this time, because there were no consultations.

Would the hon. member agree to give the municipalities more time to look at this piece of legislation in order for them to decide what they agree with or do not agree with? As the former president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, he should know how the municipalities work. The government should have used caution and not moved so fast.

Mr. Bryon Wilfert: Mr. Speaker, I wish my colleague had been here in 1992. With those kinds of comments we might not have had the Tories impose the arbitrary freeze and reduction on municipal governments. Where were our friends in the Tory party in 1992? Unfortunately they were not here, but that is history.

I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the FCM was fully briefed two weeks ago. The president of the FCM will be at committee. There certainly will not be any ramming. I presume there will be full debate. I hope to take part in those discussions. Even though I am not a member of the committee, I intend to show up. This is obviously something that is near and dear not only to my heart but to all colleagues.

We are in agreement. I was very heartened to hear that the member will support this legislation. Unfortunately his predecessors were not as generous or enlightened as the hon. gentleman across the way. I thank him and look forward to his support.

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech of the member for Oak Ridges. When he was president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities he certainly listened well and he did a very good job.

I have a problem with his statement that the government believes in being fair and equitable. How can the federal government see itself as being equal to every other taxpayer in the country when it thinks it should be exempt from paying taxes?

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I contacted people at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities yesterday to talk to them about Bill C-10. To my surprise, they informed me that they had no idea the bill had come back to the House. I know for a fact that it has taken at least three years for the government to take action on some of the recommendations the FCM made to it.

I would like the hon. member for Oak Ridges to respond to the question of fairness and equality as between the federal government and Canadian taxpayers. As well, why was the FCM not informed that the bill would be tabled in the House this week?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague opposite for his questions. I have the greatest respect for him. In our previous lives we used to correspond a lot, but we never actually came face to face until we came to the House. I do not think it was a surprise to either of us that we have a fair number of things in common when it comes to municipal concerns.

• (1320)

First, this legislation will treat the federal government as a taxpayer, just like everyone else. The government will pay on time. It will pay penalties if it does not. The bill will ensure that if there is an assessment question the government will go through the same process as taxpayers go through.

As far as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities is concerned, it was briefed two weeks ago. The minister in June 1998 went to the FCM convention along with the Prime Minister. It is too bad the Leader of the Opposition was not there. He missed a tremendous speech on this issue.

This is what happened. The minister, in consultation with the FCM, in June said to over 2,000 delegates "I want to hear from you", which is why the round tables were set up across the country. I am sure the minister met with mayors and councillors in their ridings to get feedback so that the minister would hear the concerns of the grassroots. That is what happened.

The bill will be going to committee after second reading. I can guarantee members that the president of the FCM will be there and that he will make any comments with regard to anything in the legislation that the FCM may have a question about. But to suggest for a moment that it was not briefed is not the case. I do not know to whom he was speaking at the FCM, but the executive director and the policy director were fully briefed. They knew what was in the bill. Two weeks have gone by and my phone is not broken, but they did not call me.

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I commend the hon. member from Oakville for suggesting that there was

wide consultation, because there was. We all know that. It took a little better than four and a half years to go through the whole process.

The hon. member insisted that people at the FCM were thoroughly briefed on the bill two weeks ago, and that may very well be true. In fact, my consultation with people at the FCM corroborates that indeed they were briefed.

The interesting thing is what happened between the time the FCM people were briefed and the actual presentation of the bill. Clearly the FCM people then had to be advised that there were certain recommendations that were originally proposed to be included in the bill, but were in fact not in the bill. The addition of certain corporations to schedule 4, for example, was deleted.

The other issue is that the panel should have some teeth and that everything should not be at the discretion of the minister.

These recommendations were included in the report of the joint technical committee and the consultations which took place.

If the hon. member is so absolutely convinced that everything is hunky-dory with regard to the FCM and with regard to the briefing, why is it that not all of those things, which apparently he thought they understood, they apparently did not agree with?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert: Mr. Speaker, although I come from the fastest growing community in Canada, Richmond Hill, the riding is Oak Ridges. We have not expanded to Oakville yet, although we are probably working on it, but I do thank the member for that.

The president of the FCM was on Parliament Hill two weeks ago. At that time—

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Nobody is denying that.

Mr. Bryon Wilfert: I appreciate the fact that the hon. member collaborated what I said with regard to the fact that it was consulted.

I do not remember saying that absolutely everything that every municipal government or the FCM wanted was in the bill.

On the one hand we are saying that it took four and a half years to get here. I guess the inference is that the process has been slow. It was deliberately done in a way that got all of the parties to the table, and that concluded in the agreement of 1997. If there was not a federal election in April 1997, the legislation may have been before the House at that time. To reinforce that we were getting it right, we held consultations during the summer of last year.

What we have here is, in general, without question, what the FCM wanted to see. When the bill goes to committee, I am sure that anything that needs to be clarified or added will be dealt with.

• (1325)

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Chair to ensure that I get my full 20 minutes.

Bill C-10, an act to amend the Municipal Grants Act, does not go far enough to ensure that municipalities will be treated fairly and equally by the federal government and crown corporations on the issue of property taxes.

There is no doubt that the minister and crown corporations still retain too much discretionary power. If federal governments, both past and present, really understood and did the right thing, why would we need any kind of legislation regarding the whole issue of the federal government paying taxes?

Canadians all pay taxes. We know what happens if we do not. None of us want to encounter Revenue Canada.

The issue of grants in lieu of taxes goes back many years. Whenever municipal leaders get together, grants in lieu of taxes seems to be a favourite topic.

Despite federal constitutional powers for tax exemption, as we approach the new millennium why does the federal government not operate under the principle of equal and fair treatment when it comes to paying its taxes on federal buildings located in municipal jurisdictions?

I want to say a few words about municipalities. They have been around for a long time in the country, a lot longer than the Canadian federation. Like many of my colleagues in the House, such as the member for Oak Ridges, I was a former municipal mayor before coming to Ottawa. At least 10% of the members of parliament in this House came from a municipality, and there is no doubt that we all know the effects of both federal and provincial downloading on the municipalities, as well as governments not paying their taxes to municipalities.

The federal government needs to pay all of its taxes, period. The federal government should not expect special treatment from the taxpayers. The federal government uses the same services as everyone else. It uses roads, sewage systems, water services, garbage collection and other services.

Municipal governments are the backbone of the country's economy. There are currently a couple of high cost items that municipal governments across the land have to deal with. Those are water and sewage.

It is unbelievable that in a country like ours there are many municipalities and communities that do not have full water treatment facilities. These communities basically rely on chlorination. Giardia is commonplace in many of the communities. Over the last couple of years we have heard in the press about large communities, such as those close to Toronto and Victoria, having cases of giardia.

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Even deadlier bacteria, like cryptosporidium, cannot be treated effectively with chlorine. These water treatment plants require a huge capital investment and obviously the source of the capital comes from taxation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe you are signalling me to end my remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. He has utilized about four minutes and will have approximately sixteen minutes in which to speak when this bill comes before the House again.

It being 1.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1330)

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP) moved that Bill C-238, an act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act (mail contractors), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to have the bill come forward. I felt very fortunate when my name was drawn in the lottery and then very grateful when the standing committee chose to make the bill votable.

I believe it is an issue of broad public interest and something that is long overdue. I will argue, and I hope that I can prove to the House, that we have an opportunity to correct a longstanding injustice. We have an opportunity to right a longstanding wrong.

My bill, Bill C-238, is probably one of the shortest. It is certainly the shortest that I have ever seen. I think it might be the smallest bill on record. It is one line exactly. It calls for one simple thing, to repeal subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act.

Subsection 13(5) is a very small subsection that bars rural route mail contractors from the right to collective bargaining. They do not have the right to form a union. They do not have the right to join a union. They do not have the right to bargain collectively.

I know that support for giving these people these rights is spreading broadly. I know that the hon. member from Kamloops strongly supports the concept because in his rural setting there are rural route mail couriers who have probably sought him out to lobby and to explain the problems they run into.

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Why is this particular group of workers barred from collective bargaining? The Canada Labour Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, international conventions and covenants all guarantee the right to free collective bargaining for employees. The reason is that subsection 13(5) makes the argument that these are not to be considered employees. They are to be considered independent contractors.

Faced with that problem, this group of workers went to the Canada Labour Relations Board and asked, "Are we employees or are we independent contractors?" They brought that question to the only avenue of recourse that they really could bring it to. The Canada Labour Relations Board ruled unanimously that these are not independent contractors and that their relationship with Canada Post is that of an employer and employee. At best, it is a wholly dependent contractor. Under the Canada Labour Code, a dependent contractor is, in fact, an employee.

One would wonder, then, what the problem is. This group of workers went and got the ruling they were seeking. The problem is that the government went to the Federal Court of Appeal and had the CLRB ruling overturned, not on the basis of merits. Frankly, the federal court did agree that these people are in fact employees. It came to the same conclusions that the labour board came to. It was strictly on jurisdiction. The Federal Court of Appeal ruled that the Canada Labour Relations Board does not have the jurisdiction to overrule a section in the Canada Post Corporation Act. That is something that only parliament can do and that is the reason we are here today, at the request of the many rural route mail couriers who feel strongly about this issue.

