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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Monday, September 24, 2001**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, September 24, 2001

The House met at 11 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

### SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD AND THE SIR WILFRID LAURIER DAY ACT

The House resumed from June 7, 2001 consideration of the motion that Bill S-14, an act respecting Sir John A. Macdonald Day and Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the bill respecting Sir John A. Macdonald Day and Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day. I find it somewhat curious that a Liberal member tabled this bill in the House, yet their Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is unable to provide his support to the Bloc Québécois to recognize the importance of the deportation of the Acadians.

We, in the Bloc Québécois, are not afraid of calling attention to this great historic mistake because we are not afraid of learning from the past. Indeed, there are a host of reasons why it would be inappropriate for us to support the bill tabled before us this morning. The wording alone indicates that one of the reasons to celebrate the birth of Wilfrid Laurier is because of the fact that he was an ardent supporter of national unity. To which national unity does this refer?

For us, Canadian unity, and all that has been done in its name, represents the main obstacle to Quebec's development. In Quebec, national unity, in the sense of preserving the current federal system, is not the political objective that transcends all others. Rather, it is more of a problem for Quebecers. For sovereignists like us, the answers are to be found elsewhere.

Over and above our constitutional opinion, however, there are numerous reasons the federal parliament ought not to get involved in historical commemoration. First of all, we must be forearmed against the temptation of having an official and politically oriented history, by not giving the Canadian government the opportunity to use history to political ends. Who would be in charge of the celebrations, if not Canadian Heritage, a department that ensures that everything it lays hands on sends out a message of Canadian unity?

There are two nations in Canada; there are two national histories. We should also add the aboriginal perspective of history. Each of these versions places the emphasis on different aspects of historical events and figures. For example, one side of the Ottawa River celebrates Victoria Day while the other celebrates Dollard des Ormeaux.

Let us take the example of Confederation, which the bill describes as “the major accomplishment of J.A. Macdonald”. Everyone knows that Macdonald would have preferred a legislative union that would have made Canada a unitary state, and that he made sure that Canadian federation would be highly centralized.

In fact Macdonald championed the federal idea, and not the confederal idea as people wanted to have it believed, in order to attract the maritime provinces and to overcome the strong reservations expressed by Quebec. Moreover, despite promises to the contrary, the British North America Act was never voted on in a referendum. Even if the Quebecers supported Macdonald's party in the November 1867 election, this must not lead us to conclude that they backed his vision of Canada. Bending the truth, the newspaper *La Minerve*, a propaganda tool—yes, propaganda is nothing new—presented the partners of Confederation as sovereign states delegating part of their rights and powers to a so-called “central” government. What an appealing notion, a partnership between sovereign states. That is what the people of Quebec thought they were embarking on.

Not everyone was taken in, however. Let us keep in mind that there was the “Parti des rouges”—yes, the party to which Wilfrid Laurier belonged—which opposed confederation. In May 1867, Laurier wrote as follows in his newspaper *Le Défricheur*:

We must return completely and directly to the politics of Mr. Papineau, protest with all our might against the new order that has been imposed on us and use whatever influence we have left to demand and obtain a free and separate government.

Of course, after 1867, Wilfrid Laurier ended up playing the game and became a supporter of the Canadian system. He was Prime Minister for 15 consecutive years and continued the work of Macdonald. Yet, is the legacy of these two men unsullied? Talk to those Franco-Manitobans still left. Manitoba might have become the model of a Canada where the two peoples, anglophone and francophone, could live together side by side.

*Private Members' Business*

There was also the hanging of Louis Riel that Prime Minister Macdonald could have prevented, and the elimination of educational rights of the francophones that another Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier, did not have the courage to stop. "It is unfortunate that the Prime Minister is a French Canadian", he said to his friend and former colleague, Henri Bourassa, "because as a French Canadian I do things I would never do were I English".

• (1105)

This is why in today's Canada 19 francophones out of 20 live in Quebec. This was what fate had in store for these two peoples.

Why should the Government of Canada stop at honouring just these two Prime Ministers with a special day? However, the legacy of the greatest Prime Ministers is just as controversial.

Let us take Robert Borden and Mackenzie King, who imposed conscription during the two world wars in the 20th century. There is Louis Saint-Laurent, who oversaw the construction of the St. Lawrence seaway, the first of a series of federal decisions that drained Montreal's prosperity away toward Ontario. I refer to the auto pact and the Borden line, which put Ontario at the heart of Canada's automobile and petrochemical industries.

When we think about it, it is a good idea to recall history. It reminds us more clearly why there is a sovereigntist opposition in Ottawa.

In Quebec, we would have a lot of other great individuals to commemorate. They include Samuel de Champlain, Garagonthié, Marie Gérin-Lajoie, Henri Bourassa, Norman Bethune, Thérèse Casgrain, Gaston Miron and many others. There would not be enough dates on the calendar to celebrate all our great men and women. This is certainly true for the rest of Canada, and we respect that. But it is not our history.

For all these reasons and despite the respect Quebecers feel for past heroes of the Dominion of Canada, the Bloc Québécois has decided to oppose this bill.

• (1110)

**Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, we witnessed the tragic and horrible events that took place in the United States, and we were all profoundly shocked. It was a painful nightmare for each one of us.

It is not my intention to speak about the terrorists' attacks and their repercussions. However, this recent terrible tragedy brought home to us only too vividly that which we hold most dear: our country, our freedoms, and our values as Canadians, our way of life.

In moments of tragedy, the values we cherish shine the brightest, and our desire to preserve those values and see them grow takes on a new urgency.

It is our pride in being Canadians that underlies the bill before us today.

Bill S-14 pays tribute to two of our great prime ministers: Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. This bill will enable us to remain proud of our past and mindful of our heritage.

Some will perhaps wonder what we have to gain by setting aside the birthdays of these two men as special days. The answer is a simple one.

If there is one thing that we have learned from the tragic events of recent days, it is that as Canadians we cannot and must not take for granted everything that we have.

If we pass Bill S-14, we will send a message to all, to current and future generations of Canadians, that we keep in our collective mind the memory of Canada's first Prime Minister and first French speaking Prime Minister.

We will thus show our commitment to celebrate their contributions to Canada, as well as the values and principles on which these contributions are based. We will also show that we are not prepared to take our heritage for granted.

In a world that is increasingly based on global trade, technology and communications, we are constantly at risk of losing sight of our Canadian identity. And this risk will be even greater as we face the challenges of the 21st century. In trying to meet these challenges, we can build on the examples of Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who were men of great value.

At times we may think that our problems are insurmountable and we may also be tempted to lose faith in our ability as a nation to overcome the obstacles before us.

But we could certainly put things in perspective by pointing out the innumerable difficulties faced by John A. Macdonald, Wilfrid Laurier and the other Fathers of Confederation when they were trying to turn a beautiful dream into reality, that is to build a country, to build Canada.

It is also important to remember some of the other great achievements of John A. Macdonald, this great Canadian, including the building of Canada's first national railway, the Intercolonial Railway. This monumental project helped build the infrastructure required to settle the western Canada, develop our economy and strengthen our national identity.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier's contributions were different, but just as important. His immigration policy helped create and define our current society.

A staunch protector of national unity, he believed that both founding cultures could not only coexist, but also forge together a stronger and more prosperous nation, a nation that would serve as a model to the whole world.

Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier had long term vision and their leadership helped Canada grow, evolve and prosper.

Over the past 134 years, we have been put to the test many times. We have experienced wars and the great depression, and we have witnessed major social and technological changes. In fact, we are being put to the test now.

*Private Members' Business*

•(1115)

One of the most potent forces that equips us to meet the challenges of our time is the memory of what those who came before us have contributed and accomplished. That is what lies behind this bill's creation.

I join with other hon. members in congratulating the hon. colleague who introduced this bill. It was a most laudable initiative on his part. In addition, he has given us an opportunity to perpetuate in memory the accomplishments of these two great Canadians. We must seize that opportunity. Let us not miss out on it.

Our role as parliamentarians has a number of different dimensions. We pay attention to the interests of those whom we represent, and we do our utmost to represent them well. We take part in this fundamental activity of legislating, of fine tuning as it were, the rules that govern our society.

Our responsibility as parliamentarians includes another dimension as well. We set an example for other Canadians each time we rise to speak in this House, each time that we vote, each time we take a position on matters of importance that influence the daily lives of each and every Canadian.

Today we have the opportunity to speak out on an important issue. By voting in support of Bill S-14, we will be reminding Canadians of part of their heritage and of the strength we can derive from it as we trace our path through this new century and this new millennium we are just entering.

I would therefore invite all hon. members to reflect seriously on the substance of this bill and to give it their support, for it means not only paying tribute to two great men—Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier—a noble goal in itself, but also forging more solid ties between our past and our future.

[*English*]

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Canadian Alliance it is an honour for me to speak to this issue about two great Canadians, a French Canadian and an English Canadian. What better time than right now to talk about this in the difficult times we are all faced with today.

These two men, Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, were unifiers and builders. They were individuals who saw Canada as a whole, Canada as a nation, Canada as one nation indivisible, a country for all people, embracing the diversity we have; they were individuals who embraced this diversity not as a weakness but as a strength. That is what Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier would have done then and that is what they would have said today.

These two gentlemen would be rolling over in their graves if they could see what has happened to the unification of our country, if they could see how our federal-provincial relations have been weakened, if they could see how the threads, actually steel, that bind us together have been chopped up and put down in order to support smaller and more parochial interests. These men would not tolerate this. They would say how, in this big country, do we embrace what is strong in our country and how do we actually try to improve and build bridges among all Canadians?

They would abhor the fact that in our country language has been used as a political tool rather than as a unifier. Language, an agent of communication and unification, has been used as a political tool to turn one Canadian against another. What a tragedy it is in a country like ours that is fortunate enough to embrace two great languages, English and French, that these languages have been used as a political tool to turn Canadian against Canadian. Both these gentlemen would find this utterly abhorrent.

They would also find it sad to see that federal-provincial relations have come to a stage when provinces are looking to the federal government as to what they can take and individual responsibilities have been blurred and marred so that Canadians are not getting the best bang for their buck, so that political institutions cannot work as effectively as they should.

What Macdonald and Laurier would want to do, perhaps, is ensure that the federal and provincial governments each do what they are able to do best, that responsibilities are well delineated and that we are able to ensure that Canadians are able to get the services they need when they need them in the most effective way possible and that national standards are adhered to. A Canadian who lives in British Columbia or a Canadian who lives in Quebec or one who lives in Newfoundland should be able to receive pretty much the same types of services.

Unfortunately, with the balkanization of critical services in health care and education we do not see that any more. We see dramatic differences across the country. Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier would both want to change that. They would both want to find ways to get some equivalency across Canada today.

They would also see in the country we have today that sometimes we focus on what Michael Ignatieff calls “the narcissism of the minor differences”, where we tend to focus on the small things that divide us rather than the great things that unify us. If the tragedy of September 11 has told us one thing it is that we as a country are one nation regardless of where we live, and that the problems we have within our own borders pale in comparison to the international challenges we have. September 11 has shown us that we live in a global environment with global challenges, where our economy is intimately entwined with the economies of countries around the world, where our individual security is intimately entwined with the security of our neighbours and our allies.

This makes it even more important that as a country we broaden our horizons to see that we have to participate in the global economy perhaps better than we have. Canada has to look to ways to improve our economic competitiveness, not by looking within our own borders but by saying that we will compete internationally. We need to break down the barriers to trade that exist within our country and abroad. We need to lower our tax structure to make us more competitive. We need to improve our education system because we know that a child being educated in Canada today, perhaps in Ottawa, is competing not only with the child in Toronto but with children who live in Tokyo, Beijing, Delhi and Cape Town.

•(1120)

As individuals here, we are competing on a global playing field. The tragedy of September 11 also indicated that our individual security was entwined with our allies.

*Private Members' Business*

Unfortunately, over the last eight years our defence forces have been gutted. Our ground and troop component is less than 55,000 people, when it was 90,000. From a navy perspective, we only have one frigate that is functional.

Again, from the army perspective the minimum requirement for an international endeavour, such as what we will be asked, is a brigade. A brigade is made up of 5,000 men and women. We have not functioned with 5,000 personnel in over nine years. How are we expected to function? Furthermore, our defence department said that for us to transfer 5,000 people it would take more than three months, and we could not sustain that number for more than six months in the field.

Our airlift capabilities are almost non-existent. As a colonel in the military recently said, it is "a near catastrophe". Therefore, we cannot transport them without our voting to rent planes from our allies.

Our CF-18 fighters, one of the most potent weapons we have, is in dire straits right now because we have less than 24 of our 120 that could put into the field. There are questions about whether or not those fighters could actually integrate with the Americans fighters because some of the systems on board are obsolete.

We have superb men and women in our military, men and women who are willing to work hard to ensure that our security will be protected. Yet they have not been given the tools to do the job. They will again be asked to go perhaps to a foreign land to lay their lives down to protect our citizens as well as the citizens of our allies.

The war on terrorism will be an international war to root out those individuals who would rather blow up the negotiating table than sit at it. Unfortunately, negotiations for those individuals are over.

Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier would have ensured that our military had the tools to do the job and that we would be able to meet our commitments, commitments our country made in 1994. Our white paper in 1994 made a whole series of commitments, almost none of which we can meet at this point in time.

Unfortunately, it took a catastrophe to draw our focus toward this, but I am hopeful. We will offer the government constructive suggestions to improve the security of our country, both domestically and internationally.

In closing, the bill is a good bill. These two gentlemen, our former prime ministers, French and English, are true Canadian heroes. We do not do enough to uphold these individuals who were outstanding individuals and Canadians, individuals who tried to build our country.

As legislators today, as we sit here with this great responsibility, we can look back to the past and learn a number of things that will allow us to do our jobs better and more effectively for all Canadians.

• (1125)

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the most recent coalition in the House of Commons to pay tribute to two distinguished Canadians whose career constituted the establishment of coalitions in the House and in the country.

Bill S-14 is an act respecting Sir John A. Macdonald day and Sir Wilfrid Laurier day. The bill, introduced by the leader of the opposition in the other place, Senator John Lynch-Staunton, so far has received in both Houses unqualified support.

At a time when Canadians are thinking so seriously about our future, our future as a comprehensive, cohesive and identifiable national community in a world transformed by technology and our future as individuals in a world where terrorists kill people simply for going to work, it is useful for us to reflect on our past and on the extraordinary individuals who faced down risk, faced down fear and faced down disappointment to define a Canadian nation and identity.