Who are they? There are roughly 5,000 rural route mail couriers. They are the people who deliver mail anywhere other than in an urban setting. They drive over the country roads delivering mail to farms, homes and businesses all over rural Canada. They get their work by tendering and contracting the work. The contract is given to them and they keep it for a period of five years. They then have to renew it after that period of time.

The difference is that if they are truly independent contractors there are a number of tests that they go through and look at to say what the difference is between an independent contractor and a dependent contractor or an employee. I would like to go through some of the things that the Canada Labour Relations Board looked at in making its ruling.

First, the concept of economic independence is one of the key issues. Are they being directed and controlled by someone else, or do they truly have control of their own job and workplace? In this case, the Canada Labour Relations Board found that they were economically dependent and not independent.

• (1335)

As far as the control over the day to day operations of their job, the Canada Post Corporation still dictates exactly how these

workers must do their job, how they have to sort the mail, what route they have to take and when they have to drive it. It dictates virtually every aspect of the person's working day. If they were truly independent contractors they could make up their own mind as to how and when they would get the job done, as long as the job did get done.

When the Federal Court of Appeal reversed the decision, it left the rural route mail couriers with no option but to seek recourse in the House of Commons today. I am very proud to take the issue forward as a private member's bill. I believe, as I began in my comments, this is a historic injustice and it is fundamentally wrong.

This is the only group of workers in the country who are specifically barred from collective bargaining strictly for financial reasons. There are other groups that are not allowed to form a union. CSIS is not allowed to form a union for obvious reasons of national security. Even the Parliament Hill staff are not allowed to form a union, although I disagree with that. At least we could make some argument that there are reasons why we would not want some issues showing up on the bargaining table. In the case of rural route mail couriers, they are really delivering mail. It is not an issue of any kind of risk to our national security.

Not allowing the rural route mail couriers to have collective bargaining rights is a denial of their basic rights, the rights that all working Canadians enjoy. I firmly believe it is a violation of the principles conveyed and promoted in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is certainly a violation of our international commitments to the ILO convention regarding the freedom of association and the protection of the right to organize. It is in violation of the international covenant on civil and political rights. It is a violation of the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights. These are all international covenants that Canada willingly enters into.

I have been to the ILO with the Minister of Labour and have heard wonderful, grand, eloquent speeches that the Minister of Labour has given at the ILO, saying that this country supports the right to free collective bargaining so that workers can elevate their standards of wages and working conditions. I believe him. I do not accuse the Liberal government of being anti-union in any way.

I am looking at an anomaly in subsection 13(5). When subsection 13(5) was put in, it was just at the time when the Canada Post Corporation Act was created in 1981. It was a time when the Canada Post Corporation was showing a huge deficit. There was a real money crunch. The lawyers involved obviously realized that when the employees went from being under the Public Service Staff Relations Act to being under the Canada Labour Code when the corporation was created and that the Canada Labour Code recognizes dependent contractors as employees, that they would have a problem with the rural route mail couriers. So they deliberately and specifically contemplated this with subsection

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13(5). So that no application to have these workers considered employees could succeed, they would be specifically barred.

It was strictly financial. I have quotes from Andre Ouellet, the postmaster general at the time, admitting the same. He said that it would be cost factor if these employees were allowed to bargain collectively.

The tendering process, if it ever did serve the couriers well, certainly does not serve them well now. Never before have they needed to have the right to elevate their conditions somewhat. I will give an example.

One example that I am aware of concerns a courier named Mavis Wiebe who has been a rural route mail courier just outside of Surrey, B.C. since 1978. It is Rural Route Number 8 in Cloverdale. When she started she had 326 calls to make and she was paid \$1,000 a month to do her 26 kilometre route. Some 21 years later, Mavis Wiebe's route is now 1,000 points of call and she is now paid \$1,900 per month. Out of this, she has to pay for her car, gas, repairs and insurance. She gets no benefits whatsoever, like a normal employee does. There is no UIC, no CPP and no workers' compensation. She has no sick days. If she gets sick she has to hire somebody to take her place. Ironically, the minister responsible for Canada Post uses this as an example of why these people really are independent entrepreneurs. He says that they hire people. Well they only hire people if they are sick and they have an obligation and a duty to do their route. It is a fact that they do not have sick days.

• (1340)

Mavis Wiebe puts her operating costs at \$1,000 a month, leaving her with \$900 a month for days that can go as long as 12 to 14 hours during the busy season. She takes home an average of \$6.84 an hour. If I was an independent contractor, I would not structure my lifestyle to make \$6.84 an hour.

She has an interesting quote. She says "My granddaughter at 14 just started working at McDonald's and she earns \$7.15 an hour, the minimum wage in B.C. She said to me, 'Nana are you nuts? I make more than you do'". There is clearly something fundamentally wrong here when a woman who has been doing this job faithfully for 21 years finds herself in a position where she is making less than minimum wage.

Further on in the article, many of the rural route couriers talk about the tendering process and how it has been bastardized. It is not a fair tendering system. When it is time to renew their contract they are often told that there is a lot of competition and that they had better bring their numbers down or they will not likely get their contract. That is interfering with the fair tendering process, yet there is case after case of this happening. Rather than having their salaries go up with the cost of living, they are actually being

manoeuvred down and are getting less money now in many cases than they did from previous contracts.

I am very aware of the whole concept of independent contractors. I worked in the building industry where this has been a problem for quite some time. Contractors, who used to keep maybe 20 drywallers on their staff, would say to them "I am paying you guys \$20 an hour. I will give you \$25 an hour and you just be your own man. You are your own independent contractor now. You still have to be at work at 8 and go home at 4.30. You still have to take your lunch at noon. I am still going to provide everything else to do your job but for the purposes of the law, I am going to call you an independent contractor". We could go into a place with 20 drywallers working in a big area and each one of them would consider themselves to be independent business. They have no workers' compensation, no UIC and no CPP. It is really trying to avoid payroll burden and payroll costs. It is a net gain to the employer.

That is the game that the Canada Post Corporation has been playing since 1981. I think it is wrong. It is wrong in the building industry and it is wrong in the mail delivery business.

The supervision aspect alone is enough to win the argument in terms of whether these individuals are dependent or independent, but we do not have to do that.

I would urge all members who plan on speaking to the bill or even when they get the opportunity to vote, to please read the labour board ruling, decision 626 from April 29, 1987. It is a very easy document to read. Canada Post Corporation is the applicant and various unions are the respondents. It is a very clear-cut decision. This is actually an area of labour law that has been very well studied. There is a lot of good jurisprudence that very clearly sets out the tests as to whether someone is independent or dependent.

For the sake of the 5,000 rural route mail couriers in Canada, I would urge all members to please have a good look at these rulings and see for themselves if it is not fair.

I would remind members that this is really a rural-urban issue. These people are being disadvantaged because they live in rural Canada. A disproportionate number of them are women. Some of them are working off the farm trying to get some supplementary income for their family. The going rate for a mail delivery person living within the city limits of Winnipeg or Toronto is \$17 or \$18 an hour, plus benefits. Because these rural route couriers live outside the perimeter highway they are at \$6.86, lower than minimum wage with absolutely no benefits.

How do we defend that in this day and age? There is no justification whatsoever, certainly not for financial reasons. If we were going to conduct ourselves in that manner then why would we not put kids back in the mines? They would be cheaper than putting

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miners down there. We have to pay miners \$25 an hour. Maybe we could get some 12 year old to crawl through the cracks with a fuse between his teeth like they did in the old days. That is obviously taking examples to a ridiculous end.

• (1345)

Money is not justification for denying people basic civil rights. Organizing a union or bargaining collectively is a basic right in this country. It is the only way we have managed to elevate our standards for working people over the last many years. Everyone agrees, our government agrees and states publicly that it is in favour of free collective bargaining. Here is the opportunity. This is our chance to demonstrate that we really do care about the freedom of workers to join and to form unions.

One of the reservations I have and the only reason I can give as to why this matter was not resolved years ago is the terrible hostility between the government and the union representing postal workers. We should not let this group of workers suffer just because of management's inability to get along with its own workforce. That is clearly a poisonous environment.

Nothing in my bill would automatically tie the rural route mail couriers to the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Who is to say they will join that union? Who is to say they will join a union at all? They would just have the right to bargain collectively and they would have recourse to the Canada Labour Code like all other Canadian workers enjoy.

This issue has gained broad public interest and broad public support. There was a one hour special on one of the TV news magazine programs. There have been numerous articles in newspapers and magazines.

This group of rural route couriers has been very active politically. I would think that virtually everybody in this House has received some communication from the RRMCs trying to explain the basic fairness of their issue. It has been a long lobbying effort, 10 years long. These people have waited long enough to exercise the same rights that all other working people enjoy.

I would hope that there is broad support from other members in the House. I have canvassed most of the opposition parties and they seem interested in extending this kind of right. There is nothing more noble that we can do as parliamentarians than to extend rights and to expand the rights of Canadians so that we all enjoy and benefit equally from the protections in this case of the Canada Labour Code for employees.

Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I get into my prepared notes, I would like to do as the

member opposite suggested and share with the House a few court decisions on this very subject. The courts have already ruled on the compliance of section 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

On August 3, 1989 the federal court trial division found section 13(5) did not contravene the equality provisions of section 15.1 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms on the basis of occupational status.

On May 29, 1990 the federal court trial division found the allegation that section 13(5) creates discrimination on the basis of gender was frivolous. The court also found there were no grounds for a claim of discrimination on the basis of differential treatment of rural and urban residents.

On February 1, 1999 the U.S. National Administration Office, responding to a NAFTA challenge issued by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers on behalf of rural route contractors, rejected a claim that rural route contractors should become employees.

Both national and international tribunals have found no fault with the independent status of rural route contractors under the Canada Post Corporation Act. The member for Winnipeg Centre should take note of these judgments to fully comprehend the issue.

In 1981 parliament created Canada Post to ensure that all Canadians, wherever they lived, would receive reliable and affordable postal service. In several ways the enduring contribution of independent contractors has helped Canada Post achieve this crucial goal. However, the bill we have before us today could easily compromise the provision of good and affordable postal service to rural Canada. Affordable is the key word.

Canada Post's ability to use contractors for the delivery of mail has made reliable, affordable postal service possible. Nowhere is this more true than in rural Canada. With a sparse population spread over one of the largest countries in the world, providing a postal service to all Canadians has always been quite a challenge. It is thanks to the ingenuity, persistence and resourcefulness of independent mail contractors that the many obstacles to providing universal postal service in Canada have been overcome. We still need their dedicated service if we are to maintain the quality of service rural Canadians deserve.

• (1350)

We have to consider what the proposed amendment of the member for Winnipeg Centre does for Canadians. Does it improve service? Not at all. Will rural Canadians get their mail any faster as a result of this change? No they will not. Independent contractors have always provided excellent service to Canada Post customers and they will continue to do so.

The member's reference to hostility also catches me a little by surprise. Both the minister and I have met with representatives of the rural contractors on four occasions in the last year. The discussions have been very amicable and are producing very good results. Canada Post unions may benefit however from a few thousand more members who would pay dues but there is no benefit to individual Canadians in the hon. member's bill.

The government believes in creating opportunities for all Canadians as does Canada Post. The opportunity to work as a mail contractor has benefited countless generations of rural Canadians who have often needed to supplement their incomes. The member for Winnipeg Centre wants to put an end to all that. I do not think rural Canadians want to see these contracting opportunities simply vanish.

There is a competitive tendering process that gives rural Canadians the opportunity to perform meaningful work at a fair value. In parts of the country with no nearby industrial or urban area, the chance to have a turn at a decent paying job means a great deal. That chance vanishes once a system is created that only benefits a few to the detriment of many. I find it surprising the hon. member supports a proposal that may well translate into real losses for those Canadians who most deserve and need those income opportunities.

The quality of service rural Canadians have enjoyed for generations and continue to expect is a direct outcome of the competitive bidding process which attracts the most motivated and enterprising people.

The member for Winnipeg Centre wants everyone to believe that rural route contractors are all overworked, underpaid and underappreciated. Simple facts reveal the contrary.

The dedicated men and women who deliver mail throughout rural Canada are all compensated at a fair market value. The majority of contractors often need less than six or even four hours to complete their route assignments leaving ample time for other gainful pursuits. This work is mostly part time and that fact is consistently ignored.

Most important, rural mail contractors in Canada Post are appreciated and recognized for the immense value of the service they provide. In wanting to preserve that tradition of good service, Canada Post is introducing meaningful ways to improve the fair and equitable treatment of all contractors. All rural routes will be contracted on an individual basis. Previous experience coupled with good performance will be regularly considered upon renewal. This will promote the sustained quality of service for rural customers while rewarding the hard work of dedicated mail contractors.

Canada Post will rigorously ensure that the tendering process is accepted as fair and competitive by all participants.

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Legislation is not the best way to improve Canada Post's relationship with its independent mail contractors. The previously cited examples of Canada Post's efforts demonstrate that immediate improvement is achievable. Moreover, these changes represent a genuine effort to make co-operation a keystone of the relationship between Canada Post and its mail contractors.

When Canada Post Corporation was created in 1981 through a widely supported act of parliament, it was made clear that Canada Post was to operate like a business. To this day the corporation continues to have the important public mandate of providing postal service to millions of addresses while keeping letter mail rate increases below the rate of inflation. To achieve this mandate, it was and continues to be understood that Canada Post needs to manage its expenses just like a business does.

The financially responsible management of Canada Post has meant taxpayers have not had to subsidize their post office since 1988. By recording modest profits over recent years, Canada Post has been able to balance the financing of its operations with the need to invest in the future but it is still a precarious balance. The fact is that 99 cents of every dollar Canada Post earns must be spent on the annual cost of operations. With this little room to explore its new direction such as that proposed by this bill, the arguments for the prudent management of costs ring as true today as they did in 1981.

This debate cannot ignore the mandate imposed on Canada Post by the Canada Post Corporation Act. No other delivery company is legally required to offer affordable uniform service in every corner of the nation while maintaining financial self-sufficiency. Canada Post has been able to meet this challenge. The hon. member wants to tinker with the act but he is not prepared to acknowledge the consequences of his tinkering.

• (1355)

Contractors are naturally independent. They are entrepreneurs and as such, assume a degree of risk in deciding whether or not to engage in a certain commercial activity. Although they depend on contracts to earn revenue, they realize that the source of the revenue is not indefinitely fixed and they certainly have the freedom to seek revenue from other sources. As small business operators they can make full use of tax advantages not available to employees.

To look further at the importance of the independence of rural mail contractors, I am reminded of the explanation offered by one of my hon. colleagues opposite. It may have been the hon. member for Tobique—Mactaquac. If so, he is to be congratulated. If I recall, his words were: "The nature of this change would remove some of the flexibility for both parties to negotiate an arrangement particularly suited to each individual contractor". An astute observation.

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Every mail contractor faces many challenges in providing effective mail delivery within his or her territory. Therefore, each contract must recognize these unique and varying factors. Imagine the burden of negotiating a global agreement that effectively addressed the regional complexities of all the delivery routes. The cost of administering such a process would be considerably higher than those of a competitive bidding process that takes into account the needs of individual contractors.

When we debate the status of mail contractors, we are not only talking about the men and women who deliver mail along Canada's rural routes. Canada Post mail contractors provide air freight services, expedited parcel services, highway transport and many other services that are essential to moving the mail in Canada. All of these contractors fall within the scope of section 13(5). Alarmingly the sponsor of this bill seems to have missed or ignored the fact that eliminating section 13(5) has far greater implications than changing the status of rural route contractors.

Canada Post has over 7,000 contracts for the delivery of mail. It simply cannot afford to take on thousands of new permanent employees as part of some union membership drive. The numbers speak for themselves.

Canada Post has achieved a measure of financial health which is utterly dependent on a very prudent cost management formula. Identically, the formula for Canada Post's long term viability contained in the recently announced financial framework of the corporation depends on sound financial management. We must stay the course if Canada Post is to continue giving Canadians the service they expect at a price they can afford.

Canada Post must preserve a tradition of service that has benefited rural Canadians for so long. At the same time it must ensure that good affordable service to all Canadians remains a priority. To accomplish this, competing interests must be balanced and the Canada Post Corporation Act does that very well.

Let us not interfere with the success of Canada Post. It has had a fulfilling, challenging career. It is doing a very effective job and I think we should leave sleeping dogs lie.

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre has brought this issue to a debate. It is good because it has focused on certain things that ought to have been focused on for quite some time. It is not a new idea. It has been around for a long time. The bill does focus our attention on an issue that is rather significant.

I want to address the contracting procedure that is engaged in by Canada Post. The hon. parliamentary secretary gave a rather well reasoned speech this afternoon but avoided some of the problems that exist within the contracting procedure itself.

I have before me an affidavit sworn before a notary public in Alberta. I want to read part of it. It deals with the very issue I am talking about, the contracting procedure. It reads in part:

In April of 1996, I knew my contract with Canada Post Corporation would be expiring on June 30th. As I had done in the past, I decided to phone Contracting Services in Edmonton to see what they were going to do. I was hoping, as they had done in the past, just extend or renew it again.

I was talking to Lee Alexander. He asked me how long have I had the contract. I told him ten years. He then said they would have to tender out this route as a matter of course to show the public that I did not own it permanently. He told me to bid the exact amount I was being paid at the time and I would get it back for another five years.

After the tendering process was closed, I received a phone call from Lee Alexander. He said there were bids received lower than the one I submitted and would I drop my price to get the contract back?

I asked him how much was the lowest bid. He said they don't release that information. He again asked if I would go down or lose the contract. I said I could if I had to, but by how much would I have to go down? Five hundred dollars? He said no, go down much more. I kept dropping and dropping until he finally said "okay, that's enough". I ended up taking a cut of \$5,077.08 per annum to keep my job.

• (1400)

It is scandalous to treat people like that, but that is what happened.