[*Translation*]

Let me speak for a few moments about the origins of this bill and what it seeks to do and what it does not do. It blends into one two private members bills which died on the order paper with the call of the last general election—one bill celebrating the birthday of Macdonald, the other celebrating the birthday of Laurier.

The bill does not ask for the declaration of a national holiday. This is not about a day off. The bill celebrates work. It calls on us to remember two men whose extraordinarily hard work on behalf of Canada shaped and sustained this nation.

[*English*]

By happenstance, the celebration of their lives and their contributions to Canada will occur at opposite ends of the year: in February for Sir John; in November for Sir Wilfrid. This will give Canadians, especially those in our school history classes, at least two occasions to reflect on the building of this great country and on those who contributed so much.

Anyone who has had the honour of serving as prime minister knows that the two standards against whom everyone else will always be judged were Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. They embodied the young country as well as leading it. Each in his way symbolized how essential it is in a large and diverse society to reach out to others, to embrace them and to respect the differences which make them distinct.

Professor Desmond Morton, then director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, testified in the other place. He stated:

They were political opponents with all the differences that our adversarial system creates. Canada made them surprisingly similar, too, when faced with the responsibilities of power because the realities of this country do not change very easily even when governments change...along with their steadfast vision of Canada and its potential came a skill in compromise that history has shown to be indispensable for any common future

These two men were able to lead and lead successfully during challenging times. It was for Macdonald to link and draw the country together and it was for Laurier to hold it together, linguistically and culturally.

Through the passage of the bill, we will give Canadians an opportunity to reflect on how this country came to be, the values it reflects and on how individuals citizens can shape and fashion the values and the nature of this country.

*Private Members' Business*

We Canadians do not spend enough time celebrating our origins. Not enough Canadian history is taught in our schools. We do not know enough of our past. The designation of these days will give all Canadians an opportunity to pause and consider our beginnings as a country and the difficulties faced in the early days of keeping it together.

As Professor Morton has said, the careers of Macdonald and Laurier overlapped. They engaged with each other. They were practical politicians, both with overarching commitments to Canada.

Their time together is perhaps best symbolized by Sir Wilfrid's comments made in the House of Commons on June 8, 1891. In the death of Sir John A. Macdonald he stated:

The place of Sir John A. Macdonald in this country was so large and so absorbing that it is almost impossible to conceive that the politics of this country—the fate of this country—will continue without him. His loss overwhelms us. For my part, I say, with all truth, his loss overwhelms me, and that it also overwhelms this parliament, as if indeed one of the institutions of the land had given way.

Sir John A. Macdonald now belongs to the ages, and it can be said with certainty that the career which has just been closed is one of the most remarkable careers of this century...

He went on to say:

As to his statesmanship, it is written in the history of Canada. It may be said without any exaggeration whatever, that the life of Sir John Macdonald, from the time he entered parliament, is the history of Canada.

Laurier himself had his own indelible contribution to the future of Canada dealing with the challenges of francophones outside Quebec, of the Catholic Church in Quebec and of the threat to national unity posed by World War I.

However, it is in his commitment to a united Canada that we remember him best, as he stated at the Club National in Montreal:

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

We, people of French origin, have a sense of our own individuality. We want to pass on to our children the language we inherited from our ancestors. But while we cherish this feeling in our hearts, we refuse to admit that it is incompatible with our being Canadians. We are citizens of Canada and we intend to fulfill all the duties that this title implies.

This being said, whenever we invite men from another race to our table, we affirm that they are our fellow citizens, just as they affirm that we are their fellow citizens. Our country is their country: their political opinions are our political opinions; our aspirations are their aspirations.

What they want, and what we want, is that the rights of minorities be respected; that our constitutional guarantees be safeguarded; that the provinces remain sovereign and that Canada be united in its diversity.

[*English*]

It is to remember these two leaders that we should set aside the days of their birth in our calendars and celebrate their contributions to the Canada we enjoy today.

On behalf of my colleague the leader of the opposition in the other place, the sponsor of this bill, I would like to publicly thank the member for Don Valley West for sponsoring the bill in this House and I would like to thank all of those in this parliament who have spoken in support of Bill S-14.

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to join in support of this debate. It is particularly a privilege for me to follow the last speaker. I greatly appreciated his eloquence and his particular place in the evolution of this wonderful country.

Recognizing and celebrating a nation's outstanding persons, places and events are integral to the foundation of the land's historical memory and for contributing to the sense of identity of its peoples. Yet commemoration does not deal solely with the past. Who and what we choose to commemorate as a country speaks volumes, not only about who we have been, but also about who we are as a people and who we aspire to be in the future. Only by understanding our history and learning about the lives and accomplishments of the women and men who have built Canada can we fully appreciate what it means to be Canadian.

We are here today to review Bill S-14 which seeks to honour two of our greatest prime ministers, Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It would designate the birthdays of these outstanding Canadians as special days, helping to commemorate their remarkable contributions to the building of our nation.

The intent of the bill is clear. It represents an act of respect and acknowledgement for these two towering figures of Canadian history, one a Father of Confederation and the first prime minister of Canada, the other, Canada's seventh prime minister and one of our nation's most powerful and articulate advocates of national unity.

Most Canadians know that Sir John A. Macdonald led the effort to make Confederation a reality. They know the fact that he drafted the British North America Act defining the federal system by which the original four provinces were united as one country on July 1, 1867. They know the fact that he became Canada's first prime minister and went on to help forge a strong and vibrant new nation. However, perhaps fewer know that it was he who launched the intercolonial railway which would eventually provide a key physical link for Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, linking the vast largely unsettled land in between.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier is recognized by many Canadians as having been an eloquent and staunch promoter of national unity and as the first Canadian of French origin to become prime minister. Fewer Canadians know that he held the longest unbroken term of office as prime minister, from 1896 to 1911. This was a period during which his unshakable confidence in Canada fostered unprecedented growth and prosperity for a still young country.

If we care about preserving and celebrating the achievements of these great Canadians, we must take the initiative to ensure that their contributions to Canada are recognized.

It is time to take appropriate measures to honour these exceptional men. Setting aside special days celebrating the achievement of great Canadians is a well established and time honoured tradition in this country.

*Private Members' Business*

As the bill recognizes, both Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier were forward looking men who saw nation building and unity as the road to Canada's future. Each made profound and lasting contributions to the achievements of a strong and united Canada. The proposed legislation represents one very tangible means of paying tribute to their legacies, and for this reason alone, I believe the bill is worthy of support.

It seems to me that in very difficult times like the ones we are facing, like the House is facing and like the free world is facing, it is particularly important to give some thought to our roots and to our history because that will give us the confidence we need to face the future knowing that Canada was well founded and that she is still a very strong country.

It is a privilege for me to support this bill.

● (1135)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, to thank the hon. member for Don Valley West for bringing this very relative bill, which originated in the Senate, before the House of Commons.

There is no question that we should set aside a day to honour and support the builders of our country. This bill would put forward the particular enactment.

I recommend that the member for Don Valley West convey to the finance minister that one of the problems we have in Canada is the history lessons taught in our classrooms. It is very important that the House pass the bill as an enactment for the particular day, but it does absolutely nothing if it does not reach down to our classrooms.