The RRMCs is a reliable, resourceful, friendly and independent group of people. I admire these couriers. Our mail is delivered by a rural route mail courier, a wonderful person. They love freedom. They love enterprise. This lady loves to be independent and I agree. I am an entrepreneur and enjoy that freedom and independence. I believe they have been treated shabbily. In some cases I dare say the treatment has been disgraceful.

The question now before us is: Will eliminating subsection 13(5) of the Canada Postal Corporation Act be the best response to the problem? Can the problem be resolved? Of course it can. I clearly understand the frustration and the anger of the RRMCs. No one should be treated as some of them have been treated. I am not suggesting they have all been treated this way. I do not know, but I know that some of them have been treated very badly.

The contracts were awarded and then negotiated after they were awarded. Mr. Speaker, you have been a businessman for many years. Many of us have been in business. We do not negotiate contracts after they are awarded. We negotiate them before.

The process was secret. In this case the particular mail courier was told there was another bid. He was not told how much that bid was or whether there really was a bid. He does not know to this day whether there really was a bid or how much it was. He was simply told to drop his price. When it was not enough he was told to drop it a little more. It was not an isolated case. I have only the one

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affidavit, but a number of them have told me that this is the situation.

Pressure was exerted to lower the bid. Conditions, or whatever else the supervisor wanted, became negotiable items after the contract was signed. Some couriers were coerced into submitting a tender they felt was unreasonable, but due to personal conditions or requirements they went along with it. In some cases whole lifestyles had to be changed.

The playing field was unfair, capricious, unstable and often unreasonable. A question has to be asked in this regard. If it was so bad why did they stay? I think one of the reasons was that for them it was a lifestyle, something the family was used to, a second income or a variety of indications.

The issue is not whether it is a second income or whether it is subsidiary to something else. The question is whether the contract is fair, honest and above board, and does everyone know what are the conditions. That is the principal issue.

They stayed because it gave them flexibility. They did not have to punch a clock. They did not have to do things exactly the way someone else told them to. They could exercise their own initiatives and resourcefulness in applying their own innovations. Many of them, I suggest all of them, liked their neighbours and the social contact as they went from delivery post to delivery post. They were proud and they still are.

They say with pride that the mail must go through no matter what the weather or road conditions. They are proud to live by that. To overcome these problems is a challenge to them and they like that. I commend them for it and have great respect for them.

Repealing subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act would eliminate the quality of independence of the entrepreneur. They would become employees.

• (1405)

It would take away the flexibility these people enjoy today both on the RRMC side and on the Canada Post side. Clearly it would do away with that. It would do away with a way of life. It would become a job. It would take away their sense of personal freedom, flexibility and opportunity to exercise their initiative, their innovativeness and their resourcefulness. It would make them employees, not contractors or entrepreneurs.

What could be proposed as an alternative to eliminating section 13(5)? Clearly it is better to do something else than to eliminate that clause. The hon. parliamentary secretary said that removing that clause would apply to a lot more than just the RRMCs. It would apply to a whole host of other contractors doing business with Canada Post.

What needs to happen is that the contracting procedure must be changed. It has to become fair, open and transparent. Everybody should understand before they bid what they are bidding on. The bidding should be open and then on the day the contracts are to be awarded or opened everybody would know exactly what bids are on the table and what the conditions are. Then they could move ahead. All coercion must be removed. There should be absolutely no way in which the bidding procedure could be interfered with by some kind of a supervisor.

There is some indication there is a movement in that direction. I have a letter from the hon. André Ouellet, chairman of Canada Post, in which he indicates clearly some of the things that have been done. It does not go far enough. He is moving in some directions but not nearly adequately in my opinion.

Unless Canada Post changes and implements a whole new contracting procedure and gets a contract that is fair, open and similar for couriers in a particular region, it will invite continued pressure by the RRMCs to do the kind of thing the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre has presented to us. I do not believe it is the best solution, but I fear that unless Canada Post has a better relationship with its rural route mail couriers and gets into a contracting procedure that is fair and honest, it will simply invite more of this kind of thing.

There appears to be a movement toward solving some of the contractual process problems. Let us not do this now and slam the door shut before they have a chance to improve their relations.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this bill, which I am interested in because I am my party's postal service and public works critic.

I listened very closely to the remarks of the member who introduced this private bill. I also listened with great interest to the remarks of the government member on the Standing Committee on Public Works and Government Services.

Members on the other side of the House are naturally in favour of any government initiative. I recall that, not that long ago—in the spring, I think, or last fall—our committee considered the renegotiation of the contracts for the small postal outlets that have sprung up everywhere, in drug stores, shopping centres or other small businesses.

When Canada Post Corporation launched this idea, it was hoping to reduce its operating costs, generate additional profits and provide work for the operators of postal outlets, but at the lowest possible cost, so as to generate additional profits, because otherwise Canada Post Corporation would have run these postal outlets itself.

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Unfortunately for Canada Post Corporation, and fortunately for the operators of these small postal outlets, the profits generated were higher than those initially estimated by the corporation.

• (1410)

When the contracts came to an end, the Canada Post Corporation negotiated mercilessly with people, putting a gun to their heads and saying "Take it or leave it. Sign here." and their commissions were cut. This is the cavalier behaviour of the Canada Post Corporation.

Things are no different with rural mail delivery. As the member said, a person buys a small car or truck to deliver mail in the area. They collect their mail in the morning at the central post office; if the person sorting the mail is sick and could not sort the mail the day before, the independent mail delivery person will do it. In winter snow storms, this is the person who takes out his shovel and clears the snow in order to get to people's mailboxes. It is wrong, as the party in power is claiming, to say that these people are independent.

And to hide all the time behind legalistic reasoning like that cited by the representative of the party in power is sad and unfortunate, I find. These people are working for less than the minimum wage in their respective regions, it is a fact. This is abusing people.

I think the charter of rights and freedoms so often cited here in Canada establishes the freedom of association. Freedom of association is the rule. There must be as few exclusions and exceptions to the rule as possible.

But every time the government is involved directly, through a crown corporation or in any way in confrontation with groups that may make a claim, such as the RCMP or the letter carriers at the moment, the people delivering rural mail, it wastes no time breaking the rule of freedom of association.

It thumbs its nose at its own charter in prohibiting collective bargaining just so that the Canada Post Corporation can pay it another \$200 million annually in net benefits that it gives back to the government, which claims the corporation owes it money from back when it was not breaking even.

The government did invest money. Now it wants to recover that money but, true to its ways, the government will not take it off the earnings of its senior officials, or that of CPC chairman André Ouellet or his directors and deputy directors, but from those as the lower end of the pay scale, who walk in the snow to deliver parcels and letters to mailboxes. The government is making them pay for the mismanagement that occurred in previous years.

I cannot accept that. It is one thing to be partisan, to do one's utmost to support one's party—and the member opposite is doing a

good job at that—but one must still have some moral principles. Regardless of our political allegiance, when people are forced to slave away for less than minimum wage, partisanship is no longer acceptable. This issue has to do with dignity, and we must allow these people to preserve their dignity.

I was floored to hear the Reform Party member, whom I respect, say "We will break the contractual relationship that exists between Canada Post and contract employees'." That relationship was prescribed by the act. They did not choose it, they did not want it. It was imposed on them by the act.

Today, those who deliver our mail are asking us to help them. I think we have a duty to do so. It would be too simple, as a governing party or a political party, to stay away from society's problems, to not face these problems, to hide behind the rulings of the Federal Court of Appeal or of any other court.

• (1415)

I think the government is missing a prime opportunity to give some dignity back to these contractors who no longer want to remain independent.

I have taken part in such negotiations. Someone will buy a small vehicle in order to get a contract. When the contract is about to expire, the local or regional postmaster says "You know, you have some competition. A few people have called us this year". That person is still making payments on the vehicle and the contract is coming to an end. If that person does not get the next contract, he or she may get stuck with the truck or car still being paid for. So that person is told to make a reasonable bid.

Year after year, contract after contract, this poor person has to submit lower and lower bids. Such behaviour is unworthy of a representative of the Canada Post Corporation, which claims to be so honest and great. Wanting to make a profit on the backs of poor workers is despicable.

Personally, I will wholeheartedly support, as my party will, the bill introduced by the hon. member. I urge the members opposite to show some mercy, to rise above party politics and to try to imagine what it is like to work hard and still have trouble earning a living. Not everyone earns as much as federal ministers do and gets to travel anywhere in the world whenever he or she feels like it. There are people who are hurting in their ridings.

The Reform Party suggests that the existing contracts be cancelled. This is total nonsense. I remember that the members of the Reform Party opposed a measure limiting to three months of interest the penalty imposed by the lender when someone wants to renegotiate or pay off his or her mortgage before it was up.

They opposed it as though all Western farmers who owed money on machinery, land or farms were so rich that they did not care

about paying the big penalties imposed on them when they wanted to renegotiate or pay off mortgages or loans before they were up. Only the Reform Party could oppose such a measure. As if all Western farmers were millionaires.

Then they turn around and describe the hardship suffered by Western farmers, saying how sad it is when grain prices drop. However, when the time came to help the farmers through modest private members' bills like that one, Reform was always the first to oppose them.