As a kid growing up and going through the school system in Canada I learned more about American history than I did about Canadian history. I always thought that was a flaw in the process. One of the problems is that the provinces are responsible for the delivery of education.

However I will give credit where credit is due. We have an education minister in Nova Scotia by the name of Jane Purves who is pushing that history be made a mandatory subject in our schools. I could not agree with her more. I say this because she is a minister of education in our province who has gone through some very rough times, most of it brought on by herself. However in this circumstance I support her recommendation.

What better time than now to teach students about the first prime minister of the country and one of the longest serving prime ministers of our country, two people from different political parties who even today have a very strong influence on the way that the House runs, especially in terms of bilingualism.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was stressing that need being our first prime minister of French origin. It is imperative that the House be able to communicate in both official languages throughout the entire country. That is the vision of those two men and it should be honoured by the particular day.

Perhaps the hon. member for Don Valley West would accept a friendly amendment, not that I am proposing one. However if he nods his head I will let him propose the amendment that we not only

make it Sir John A. Macdonald Day and Sir Wilfrid Laurier Day, but also include J. S. Woodsworth who was one of the finest democrats this country has ever seen. Maybe he would like to include that name as part of the bill.

This is not to speak critically in any way of Mr. Macdonald or Mr. Laurier, but at the time they were building the country an awful lot of people were left behind in the vision of the future of Canada. This is where J. S. Woodsworth was effective, along with M. J. Caldwell and the late great Tommy Douglas. These were three democrats who helped build the country.

If the member for Don Valley West wants to throw in the name of J. S. Woodsworth he would have no argument from the New Democrats in that regard.

It is imperative that we recognize the contribution these two gentlemen made to Canadian history, but I impress upon the member to advise the finance minister to ensure that the provinces have adequate funding through the transfer programs to put money back into the classrooms so that teachers have the resources by which to teach Canadian history.

That would do more than just honour the commitment of these two men. It would ensure the memory of these two men in terms of educating our children, which I believe is imperative. If we do not know our history we cannot know where we are going.

I thank the hon. member on behalf of the New Democratic Party for bringing forward the bill.

● (1140)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak to Bill S-14. The bill would recognize Sir John A. Macdonald, who was born on January 11, 1815, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who was born on November 20, 1841. They should be recognized; one English, our first prime minister, and one French, our first French prime minister.

These leaders built far better than they knew. They took a country of regions where there was a natural north-south pole and forged it together into a very strong east-west unity. That was felt impossible at the time. There are many today who still think it is very difficult to do. However they forged together what has been recognized many times as the best country in the world and the best place in which to live.

They built the railways against great financial odds and tremendous geographic natural difficulties. Last spring I had the opportunity to travel by rail through the mountains from Vancouver to Edmonton along with many of my colleagues who were on the Canada-U.S. parliamentary association. My American and Canadian colleagues talked a lot about the history of the railroad. We could see by looking at the rails that were placed through the mountains some hundred years ago the tremendous amount of difficulty that must have been faced by the people to link the country from coast to coast.



*Private Members' Business*

As leaders of the country they rose above the financial and geographic obstacles which must have been both challenging and risky. These leaders had a lot of inspiration and dedication to stick with it to get the job done. These two prime ministers were very instrumental in the expansion of the west as a result of the building of the railroad and much more .

I was not surprised that the hon. member from the Canadian Alliance who spoke earlier was trying to be a naysayer. We have an opportunity to take a look at our history and build on it. This is not the time to bring in current events.

One of our failings as Canadians is that we often look at the negative. We are very fortunate to live in Canada. It has been recognized as the best country in the world in which to live, but it is much more than that. We live in a very tolerant multicultural society where we have brought two great languages and many other cultures together to build this great country. We have such a great foundation as a result of these leaders.

We should be using the debate today when talking about Macdonald and Laurier to build on our past and to talk about how wonderful it was. The hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore talked about there not being enough history taught in our schools. That is absolutely true. There is not enough history taught in our schools. If we do not know our history, we will not know where we come from and we will not know where we should be going.

I also comment on the points raised by the Bloc that we were naming two but that the rest of the heroes were not being mentioned.

• (1145)

There were many heroes in the country. It is important to recognize these two men because they consolidated the inspiration to put the country together, to tie it from coast to coast to coast, and to build on that foundation, giving the opportunity to past leaders and current leaders to build the kind of country that we have today.

I understand the Bloc's point of view in terms of the tactics it uses of confusing history because it makes the cause for separatism that much easier. However it is important to name these two leaders because it allows us to build on our history, to recognize the great leaders of our past, and to give high school and university students the opportunity to use these days when they are named to further study these and other leaders from our past and what they did to build the country.

People often look at the calendar, including myself and I expect others in the House as well, and ask why that day is there. A study was done to determine why the day should be recognized. As a result we have a better knowledge and understanding of our history and of these two leaders in Canada's past.

It is very important for all members of the House to support Bill S-14. As Canadians we have not given enough recognition to the leaders of our past and we have not studied enough of our history. We have not recognized the difficulty of building a nation, the inspiration of these two leaders and the difficulties they experienced in forging the ties to build the kind of country we have today.

With the passage of Bill S-14 these two days would be catalysts that Canadians could use to study our history, learn more and as a result become better Canadians because of it.

• (1150)

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Prince Albert is somewhat relevant to the debate today as it has been home to three prime ministers: John Diefenbaker, Mackenzie King and Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

If I understand correctly, John Diefenbaker was inspired as a young boy to become prime minister upon meeting Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the streets of Saskatoon at which time the prime minister actually took the time to talk to him. In fact, if I am not wrong, Mr. Diefenbaker always considered Sir Wilfrid Laurier to be our best prime minister. I have often wondered why, if that was the case, he chose to pursue the Progressive Conservative path rather than the Liberal path but that is another story.

I have a great regard for Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He was truly one of the real builders and visionaries in this country's past. Being from Saskatchewan, when he became the prime minister of Canada, he was aware that Saskatchewan and Alberta were largely unsettled. He appointed Clifford Sifton as the minister of the interior and gave him a mandate to settle western Canada based on its economic needs and so on. There was a very active recruitment program in Europe, particularly in eastern Europe, to help bring people through the prairies with its cold, long winters to cultivate and farm the land. He was largely successful. It created a mosaic in western Canada of many different cultures of people from many different ethnic backgrounds. Saskatchewan and Alberta truly had a broad representation of many ethnic groups as opposed to what central Canada was at that time, which was largely remnants of the loyalist elements and our French heritage. It was the beginning of true multiculturalism in the west.

I also see Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a great visionary. Sir John A. Macdonald built Canada based on the national plan, which was really a nationalistic type of plan, and a very protectionist concept in many respects. Sir Wilfrid Laurier saw that Canada's future needed to be much larger than that. It needed to be very much tied to North America and our U.S. neighbours to the south. In 1911 he ran an election campaign on something called reciprocity with the United States. He lost that election in 1911. That was probably his most ambitious plan during his time.

Historically, we have seen some strange things. In 1988, some 80 or so years later, it was a Conservative government that abandoned Macdonald's national policy and moved toward Laurier's vision of Canada, a Canada closely integrated and tied to our American neighbours to the south. An interesting paradox is that it was the party across the way, the party of Laurier, that fiercely opposed the free trade agreement of 1988. I think it would be a fair comment to say that today it now agrees with Laurier's vision some 90 years after the fact.