I say to the hon. member who introduced the bill that he can count on my support and on the support of my party. I hope that, at some point, the people across will see the light and understand that they cannot act as if their party were the only one on the face of the earth.

[English]

Mr. Gilles Bernier (Tobique—Mactaquac, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-238, which involves private mail contractors.

I have been involved with this issue almost from the day I was elected two and a half years ago. I have met with and discussed this issue with representatives of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the Organization of Rural Route Mail Couriers and Canada Post Corporation itself. In addition, as a beneficiary of daily rural mail delivery, this is an issue that concerns me personally.

Canada Post became a crown corporation in 1981 by means of the Canada Post Corporation Act, and as such, its labour practices were no longer governed by the Public Service Staff Relations Act but by the Canada Labour Code which allows dependent contractors to unionize, something not provided for by the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

Subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act provides an exemption to subsection 3(1) of the Canada Labour Code that deems mail contractors, including rural route mail couriers, not to be dependent contractors.

In 1981, under the guidance of the former postmaster, and at that time Progressive Conservative postal critic John Fraser, our caucus voted to support subsection 13(5) for a number of reasons.

First, this provision continued the historical relationship that Canada Post has always had with its mail contractors.

• (1420)

Second, it was felt that changing that relationship could potentially increase the operating costs of the corporation substantially with no corresponding improvement in service levels to the public.

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Third, the nature of this change would have removed some of the flexibility for both parties to negotiate an arrangement particularly suited for each individual contractor. For example, under the current arrangement, contractors have the ability to subcontract while employees do not. Finally, this arrangement kept Canada Post on a level footing with many private sector companies who also use private contractors for their own deliveries.

For these reasons, our party continues to support subsection 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act, and that is why we cannot support the bill.

That does not mean, however, that we are indifferent to the problems faced by private mail contractors in their dealings with Canada Post. In many conversations I have had with individual contractors, with representatives from the Organization of Rural Route Mail Couriers, CUPW and with some Canada Post employees, I have heard many horror stories about the contracting practices of the post office.

For example, at one point it was common practice that when a delivery contract was up for renewal, a Canada Post employee would phone up the contractor and tell them that they had received a bid from another source that was thousands of dollars less than what the contractor was currently being paid. Because Canada Post operates a closed bidding system, there was no way for the contractor to verify the claim of the postal representative. The contractor would then be faced with a difficult decision: undercut his or her own price by several thousand dollars or else lose the contract.

These and other bad faith practices by the post office have led others and myself into discussions with Canada Post. As a result of complaints from contractors and others acting on their behalf, the post office has introduced a series of new measures that I hope will alleviate a great number of the difficulties contractors have had in the past.

These include the following: one, rural routes will be contracted on an individual contractor basis; two, contractors who in turn subcontract out their routes at a reduced price, known as master contractors, will no longer be eligible to renew their rural contract; three, if a master contractor previously held the route, the previous employee or the subcontractor actually performing the work will be the first potential supplier offered the contract at renewal; four, rural contracts will be issued for five years with a five year renewal option based on satisfactory performance and tendered after ten years; five, a negotiated adjustment will be included for the five year renewal option to ensure that market conditions, such as inflation, are considered; six, a quality and performance component will be included in the contract renewal and awarding processes to recognize the past performance of incumbent contractors; and seven, the evaluation of tenders will be based on criteria

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such as experience, service performance, reliability, image and cost.

In addition, when contracts are up for bids, Canada Post will make contractors aware of the specifications of the routes they will be performing, such as the number of points of call, daily kilometres, number of stops for personal contact items and the amount of ad-mail they can expect to deliver. These numbers will be updated annually or more frequently if a significant change occurs and contractors will be compensated for these changes.

The post office has also prepared a handbook or what it calls a delivery reference manual for its mail contractors. The purpose of the manual is to provide assistance and guidance with a reference book and a phone directory of key individuals at Canada Post whom they can call when a problem arises. In conjunction with this, local supervisors and postmasters will be provided with an operator's handbook and support training material to assist them in working with contractors.

These measures probably will not prevent disputes from arising. They probably will not ensure that all contractors will be treated fairly and honestly by Canada Post employees at all times. However, I feel that the changes announced will bring much greater fairness and openness to the relationship between rural mail contractors and the post office.

I continue to work with and listen to rural mail contractors to ensure that they are treated fairly and that Canada Post deals with problems that arise in a timely and equitable manner.

I am a person who has been in the contracting business for over 22 years. I have bid on a lot of contracts for the federal government.

• (1425)

On every contract on which I bid it never meant that I became an employee of the government. I was on my own. I was the employer and the people I hired to help me perform that contract were my employees.

I understand the intent of the rural mail couriers, but when they are under contract they are not employees. They cannot benefit from sick leave, vacations, and all that they would encounter. If they want to become full time employees of Canada Post, they should apply for a job when a job opens up. Until that job becomes available, they are contractors.

When a bid comes up, it is up to them to decide if they want to bid on the contract or not. If they are going to bid on a contract to lose money, that is their own problem. As a contractor myself, I never bid on a contract to lose money.

I sympathize with the rural mail couriers, but they have to understand that they are contractors and not employees of Canada Post. When it comes to the rural routes, if all those people became employees of Canada Post, imagine how much it would cost Canada Post Corporation. We would not be getting better service. For all the money it would cost Canada Post, we would be getting the same service, not better service. This is the taxpayers' money so let us put the money in a good place.

I hope that the rural mail couriers will understand that when we were in power we were the ones who put in section 13(5) to protect them and Canada Post employees at the same time. As I told many people in the mailing industry and even Canada Post itself, I will continue to support section 13(5).

Having said that, it is a good private member's bill and I have the greatest respect for the hon. member from the NDP, but I just cannot support this private member's bill.

Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, very simply, in the time that is left, while I applaud the initiative of the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre, his bill certainly does not work as intended.

The bill proposes to eliminate section 13(5) in order to put the independent mail contractors in the union. However, the essential words of that clause are "a mail contractor is deemed not to be a dependent contractor or an employee". We can substitute "mail contractor" for "independent contractor is deemed not to be a dependent contractor".

If we eliminate this section, it will not change anything. It is one of these sections that get into legislation every now and then for political reasons. In fact, Canada Post, whether or not that section exists, will retain the right to hire independent contractors as it does now and as it will in the future. While I applaud the hon. member's good intentions, I assure him that his bill will not achieve what he is setting out to do.

I will say, however, that I am a great supporter of private members' business and I am very glad that the hon. member brought this bill forward. As the member for Kelowna said, there is no doubt there are grave injustices being done in the way contracts are being negotiated with our rural mail carriers.

The real problem is not a matter of whether they are in or out of a union. The real problem is with Canada Post itself. It is a body that is neither fish nor fowl. It is not a business, yet it is an arm of government. If it conducted itself as a business, indeed if we privatized Canada Post, it would have to conduct good business practices in a spirit of transparency that does not exist now. We

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cannot see how Canada Post operates. We would find that it would have to bend to good market practices and I would expect that it would negotiate contracts with these rural mail carriers in a decent and orderly manner.

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 2.30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, November 15, 1999 at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2.30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

Second 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	Peterborough	Ontario	Lib.
Alarie, H��l��ne	Louis-H��bert	Quebec	BQ
Alcock, Reg, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	Lib.
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	Ref.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment	Victoria	British Columbia	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Quebec	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Brampton Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Asselin, G��rard	Charlevoix	Quebec	BQ
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke — Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Bachand, Andr��	Richmond — Arthabaska	Quebec	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Bailey, Roy	Souris — Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Baker, Hon. George S., Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Gander — Grand Falls	Newfoundland	Lib.
Bakopanos, Eleni	Ahuntsic	Quebec	Lib.
Barnes, Sue	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West — Mississauga	Ontario	Lib.
B��lair, R��ginald	Timmins — James Bay	Ontario	Lib.
B��langer, Mauril, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage	Ottawa — Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier — Montcalm	Quebec	BQ
Bellemare, Eug��ne, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	Carleton — Gloucester	Ontario	Lib.
Bennett, Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon E.	Lakeland	Alberta	Ref.
Bergeron, St��phane	Verch��res — Les-Patriotes	Quebec	BQ
Bernier, Gilles	Tobique — Mactaquac	New Brunswick	PC
Bernier, Yvan	Bonaventure — Gasp�� — ��les- de-la-Madeleine — Pabok	Quebec	BQ
Bertrand, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence	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, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour	Moncton — Riverview — Dieppe	New Brunswick	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Cliff	Yellowhead	Alberta	Ref.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton — Melville	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Brien, Pierre	T��miscamingue	Quebec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Brison, Scott	Kings — Hants	Nova Scotia	PC
Brown, Bonnie, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Bryden, John	Wentworth — Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Bulte, Sarmite	Parkdale — High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Byrne, Gerry	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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Canuel, René	Matapédia — Matane	Quebec	BQ
Caplan, Elinor, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Quebec	BQ
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, Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Outremont	Quebec	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph — Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Anjou — Rivière-des-Prairies	Quebec	Lib.
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, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport)	Bourassa	Quebec	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay — Superior North	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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	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	Simcoe North	Ontario	Lib.
Dhaliwal, Hon. Harbance Singh, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	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.
Discepola, Nick	Vaudreuil — Soulanges	Quebec	Lib.
Dockrill, Michelle	Bras d'Or — Cape Breton	Nova Scotia	NDP
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland	PC
Dromisky, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	Thunder Bay — Atikokan	Ontario	Lib.
Drouin, Claude	Beauce	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis—et—Chutes—de—la— Chaudière	Quebec	BQ
Dubé, Jean	Madawaska — Restigouche	New Brunswick	PC
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier — Sainte-Marie	Quebec	BQ
Duhamel, Hon. Ronald J., Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification)(Francophonie)	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil — Papineau — Mirabel	Quebec	BQ
Duncan, John	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	Ref.
Earle, Gordon	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	NDP
Easter, Wayne	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.
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	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	Kootenay — Boundary — 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 — Côte—de—Beaupré — Île— d'Orléans	Quebec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	Ref.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Hardy, Louise	Yukon	Yukon	NDP
Harris, Richard M.	Prince George — Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	Ref.
Hart, Jim	Okanagan — Coquihalla	British Columbia	Ref.
Harvard, John	Charleswood St. James — Assiniboia	Manitoba	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
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.
Hoeppner, Jake E.	Portage — Lisgar	Manitoba	Ind. Ref.
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ianno, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Trinity — Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Iftody, David, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Provencher	Manitoba	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L.	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	Nunavut	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	Hamilton West	Ontario	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont — Dundas — Charlottenburgh	Ontario	Lib.
Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)	Edmonton Southeast	Alberta	Lib.
Knutson, Gar, Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Elgin — Middlesex — London	Ontario	Lib.
Konrad, Derrek	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Kraft Sloan, Karen	York North	Ontario	Lib.
Laliberte, Rick	Churchill River	Saskatchewan	NDP
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	Quebec	BQ
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Ontario	Lib.
Laurin, René	Joliette	Quebec	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun — Saint-Henri	Quebec	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	Quebec	BQ
Lee, Derek, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Scarborough — Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lefebvre, Réjean	Champlain	Quebec	Ind.
Leung, Sophia	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	Lib.
Lill, Wendy	Dartmouth	Nova Scotia	NDP
Limoges, Rick	Windsor — St. Clair	Ontario	Lib.
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Quebec	Lib.
Longfield, Judi, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	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, Solicitor General of Canada	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Peter	Pictou — Antigonish — Guysborough	Nova Scotia	PC
Mahoney, Steve	Mississauga West	Ontario	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea — Gore — Malton — Springdale	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Maloney, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	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
Mark, Inky	Dauphin — Swan River	Manitoba	Ref.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	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.
Matthews, Bill	Burin — St. George's	Newfoundland	Lib.
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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	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	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	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, Hon. Maria, Minister for International Cooperation	Beaches — East York	Ontario	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development)(Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	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, Hon. Robert D., Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Kenora — Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)	Bellechasse — Etchemins — Montmagny — L'Islet	Quebec	Lib.
Nunziata, John	York South — Weston	Ontario	Ind.
Nystrom, Hon. Lorne	Regina — Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	NDP
O'Brien, Lawrence D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Labrador	Newfoundland	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London — Fanshawe	Ontario	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Haliburton — Victoria — Brock	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Obhrai, Deepak	Calgary East	Alberta	Ref.
Pagtakhan, Rey D.	Winnipeg North — St. Paul	Manitoba	Lib.
Pankiw, Jim	Saskatoon — Humboldt	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Paradis, Denis, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Brome — Missisquoi	Quebec	Lib.
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Niagara Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mississauga Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds — Dollard	Quebec	Lib.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Alberta	Ref.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles—A.	Rivière—des—Mille—Îles	Quebec	BQ
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister for International Trade	Papineau — Saint-Denis	Quebec	Lib.
Phinney, Beth, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Quebec	BQ
Pickard, Jerry	Chatham — Kent Essex	Ontario	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Ontario	Lib.
Plamondon, Louis	Bas—Richelieu — Nicolet — Bécancour	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	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	Halton	Ontario	Lib.
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver — Sunshine Coast	British Columbia	Ref.
Richardson, John	Perth — Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys	British Columbia	NDP
Ritz, Gerry	Battlefords — Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	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, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Brossard — La Prairie	Quebec	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	Quebec	BQ
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	British Columbia	Ref.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	British Columbia	Ref.
Sekora, Lou	Port Moody — Coquitlam — Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	Lib.
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

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Speller, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Haldimand — Norfolk — Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Algoma — Manitoulin	Ontario	Lib.
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	Quebec	BQ
St-Jacques, Diane	Shefford	Quebec	PC
St-Julien, Guy	Abitibi — Baie-James — Nunavik	Quebec	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron — Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine	Northumberland	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan — Shuswap	British Columbia	Ref.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville — Musquodoboit Valley — Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	British Columbia	Ref.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Kitchener — Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Saint-Lambert	Quebec	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	PC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	Ref.
Torsney, Paddy, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	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	Stoney Creek	Ontario	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward — Hastings	Ontario	Lib.
Vautour, Angela	Beauséjour — Petitcodiac	New Brunswick	PC
Vellacott, Maurice	Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Bruno — Saint-Hubert	Quebec	BQ
Volpe, Joseph	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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs	Nipissing	Ontario	Lib.
VACANCY	York West	Ontario	
VACANCY	Mount Royal	Quebec	
VACANCY	Hull — Aylmer	Quebec	
VACANCY	Saskatoon — Rosetown — Biggar	Saskatchewan	

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

Second 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 (34)		
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay — Columbia	Ref.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment	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 Fisheries and Oceans	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	Kootenay — Boundary — Okanagan	Ref.
Grewal, Gurmant	Surrey Central	Ref.
Harris, Richard M.	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	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Meredith, Val	South Surrey — White Rock — Langley	Ref.
Reynolds, John	West Vancouver — Sunshine Coast	Ref.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys	NDP
Robinson, Svend J.	Burnaby — Douglas	NDP
Schmidt, Werner	Kelowna	Ref.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	Ref.
Sekora, Lou	Port Moody — Coquitlam — Port Coquitlam	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan — Shuswap	Ref.
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley	Ref.
White, Randy	Langley — Abbotsford	Ref.
White, Ted	North Vancouver	Ref.

MANITOBA (14)

Alcock, Reg, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for

Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	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 (Western Economic Diversification)(Francophonie)	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Harvard, John	Charleswood St. James — Assiniboia	Lib.
Hilstrom, Howard	Selkirk — Interlake	Ref.
Hoeppner, Jake E.	Portage — Lisgar	Ind. Ref.
Iftody, David, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Provencher	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin — Swan River	Ref.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Pagtakhan, Rey D.	Winnipeg North — St. Paul	Lib.
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North Centre	NDP

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Bernier, Gilles	Tobique — Mactaquac	PC
Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour	Moncton — Riverview — Dieppe	Lib.
Dubé, Jean	Madawaska — Restigouche	PC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie — Bathurst	NDP
Herron, John	Fundy — Royal	PC
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Greg	New Brunswick Southwest	PC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Vautour, Angela	Beauséjour — Petitcodiac	PC
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	PC

NEWFOUNDLAND (7)

Baker, Hon. George S., Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Gander — Grand Falls	Lib.
Byrne, Gerry	Humber — St. Barbe — Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	PC
Matthews, Bill	Burin — St. George's	Lib.
Mifflin, Hon. Fred	Bonavista — Trinity — Conception	Lib.
O'Brien, Lawrence D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Labrador	Lib.
Power, Charlie	St. John's West	PC

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth)	Western Arctic	Lib.
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Brison, Scott	Kings — Hants	PC
Casey, Bill	Cumberland — Colchester	PC
Dockrill, Michelle	Bras d'Or — Cape Breton	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 — Musquodoboit Valley — Eastern Shore	NDP

NUNAVUT (1)

Karetak—Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Lib.
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ONTARIO (103)