I would reiterate that I see Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a great builder of the foundation and the make-up of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. I also see him as a great visionary leader.

*Government Orders*

• (1155)

I at times wish the party opposite could find that type of leadership again, a leader with great vision and commitment who would not be so concerned about just holding his finger up to see which way the wind was blowing. It needs to recommit itself to building and creating a real vision in the country.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate on Bill S-14. I congratulate my colleague, the hon. member for Don Valley West, for what I think is a very good idea. There are no more important political leaders in our history than Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Although we talk about the first English speaking prime minister, I know Sir John would have wanted it pointed out that he was a Scotsman as was his successor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first Liberal prime minister. We could see the ethnic nature of Canada right from the start.

Sir John was of course the leading Father of Confederation and did a masterful job of cobbling together the kind of compromises that made the country necessary, and that was no mean feat trying to get together peoples of different nationalities and religions, many of whom had bitterly opposed each other on many fundamental points. As the ultimate pragmatist in Canadian history, he was able to lead, along with many other important Fathers of Confederation, and cobble together the compromise that made Confederation a reality.

Canada became a bilingual nation in 1867, not a bicultural nation, as many people have said. That would be to sell short the very culture from which our first prime ministers sprang, the Scottish culture. If were to look at the coat of arms of Canada we would see the cultural symbols of four nations: France, England, Ireland and Scotland. This country began in 1867 as a bilingual and multicultural nation. That is not some new fact or new policy that some would have us believe. I have heard opponents of mine in election campaigns castigating the Liberals for being the party that created multiculturalism. This has been a multicultural nation from day one, even more so now as nations from all around the world have come to join the original four European nations.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the first French Canadian prime minister of Canada and one of the best intellects to ever occupy that office. It is very interesting that we have just commemorated the death of former Prime Minister Trudeau who was also one of the most brilliant men to ever be prime minister of Canada.

One of Wilfrid Laurier's famous phrases was "the sunny ways of compromise". He would apply that approach to Canadian politics because he understood that we could not have a nation made up of as many diverse peoples as does Canada unless we were willing to have give and take.

The flag beside the Speaker's chair is very appropriate because it is a compromise flag. It probably was nobody's first choice or choice of a very few people.

If Macdonald was the ultimate pragmatist, then surely Laurier was the ultimate compromiser in the best sense of the word. He sought to build bridges and not fences. He employed the sunny ways of compromise. If Macdonald was the original Father of Confederation

and master crafter of the nation, which he was, then Laurier oversaw its first major expansion. Laurier oversaw the bringing in of the provinces of the west. He oversaw the so-called people in sheepskin coats, the peoples from eastern Europe, many of whom helped to populate western Canada. Canada also had a major influx of people from the United States at that time.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a major player in our history and took the country into the 20th century from the 19th century. It is no secret that the current Prime Minister of Canada is very enamored of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. I would think that it would be fair to say that Sir Wilfrid Laurier is probably his political hero.

It gave us on this side of the House great pleasure to see our colleague and current Prime Minister take this nation from the 20th century into the 21st century as Sir Wilfrid originally took the nation from the 19th century into the 20th century.

• (1200)

Probably more than most prime ministers, Sir Wilfrid Laurier understood the importance of minority rights, that democracy is about majority rules but not a tyranny of the majority which ignores the rights of the minority. Canada cannot work on that basis. Whenever we descend to that level we run into national problems, which Macdonald and Laurier both experienced.

Laurier dealt with some very difficult issues in his time such as the Boer War, the first international war in which Canada participated. Although we were not fully independent at the time in world events, it was the first international action in which we participated. Sir Wilfrid oversaw that.

A number of my colleagues have spoken about the importance of Canadian history. As a teacher of Canadian history for some 21 years, I could not agree with that more. The ignorance of our own history is absolutely appalling, dangerous and has to be addressed. I and my colleagues who share that view call upon the federal government to do what we can. I know the provinces protect education but we need a national education vision even if it is a jurisdiction jealously guarded by the provinces. As Santayana put it so well, those who do not learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** It being 12.04 p.m., the hour 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.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CUSTOMS ACT

The House resumed from September 21 consideration of the motion that Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

*Government Orders*

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The House will again consider the reasoned amendment put by the hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona. Before the House resumes consideration of the amendment I would submit that it is out of order. The motion as it has been referred to says:

this House declines to give second reading to Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts—

So far, so good. However here is the problem. The amendment adds:

—since the principle of the bill fails to specifically and adequately address national security at Canada's borders with respect to terrorist activities.

Pages 639 and 640 of Marleau and Montpetit, our procedural manual, deal with reasoned amendments. The manual makes it clear that a reasoned amendment:

—must be relevant and relate strictly to the bill being considered.

It must relate not to what is not in the bill but to the bill being considered. A reasoned amendment is not relevant, and I quote directly from M and M:

—if it relates to another bill; is intended to divide the bill; proposes that the bill be withdrawn and replaced by another bill; relates to the parent Act rather than to the amending bill; goes beyond the scope of the bill.

The last proposition is important in this case. Marleau and Montpetit goes on to state that:

It must not relate to particulars of the bill, if what is sought may be accomplished by amendments in committee.

The amendment before us opposes the bill because it asserts that the bill:

—fails to specifically and adequately address national security at Canada's borders with respect to terrorist activities.

That is clearly beyond the scope of the bill. If it were an issue for customs it would also be wrong because it would relate to the parent act, as I have just stated. I am glad the hon. member raised that as justification.

The wording of the amendment renders it out of order. It asserts that the bill specifically omits the matter, a matter which indicates the amendment is beyond the scope of the bill. The amendment defines itself as being out of order.

On the other hand, and in contradiction to the first assertion, the amendment claims the bill fails to address the matter adequately. If that were true the amendment would still be out of order on the grounds that the question of adequacy would be dealt with by a specific clause at a later stage, a case which I totally reject. In other words, if it were a matter of adequacy it could be dealt with in committee later and would therefore render the reasoned amendment out of order.

If security is specifically omitted from the bill, as the amendment asserts, an amendment is irrelevant because it is beyond the scope of the bill. If the amendment's second assertion is true, namely that security in the bill is dealt with but not adequately, the amendment is still out of order because it deals with details of the bill that may be corrected later.

This is not a matter of being fish or fowl. It is neither fish nor fowl. On both these grounds I respectfully submit to the Chair that the reasoned amendment is out of order and does not qualify.

● (1205)

**Mr. John Reynolds (House Leader for the Official Opposition in the House of Commons, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would add to comments of the government House leader that the motion was put to the House a number of days ago. Not only has the mover of the amendment spoken to it but three members from our side have spoken to it as well.

The Speaker moved at the time that the motion was in order. Otherwise we would not be debating it now. The government House leader may perhaps be asleep at the switch but the motion has been debated and approved by the Speaker. Why would the hon. government House leader challenge the Speaker at this late date?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** I thank both hon. members for their representations.

[*Translation*]

The Chair will consider the remarks by the government House leader and return to the House with a decision in an hour.

[*English*]

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on behalf of the people of my constituency of Cariboo—Chilcotin to participate in the debate. The debate deals with issues we cannot consider outside the scope of what happened on September 11.