Adams, Peter	Peterborough	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Brampton Centre	Lib.
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke — Lakeshore	Lib.
Barnes, Sue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West — Mississauga	Lib.
Bélaïr, Réginald	Timmins — James Bay	Lib.
Bélangier, Mauril, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage	Ottawa — Vanier	Lib.
Bellemare, Eugène, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Oakville	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Caplan, Elinor, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Thornhill	Lib.
Carroll, Aileen	Barrie — Simcoe — Bradford	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West — Nepean	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph — Wellington	Lib.
Clouthier, Hec	Renfrew — Nipissing — Pembroke	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport	Don Valley East	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay — Superior North	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Lib.
Cullen, Roy, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	Etobicoke North	Lib.
DeVillers, Paul	Simcoe North	Lib.
Dromisky, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	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	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, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Trinity — Spadina	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L.	Bruce — Grey	Lib.
Jones, Jim	Markham	PC
Jordan, Joe	Leeds — Grenville	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough — Agincourt	Lib.
Keyes, Stan	Hamilton West	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont — Dundas — Charlottenburgh	Lib.
Knutson, Gar, Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Elgin — Middlesex — London	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen	York North	Lib.
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Lib.
Lee, Derek, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Scarborough — Rouge River	Lib.
Limoges, Rick	Windsor — St. Clair	Lib.
Longfield, Judi, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	Whitby — Ajax	Lib.
Mahoney, Steve	Mississauga West	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea — Gore — Malton — Springdale	Lib.
Maloney, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Erie — Lincoln	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry	Ottawa South	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	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.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Mills, Dennis J.	Broadview — Greenwood	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria, Minister for International Cooperation	Beaches — East York	Lib.
Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development)(Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Parry Sound — Muskoka	Lib.
Murray, Ian	Lanark — Carleton	Lib.
Myers, Lynn	Waterloo — Wellington	Lib.
Nault, Hon. Robert D., Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Kenora — Rainy River	Lib.
Nunziata, John	York South — Weston	Ind.
O'Brien, Pat	London — Fanshawe	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Haliburton — Victoria — Brock	Lib.
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Niagara Centre	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mississauga Centre	Lib.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Lib.
Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Willowdale	Lib.
Phinney, Beth, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	Hamilton Mountain	Lib.
Pickard, Jerry	Chatham — 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	Halton	Lib.
Richardson, John	Perth — Middlesex	Lib.
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Health	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming — Cochrane	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Lib.
Speller, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Haldimand — Norfolk — Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Algoma — Manitoulin	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron — Bruce	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine	Northumberland	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development	Brant	Lib.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Kitchener — Waterloo	Lib.
Torsney, Paddy, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	Burlington	Lib.
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton — Kent — Middlesex	Lib.
Valeri, Tony	Stoney Creek	Lib.
Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Prince Edward — Hastings	Lib.
Volpe, Joseph	Eglinton — Lawrence	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Whelan, Susan	Essex	Lib.
Wilfert, Bryon	Oak Ridges	Lib.
Wood, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs	Nipissing	Lib.
VACANCY	York West	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Solicitor General of Canada	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Joe, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Egmont	Lib.
Proud, George	Hillsborough	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
QUEBEC (75)		
Alarie, H�el�ene	Louis-H�ebert	BQ
Assad, Mark	Gatineau	Lib.
Asselin, G�erard	Charlevoix	BQ
Bachand, Andr�e	Richmond — Arthabaska	PC
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Bakopanos, Eleni	Ahuntsic	Lib.
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier — Montcalm	BQ
Bergeron, St�ephane	Verch�eres — Les-Patriotes	BQ
Bernier, Yvan	Bonaventure — Gasp� — �les-de-la-Madeleine — Pabok	BQ
Bertrand, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence	Pontiac — Gatineau — Labelle	Lib.
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont	BQ
Brien, Pierre	T�miscamingue	BQ
Canuel, Ren�	Matap�dia — Matane	BQ
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Outremont	Lib.
Charbonneau, Yvon, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Anjou — Riviere-des-Prairies	Lib.
Chr�tien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Lib.
Chr�tien, Jean-Guy	Frontenac — M�gantic	BQ
Coderre, Denis, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport)	Bourassa	Lib.
Cr�te, Paul	Kamouraska — Riviere-du-Loup — T�miscouata — Les Basques	BQ
Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	BQ
de Savoye, Pierre	Portneuf	BQ
Debien, Maud	Laval East	BQ
Desrochers, Odina	Lotbini�re	BQ
Dion, Hon. St�ephane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent — Cartierville	Lib.
Discepola, Nick	Vaudreuil — Soulanges	Lib.
Drouin, Claude	Beauce	Lib.
Dub�, Antoine	L�vis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudi�re	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier — Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil — Papineau — Mirabel	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval West	Lib.
Fournier, Ghislain	Manicouagan	BQ
Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Saint-L�onard — Saint-Michel	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Qu�bec	BQ
Gauthier, Michel	Roberval	BQ
Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne	Jonqui�re	BQ
Godin, Maurice	Ch�teauguay	BQ
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport — Montmorency — C�te-de-Beaupr� — �le-d'Orl�ans	BQ
Harvey, Andr�	Chicoutimi	PC
Jennings, Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Gr�ce — Lachine	Lib.
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	BQ
Laurin, Ren�	Joliette	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun — Saint-Henri	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	BQ
Lefebvre, R�jean	Champlain	Ind.
Lincoln, Clifford	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga — Maisonneuve	BQ
Mercier, Paul	Terrebonne — Blainville	BQ
Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)	Bellechasse — Etchemins — Montmagny — L'Islet	Lib.
Paradis, Denis, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Brome — Missisquoi	Lib.
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds — Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister for International Trade	Papineau — Saint-Denis	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu — Nicolet — Bécancour	BQ
Price, David	Compton — Stanstead	PC
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	Westmount — Ville-Marie	Lib.
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Saada, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Brossard — La Prairie	Lib.
Sauvageau, Benoît	Repentigny	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil	BQ
St-Jacques, Diane	Shefford	PC
St-Julien, Guy	Abitibi — Baie-James — Nunavik	Lib.
Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Saint-Lambert	Lib.
Tremblay, Stéphane	Lac-Saint-Jean	BQ
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski — Mitis	BQ
Turp, Daniel	Beauharnois — Salaberry	BQ
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Bruno — Saint-Hubert	BQ
VACANCY	Mount Royal	
VACANCY	Hull — Aylmer	

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

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, Hon. Lorne	Regina — 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.
VACANCY	Saskatoon — Rosetown — Biggar	

YUKON (1)

Hardy, Louise	Yukon	NDP
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LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of November 5th, 1999 — 2nd Session, 36th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Sue Barnes	Vice-Chairs:	John Finlay Derrek Konrad	
Claude Bachand Raymond Bonin Paul DeVillers Ghislain Fournier	Jim Gouk Ivan Grose Louise Hardy	David Iftody Nancy Karetak-Lindell Gerald Keddy	John O'Reilly Mike Scott Guy St-Julien	(16)

Associate Members

Carolyn Bennett Cliff Breitzkreuz René Canuel Serge Cardin Bill Casey	Pierre de Savoye Gordon Earle Reed Elley	Maurice Godin Dick Harris Rick Laliberte	Gilles Perron Daniel Turp Maurice Vellacott
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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair:	John Harvard	Vice-Chairs:	Murray Calder Howard Hilstrom	
Hélène Alarie Mark Assad Rick Borotsik Garry Breitzkreuz	Odina Desrochers Gar Knutson Larry McCormick	Joe McGuire Ian Murray Dick Proctor	Gerry Ritz Paul Steckle Rose-Marie Ur	(16)

Associate Members

Roy Bailey Leon E. Benoit Rick Casson Michelle Dockrill	Jocelyne Girard-Bujold John Maloney Lee Morrisson Lorne Nystrom	John Solomon Guy St-Julien Greg Thompson	Myron Thompson Suzanne Tremblay Daniel Turp
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CANADIAN HERITAGE

Chair:	Clifford Lincoln	Vice-Chairs:	Inky Mark Dennis J. Mills	
Mauril Bélanger Paul Bonwick Cliff Breitzkreuz Sarmite Bulte	Pierre de Savoye John Godfrey Wendy Lill	Rick Limoges Eric Lowther Mark Muise	Alex Shepherd Caroline St-Hilaire Bryon Wilfert	(16)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott André Bachand Claude Bachand Carolyn Bennett Rick Borotsik	Pierre Brien Serge Cardin Antoine Dubé Maurice Dumas Gordon Earle	Paul Forseth Christiane Gagnon Rick Laliberte Peter MacKay Louis Plamondon	Benoît Sauvageau Suzanne Tremblay Daniel Turp Elsie Wayne
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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Chair:	Joe Fontana	Vice-Chairs:	Leon E. Benoit Steve Mahoney
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Rob Anders Jean Augustine Bernard Bigras Paul Bonwick	John Bryden Sophia Leung Rick Limoges	Patrick Martin John McKay Pauline Picard	David Price Jack Ramsay Andrew Telegdi	(16)
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Associate Members

Claude Bachand Serge Cardin Libby Davies	Gordon Earle Louise Hardy Francine Lalonde	Réal Ménard Deepak Obhrai Diane St-Jacques	Suzanne Tremblay Daniel Turp
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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Charles Caccia	Vice-Chairs:	Rahim Jaffer Karen Kraft Sloan
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Rick Casson Marlene Catterall Dave Chatters Jean-Guy Chrétien	Nick Discepola Jocelyne Girard-Bujold John Herron	Joe Jordan Walt Lastewka Peter Mancini	David Pratt Julian Reed Paddy Torsney	(16)
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Associate Members

Jim Abbott Hélène Alarie Leon E. Benoit Bernard Bigras Pierre Brien	Chuck Cadman Serge Cardin John Duncan Louise Hardy	Rick Laliberte Clifford Lincoln David Price Nelson Riis	Guy St-Julien Peter Stoffer Stéphan Tremblay Daniel Turp
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FINANCE