On behalf of all the people of Cariboo—Chilcotin I offer our sincere and deep regret at the loss of so many people in the United States. Our ties are so intermingled that it was true when the Prime Minister spoke in terms of friends and family. Many of us have not only friends but family in the United States. Many more of us have friends as a result of commercial relationships that have grown deep and strong. However it is those who have family in the U.S., family who are in jeopardy or who have suffered, to whom I offer our deepest regrets.

Bill S-23 seeks to amend the Customs Act and other acts to allow for the preapproval of people, goods and low risk cross-border travellers. It contains an amendment that points out the inadequacy of the bill to which I am speaking now. I have been assured there has been much consultation with industry stakeholders concerning the contents of the bill. We are told the bill is a result of such consultation.

The bill comes none too soon and perhaps much too late. Bill S-23 focuses on risk management. It would implement automated electronic reporting mechanisms such as Canpass Nexus and EPPS for preapproved, low risk commercial and personal travellers so that greater resources could be applied to so-called higher and unknown risk traffic.

Landings under the new programs proposed in Bill S-23 would be subject to random stop checks and a regime of monetary sanctions that match the frequency and severity of the infractions.

*Government Orders*

•(1210)

Why do we need the bill? There is a consensus among our business community, consumers and tourists that as a free trading nation we must maximize the efficiencies of moving people, products and capital across our border.

Canada and the United States have enjoyed the benefits of sharing the largest and longest peaceful border in the world. We share a border with the largest economy in the world. We need to ensure we take advantage of the opportunities of being in close proximity to such a wealthy neighbour. We must prevent any disruptions that would harm those advantages.

In 1995 we signed the Canada-United States accord on our shared border. Its goal was to promote international trade, streamline processes for legitimate travellers and commercial goods, provide enhanced protection against drug smuggling and the illegal entrance of people, and reduce costs for both governments.

Everyone agrees we must do these things to ensure our prosperity. In the past we have managed to increase Canada's trade under the free trade agreement and NAFTA. Let us look at some of the facts and figures.

The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency handles over \$500 billion in cross-border trade and processes more than 108 million travellers each year. Over 87% of our trade is with the United States. The emergence of so-called just in time manufacturing and e-commerce has shortened delivery deadlines from a matter of days to a matter of hours.

All these advancements have created an exponential increase in cross-border volume. However, have we agreed with the United States on reciprocal arrangements that would prevent the bill from becoming a detriment to trade and thereby slowing the process by which our products go into the United States? We should ask for assurances that the United States will take the same measures to ensure a level playing field so that Canadian goods can flow into the United States as easily as American goods and people come into Canada.

Earlier this summer I drafted a short questionnaire for our international visitors. It came out of a number of complaints I have received from our tourism operators that some of their clients and guests have been harassed at the border.

I think of a 70 some year old lady who was detained and given a great deal of difficulty because she intended to come to Canada for more than just a few weeks to care for a sick daughter. She understood the laws and intended to obey them. However the problems she encountered were such that other people who saw them turned back to the United States rather than continue their holiday in Canada. This is only one of many instances of which I have been advised.

In Cariboo—Chilcotin we have many visitors travelling from outside Canada to our beautiful part of the world. Because of the economic situation of today these visitors are absolutely essential to our economy.

On the questionnaire I prepared I asked visitors to tell me about their experiences at our border. I will use their responses to advise

the minister responsible for Canada customs about shortfalls and the lack of good service at our borders.

This is an important exercise because we want tourists to return with their vacation dollars. We want them to feel at ease and not have a problem vacationing in Canada. I am happy to report to the House that the results of the survey were mostly positive, though certainly not all.

At the same time Canadians want assurances from the government that from a national security perspective we can ensure that people, products and capital entering Canada are not an economic, medical or criminal risk.

As a result of the vicious attack on the United States on September 11, our border security has become one of the chief concerns of all Canadians. Apparently the protection of our borders, freedoms and way of life is not the chief concern of the government.

•(1215)

Today's debate on Bill S-23 is late and it is a weak effort under today's circumstances. The bill attempts to streamline border procedures but it is only a start. It does not take into account difficulties that we discussed in the House four, five and six years ago, difficulties that our customs and immigration people are having with their computers in communicating with the computers of other departments and other agencies, where customs and police are not on the same page and where the lack of essential information is not communicated and is not available.

It was only last spring that we were talking about adapting CPIC, the police computer system, to monitor sex offenders and to create a registry. The government turned that down. This in my view is an essential component of the protection of our citizens. The government's refusal to consider this is only another example of its lack of concern for the basic security and welfare of our own citizens.

We are all trying to engage the government in a greater debate on national security, in particular the integrity of our borders, ports, coastlines and airlines. The government continues to turn a deaf ear and to speak to us in the most rude manner. The Prime Minister is hesitating. There is no apparent willingness to move from the comfortable past to meet the urgent, threatening and dangerous challenges not of the future but of today.

Canadians want to see more effective screening and security at our borders and more effective tracking of refugee claimants and permanent residents within Canada. We want the ability to deport suspected terrorists to their countries of origin or the countries where the crimes were committed. Let me say that again: We want immediate action to detain and deport anyone in Canada illegally or failed refugee claimants linked to terrorist organizations. We want an improved ability to detect these dangerous people. We believe that our first priority should be the protection of Canadian people and the safety of all our citizens.

*Government Orders*

We all agree that the threat to our safety is real. Why will the government not take it seriously? This legislation is late and half baked. It does not meet the needs of today and that is why we cannot support it.

Before last week's terrorist assault on the United States, Canadians faced the threat of long waits at the border because the United States was threatening to implement changes. It has drawn up section 110 of the U.S. illegal immigration reform and immigrant responsibility act. These changes would require more in-depth interviews and examination of documents at the border. This would cause considerable hardship to Canadians trying to do business in the United States. That is the threat the United States has been holding over the government's head. The government has dragged its feet when it comes to protecting our borders so the United States is prepared to do something about it. The U.S. has talked about doing the job for the Liberal government by using section 110 of its immigration act.

The Canadian Alliance has supported a move toward more use of technology in terms of how we handle border crossings. We support that. The idea of using the technology of retina scanners and handprint readers, the so-called biometric pass system, is necessary in today's world. We have tried to show the Liberals the work that must be done to protect our citizens and the United States from the long reach of terrorists.

I want to be clear: Canada's porous border is not a reflection on hard working men and women who serve as our customs officers. It is a result of policy decisions that shifted customs from a security mandate to the Department of National Revenue with the prime mandate of recovering tax and duty for the crown.

Our customs and immigration officers should be more than tax collectors, but that is what they have been relegated to.

•(1220)

That is what the Liberals are most concerned about, it seems: collecting taxes as well as collecting votes. When it comes to Canada's immigration and refugee policies, the Liberals seem most concerned about collecting these votes.

Canada has no definition of refugee. The government simply takes those who present themselves at the border and declare themselves to be refugees. Then it is our responsibility to determine the validity of these claims. Why can Canada not use a UN convention definition of refugee and predetermine which legitimate refugees should come to our country to be useful, productive and happy citizens? We need a definition of refugee. Let us make use of the UN definition and know who we are welcoming, know who is coming to our borders and know that we can trust them. There are ways of avoiding those who would come here to harm us.

David Harris, former CSIS chief of strategic planning, declared it is guaranteed that the terrorists are coming. He also referred to Canada as a big jihad aircraft carrier for launching strikes against the United States. In January 1999 a special Senate committee on security and intelligence stated very clearly that Canada is a venue of opportunity for terrorist groups.

Other former senior government staff members have expressed concern. The government has not listened. It is still not listening. The

government must improve our border entry and our exit security. By not responding to the pleas from the United States concerning the openness we have enjoyed along the Canada-U.S. border, the government is jeopardizing billions of trade dollars and tens of thousands of Canadian jobs.

The government should be pursuing policies and laws that protect the lives and livelihoods of all Canadians. We must weigh the concerns about the safety of our citizens and the preservation of an open trade relationship with the United States with our humanitarian responsibility to receive genuine refugees. We can no longer have a policy of admit first, ask questions later.

If the Liberal government is not willing to increase our standard of national security, the United States will not be willing to jeopardize the safety and security of the American people by continuing open access across our long undefended border. If we do not respect and defend that border from abuse by unscrupulous people, dangerous people, it will not remain an undefended border. That would be a great shame. We must do everything for the economic well-being of our citizens, the safety of our citizens and the harmony of this precious relationship we have with the people of the United States of America.

•(1225)

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I have one comment and one question. During this debate there has been some implication that the United States of America is anti-immigrant and anti-refugee. Let us just examine that implication.

Some 400 years ago that country was settled. As far as I know the people who made that country grow and become a country that today has 5% of the world's population and 35% of the world's GDP were immigrants from all four corners of the world. There is no country in the world that is more multicultural, built on immigration and refugees, than the United States of America.

Again, I see a hint of anti-Americanism behind the reaction of some government members: that we cannot really work together with the Americans with a common immigration and refugee policy because somehow they are not in favour of immigration and refugee policies like we are. I just want to set the record straight on that matter. The U.S. has probably been more pro-immigrant and pro-refugee during its history than Canada has.

I have another concern. I would like to draw this question to the attention of my learned colleague for his comments. There has been a suggestion on the government side that in the face of this terrorist threat what the government will do is take a moderate, balanced approach in dealing with this threat with bin Laden and the international terrorist groups and the 40,000 people in Canada who have deportation orders and have not been deported. We will take a liberal, moderate, balanced middle of the road approach.

*Government Orders*

As a student of history, I have a lot of problems with that. If Roosevelt and Churchill in the face of Hitler had said that they would take a moderate, middle of the road approach in dealing with Adolf Hitler and nazis, where would we be? I do not think we are talking about domestic social programs here or some other type of program in regard to which they like to use this terminology and I would like my colleague to respond to whether he could envision the Government of Canada fighting terrorism with a moderate, balanced, middle of the road approach.

**Mr. Philip Mayfield:** Mr. Speaker, is that not an interesting comment that my colleague makes concerning a moderate, balanced approach?

For so long we have prided ourselves on being moderate and balanced, even in immoderate and unbalanced times. We have this little mantra that has been a bit spoiled lately because the United Nations did not declare us to be the best nation in the world this year, but we are the best country in the world, a little mantra with which the government has tried to soothe our people.

When we look at the history of Canada, it has not been those moments of crisis we dealt with in a moderate, balanced way that have made Canada the nation we can be proud of. I was in Quebec City some months ago reviewing my history. It is interesting to note that there were times when we could not even have a balanced and moderate approach with the citizens of the United States. Fortunately since the war of 1812 that has not been something we have been concerned about. However, I think of Canada and the effort it made in World War I, the second world war and the Korean war and those citizens who volunteered, as members of my family did, to defend the principles of democracy and freedom from fascism, from nazism and from tyranny.

Today we are faced with some of those same immoderate forces. We have been told, not by foreign experts but by our own people who care about these matters, that there is a serious threat, yet we are still talking about moderation and balance.

I spent many years in the ministry, years in which I was proud to care for many people. It is something from which I get the most satisfaction. However, there were instances where one would be with someone diagnosed with a terminal illness. One would sit and listen to the moderate, balanced approach of someone who perhaps had a week or a month to live as he talked about what he would do in the next 10 years.

These are times when we must look seriously at the situation we are in and when we must act decisively. When I hear our foreign affairs minister speak in those aggressive tones, I applaud him. I hope his government is listening to him and I hope the Prime Minister is remembering what he said as he sits with President Bush today. I truly hope that our Prime Minister will not have the experience of visiting the woodshed at the White House when he goes there today. He is in danger of that and he deserves it for his moderate and balanced approach to so many issues and so many policies, which has left our country lagging.

I think of our emergency response resources in British Columbia that have been almost totally depleted as far as the government is concerned. The military has been taken away. Unused ships sit tied up. The military airports are practically vacant. The army is gone.

We talk about bringing the resources we might need in British Columbia in the event of a civil emergency over the highways. What do we do when those mountainous highways are closed and there is no way through them? We are talking through our hats in moderate, balanced tones when we need decisive action.

British Columbians are extremely concerned about this. They are talking about it a lot. We need decisions that move us with decisive actions, that will protect and care for our citizens, that will look after the future of our children and see that they are safe.

• (1230)

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's speech with great interest. I have been to the border numerous times. One of the things I find very troubling when I am there is that it is almost like our people are not equipped to handle any type of emergency there. I would like the member to comment on that if he could, please.

Also, there is some talk basically from the American side of the border with regard to creating a perimeter. I look at that very favourably. I would like to know the member's views on that.

**Mr. Philip Mayfield:** Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize once again to my colleague that the lack of resources at our border is the result of policy decisions that are made here in Ottawa.

The men and women on the front line know what they need. They have been asking for them. If responsive and good people engage them in conversation, they would tell them what they need. The problem is that we have different priorities in Ottawa, priorities that do not necessarily include the welfare and well-being of our citizens, the security of our borders.

With regard to an open border with the United States and a tighter border at our ports and airports where people from other continents come into Canada, that is something we have to look at very seriously and adopt. The United States at this time is determining where it is going to be putting its stops at its borders. We do not want them at Blaine, Windsor and Niagara. We want the stops to be secure at Vancouver, Halifax and Toronto where the airports are.

My colleague has raised a most important question. I beg the government to seriously consider it.

• (1235)

**Ms. Sophia Leung (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's action plan.

I wholeheartedly support Bill S-23 as presented by my colleague, the Minister of National Revenue. I cannot stress enough the importance of pushing the bill forward. Bill S-23 proposes to modernize the management of our border, to further encourage trade and tourism, all this without jeopardizing safety and the security of Canadians.

Over the past five years the volume of trade and travel has steadily increased. This surge of activity at the border has compelled the CCRA to re-evaluate how it can best carry out its dual mandate of protection, and trade and travel facilitation.

*Government Orders*

I believe strongly that the customs action plan will serve Canadians well. It will improve the flow of people and goods across the border and will strengthen our country's ability to protect its citizens.

I think hon. members will agree that following the terrorist attacks on the United States it has become even more crucial that this bill become a reality. We need to act now.

Bill S-23 includes a range of enforcement initiatives and services that support the protection of Canadians and the competitiveness of business. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the great majority of travellers comply with our laws and regulations. However there are those who cross our border illegally, some with the intent to undermine the safety of Canadians. The amendments in Bill S-23 can help stop this threat.