Chair:	Maurizio Bevilacqua	Vice-Chairs:	Nick Discepola Richard M. Harris
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Carolyn Bennett Scott Brison Roy Cullen Ken Epp	Roger Gallaway Albina Guarnieri Sophia Leung	Yvan Loubier Richard Marceau Lorne Nystrom	Gary Pillitteri Monte Solberg Paul Szabo	(16)
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Associate Members

Diane Ablonczy Rob Anders Rick Borotsik Pierre Brien Serge Cardin Joe Comuzzi Odina Desrochers Norman Doyle Antoine Dubé	Paul Forseth Christiane Gagnon Jocelyne Girard-Bujold Monique Guay John Herron Dale Johnston Jim Jones Jason Kenney	Gary Lunn Peter MacKay Alexa McDonough Bob Mills Gilles Perron Pauline Picard Charlie Power Karen Redman	Nelson Riis Benoît Sauvageau Werner Schmidt Alex Shepherd John Solomon Stéphan Tremblay Daniel Turp Tony Valeri
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FISHERIES AND OCEANS**Chair:** Wayne Easter**Vice-Chairs:** John Duncan
Carmen Provenzano

Sarkis Assadourian G�rard Asselin Yvan Bernier John Cummins	Claude Drouin Bill Gilmour Nancy Karetak-Lindell	Bill Matthews Lawrence D. O'Brien Charlie Power	Lou Sekora Paul Steckle Peter Stoffer	(16)
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Associate Members

Gilles Bernier Ren� Canuel Paul Forseth	Ghislain Fournier Yvon Godin Philip Mayfield	Svend J. Robinson Yves Rocheleau	Mike Scott Suzanne Tremblay
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND OCEANS ACT**Chair:** Carmen Provenzano

Yvan Bernier	Bill Gilmour	Charlie Power	Peter Stoffer	(5)
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FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**Chair:** Bill Graham**Vice-Chairs:** Colleen Beaumier
Deepak Obhrai

Sarkis Assadourian Jean Augustine Andr� Bachand Maud Debien	Francine Lalonde Diane Marleau Ted McWhinney Fred Mifflin	Bob Mills Denis Paradis Bernard Patry Svend J. Robinson	Yves Rocheleau Bob Speller Darrel Stinson	(18)
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Associate Members

Claude Bachand Eleni Bakopanos Eug�ne Bellemare Carolyn Bennett Bill Blaikie Sarmite Bulte Murray Calder Serge Cardin Aileen Carroll	Rick Casson Paul Cr�te Maurice Dumas Raymonde Folco Gurmant Grewal Jim Hart Jason Kenney Ren� Laurin Sophia Leung	Gurbax Singh Malhi Richard Marceau Keith Martin Patrick Martin Paul Mercier Lee Morrison Lorne Nystrom Pauline Picard Charlie Power	Nelson Riis Alex Shepherd John Solomon Diane St-Jacques Chuck Strahl St�phan Tremblay Suzanne Tremblay Daniel Turp
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Chair:** Colleen Beaumier

Jean Augustine Eleni Bakopanos Eug�ne Bellemare	Aileen Carroll Maud Debien	Gurbax Singh Malhi Keith Martin	Svend J. Robinson Diane St-Jacques	(10)
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**SUB-COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE,
TRADE DISPUTES AND INVESTMENT**

Chair: Sarmite Bulte

Sarkis Assadourian	Bill Blaikie	Richard Marceau	Alex Shepherd	(9)
André Bachand	Murray Calder	Deepak Obhrai	Bob Speller	

HEALTH

Chair: Lynn Myers

Vice-Chairs: Reed Elley
Ovid L. Jackson

Yvon Charbonneau	Bill Matthews	Bernard Patry	Greg Thompson	(16)
Christiane Gagnon	Ted McWhinney	Karen Redman	Rose-Marie Ur	
Gurmant Grewal	Réal Ménard	Paul Szabo	Judy Wasylcyia-Leis	
Keith Martin				

Associate Members

Carolyn Bennett	Libby Davies	John Herron	Bob Mills
Bernard Bigras	Pierre de Savoye	Grant Hill	Pauline Picard
Serge Cardin	Michelle Dockrill	Sophia Leung	Suzanne Tremblay
Jean-Guy Chrétien	Jocelyne Girard-Bujold	John Maloney	Daniel Turp

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Chair: Peter Adams

Vice-Chairs: Maurice Vellacott
Bryon Wilfert

Diane Ablonczy	Jean Dubé	Dale Johnston	Karen Redman	(18)
Bonnie Brown	Raymonde Folco	Judi Longfield	Andy Scott	
Paul Crête	Christiane Gagnon	Larry McCormick	Stéphan Tremblay	
Libby Davies	John Godfrey	Rey D. Pagtakhan		

Associate Members

Carolyn Bennett	Michelle Dockrill	Peter Goldring	Patrick Martin
Yvan Bernier	Norman Doyle	Deborah Grey	Réal Ménard
Bernard Bigras	Antoine Dubé	Monique Guay	Lorne Nystrom
Serge Cardin	Maurice Dumas	Joe Jordan	Diane St-Jacques
Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral	Jocelyne Girard-Bujold	Nancy Karetak-Lindell	Suzanne Tremblay
Bev Desjarlais	Yvon Godin	Wendy Lill	Daniel Turp

INDUSTRY**Chair:** Susan Whelan**Vice-Chairs:** Walt Lastewka
Charlie Penson

Pierre Brien	Antoine Dubé	Jim Jones	Jerry Pickard	(16)
Gerry Byrne	Jim Hart	Gurbax Singh Malhi	Nelson Riis	
John Cannis	Marlene Jennings	Ian Murray	Werner Schmidt	
Brenda Chamberlain				

Associate Members

Hélène Alarie	Pierre de Savoye	Rahim Jaffer	John Solomon
Gérard Asselin	Odina Desrochers	Richard Marceau	Guy St-Julien
Bernard Bigras	Jean Dubé	Philip Mayfield	Peter Stoffer
Chuck Cadman	Christiane Gagnon	Alex Shepherd	Daniel Turp
Serge Cardin	Jocelyne Girard-Bujold		

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**Chair:** Paul DeVillers**Vice-Chairs:** Chuck Cadman
Andy Scott

Jim Abbott	Aileen Carroll	John Maloney	John Reynolds	(16)
Reg Alcock	Ivan Grose	Peter Mancini	Jacques Saada	
Michel Bellehumeur	Peter MacKay	John McKay	Pierrette Venne	
Carolyn Bennett				

Associate Members

Bernard Bigras	Richard M. Harris	Mark Muise	Darrel Stinson
Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral	Jay Hill	Lynn Myers	Myron Thompson
Pierre de Savoye	Richard Marceau	Jack Ramsay	Suzanne Tremblay
Jim Gouk	Keith Martin	Svend J. Robinson	Daniel Turp
Michel Guimond	Réal Ménard	Caroline St-Hilaire	Tom Wappel
Louise Hardy	Lee Morrison	Diane St-Jacques	Randy White

SUB-COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT**Chairman:** Paul DeVillers

Jim Gouk	Rick Laliberte	Lynn Myers	Pierrette Venne	(9)
Ivan Grose	Peter MacKay	Jacques Saada	Tom Wappel	

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Chair:	Patrick O'Brien	Vice-Chairs:	Jim Hart David Pratt	
Robert Bertrand Hec Clouthier Gordon Earle Peter Goldring	Art Hanger René Laurin Judi Longfield	Paul Mercier John O'Reilly Janko Perić	George Proud Elsie Wayne Bob Wood	(16)

Associate Members

Rob Anders Leon E. Benoit Pierre Brien	Serge Cardin John Duncan Monique Guay	Francine Lalonde Ghislain Lebel Peter Mancini	Patrick Martin Daniel Turp
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NATURAL RESOURCES AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Chair:	Joe Volpe	Vice-Chairs:	Dave Chatters Julian Reed	
Réginald Bélair Gilles Bernier Serge Cardin John Duncan	Yvon Godin Tony Ianno Ghislain Lebel	Carolyn Parrish Carmen Provenzano Werner Schmidt	Brent St. Denis Guy St-Julien Tony Valeri	(16)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott Hélène Alarie Rob Anders Pierre Brien René Canuel	Jean-Guy Chrétien Michelle Dockrill Ghislain Fournier Christiane Gagnon Jocelyne Girard-Bujold	Jim Jones Gerald Keddy Derrek Konrad Gilles Perron Nelson Riis	Benoît Sauvageau Caroline St-Hilaire Darrel Stinson Daniel Turp
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PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Chair:	Derek Lee	Vice-Chairs:	Marlene Catterall Chuck Strahl	
Eleni Bakopanos Stéphane Bergeron Raymond Bonin Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral	André Harvey Bob Kilger Gar Knutson	Grant McNally Carolyn Parrish Jerry Pickard	John Richardson John Solomon Randy White	(16)

Associate Members

Peter Adams Michel Bellehumeur Bill Blaikie Michelle Dockrill	Normand Doyle Deborah Grey Jay Hill Joe Jordan	René Laurin Eric Lowther Larry McCormick Réal Ménard	Lorne Nystrom Suzanne Tremblay Ted White
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Chair:	Larry McCormick			
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