At the heart of the customs action plan are the principles of pre-approval and advance information, all supported by technology. Programs such as customs self-assessment and the administrative monetary penalty system are key elements that form the risk management approach detailed by my colleague, the Minister of National Revenue.

Bill S-23 will also enable CCRA to better channel its efforts and resources by concentrating its attention on high risk people or goods trying to enter Canada. Bill S-23 will clarify current laws to allow the CCRA to effectively administrate and enforce its mandate. For this reason the purpose of the changes proposed in Bill S-23 will help Canada customs do a better job of keeping undesirable people and illegal drugs out of this country.

Furthermore the proposed changes in Bill S-23 will give Canada customs more authority in controlled areas of airports and other border points. Those controlled areas not only support the business goals of the Canadian air industry but they will also create seamless connection processes for travellers in a secured and protected environment.

It is important to note that Canada customs will continue to work closely with enforcement agencies and other government departments to address illegal activities and the threats to health, safety and the security at our borders.

● (1240)

The customs action plan is not a downsizing exercise. To the contrary it is about a simplified process and improved efficiency so that business can go on smoothly and efficiently. Nevertheless low risk traders and travellers will still be subject to periodic spot checks when entering Canada.

In addition to the responsibility to control imported goods, the amendments in Bill S-23 also give customs inspectors the authority to reinforce export laws. This is to ensure that exported goods do not pose a threat to Canada or any other country.

I would like to reiterate that as a result of the recent events, these are essential steps toward ensuring the safety and security of Canadians. As indicated by the Minister of National Revenue, I cannot stress enough the importance of Bill S-23 for the Government of Canada to better protect Canadians and to continue to promote trade and investment in Canada. It is essential that we support the

customs action plan and the amendments contained in Bill S-23. Let us not forget that the protection of Canadians should always remain a top priority.

I urge members today to say yes to the bill. By doing so we will contribute to protecting the Canadian population from undue harm.

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, last week the president of Honda Motor Company made it quite clear that because of the bottlenecks on the highway for movement of goods from Canada to the U.S., they could not see themselves making any further or future investments in this country. Magma International, the big parts manufacturer in Ontario, exports a tremendous volume of parts to the United States auto industry south of the border.

There is a high speed, one lane highway system. It is a two lane highway but there is a high speed lane and a lane that is just about completely blocked. There is nothing moving through that lane. The high speed lane is the one the government is dealing with which is the flow of goods from the U.S. to Canada. The lane that is more important to Canadians is the other lane, the movement of our goods into the United States. The United States ambassador has made it very clear that he has a fair number of concerns about some of the things we have been doing in Canada in terms of security. The answers we are getting in the House refer to a moderate, balanced approach, the Canadian way of doing things.

There are other people in the U.S. who are very concerned about our internal policies. The auditor general referred to 40,000 residents of Canada who are not Canadians, people who are subjects of deportation orders but have not been deported.

Our country has security problems that the government has not addressed and it shows at our borders. There was the millennium bomber situation. I hope members watched the special on CBC last night. The French were trying to get search warrants here to deal with the terror cell in Montreal and it took six months before they were approved. The commentator just shook his head at our lax policy.

The question for my colleague on the other side of the House is, what are they going to do to open up the other lane?

● (1245)

**Ms. Sophia Leung:** Mr. Speaker, we all share the hon. member's concern. The reason we have introduced Bill S-23 is to expedite the border traffic and improve the situation. That is the whole purpose as the member has indicated. We are trying to respond to the concerns. It is hoped that we can get the bill passed soon and the situation will improve.

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**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member about a comment CSIS director Ward Elcock made in 1998. Mr. Elcock called Canada one of the world's pre-eminent terrorist targets and revealed that, with perhaps the singular exception of the United States, there were more international terrorist groups active here than in any other country in the world. Just how accurate his words were became evident when a Montreal resident was arrested trying to smuggle bomb making materials into the United States.

Bill S-23 talks about streamlining legitimate cross-border trade and travel. They have set up a process of electronic monitoring, self-assessment, advance information and pre-approvals.

Could the hon. member tell us how will the government balance both those concerns; on one hand, the free movement of goods and people and on the other hand, avoid catastrophes which already have happened where known terrorists in this country have crossed the border with the intention to wreak havoc in the United States?

**Ms. Sophia Leung:** Mr. Speaker, as we know, the reason we have introduced the bill is to focus more on the high risk travellers and the undesirable people. We also intend to improve our computer systems and have a trained staff that will be able to identify the risk individual entering Canada. This is our aim.

In the meantime, the majority of people who come in are law-abiding and without any risk. We are going to shift our focus more on the risk that will occur at our borders. That is our intention. We can do this by approving the bill. We then will be able to address these concerns.

**Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Northumberland, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in light of recent events, we have heard quite a bit about securing the perimeter of North America. It comes down to the question of what sort of consultation are we having with our neighbours to the south?

In that regard could the member tell us what consultations the government has had in bringing forward the bill to the House? It is very important that we know that we are consulting our American counterparts when we bring forward this type of legislation.

• (1250)

**Ms. Sophia Leung:** Mr. Speaker, we know that the RCMP and CSIS work not only with the United States, but they also work in joint force with other countries. I am sure there will be a lot more joint effort to try to address some of the problems, especially those concerning protection and security for Canadians.

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick:** Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the comments about the use of computers and technology to minimize the risk at the border. I suppose that is a very good initiative by the government on that matter, but I wonder how that will deal with this problem.

If we take the situation of the millennium bomber, my understanding of the matter is that he was out of the country and managed to get himself a new passport. The passport changed his name from Ressay to Benni Norris. No matter what computer system was used, nothing showed up on a Benni Norris. It was blank. There was no criminal record and nothing in the background.

If one had punched in Ressay, he or she would have found a lot of stuff.

I think just about everybody realizes that we have holes in our system right across the board. Our passport system is obviously a Mickey Mouse operation.

What can the government say about that particular situation? Will its computer systems be able to deal with phoney passport situations and so on or will it just let it go the way that it has been going?

**Ms. Sophia Leung:** Mr. Speaker, we all know that security is a very complex matter. We all know that terrorists' movements are not restricted to Canada and the U.S. They move all around the world.

We have confidence. Canada is trying to update and improve the many different aspects of security. I know that the CCRA will receive \$87 million to update and improve our system. Our intention is to improve the system for customs and at the border. I have full confidence that the RCMP and CSIS will do so.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I have risen in the House since the resumption of parliamentary business, I wish to greet my fellow citizens of Joliette. It is because of their concerns that I intervene in the debate on Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act.

I note that the aim of Bill S-23 is to modernize customs administration. I think we should have another look at some of the objectives the minister of revenue and officials noted as underlying the amendment of the Customs Act.

The first part is intended to modernize the customs administration by providing for the expedited movement of persons and goods into Canada. Second, it provides for streamlined clearance procedures for low risk passengers by pre-arrival risk assessment of passenger information.

The bill also provides for monetary penalties in respect of designated contraventions. There are a whole series of amendments to the Customs Act and to other related acts.

It is important to take another look at the objectives of the bill, because we must make sure that it meets the objectives set out by the minister and the officials. These objectives are in response to the government's commitment to modernize the management of borders, to reduce legal activities and threats to public security and to raise confidence levels of exporters and individuals travelling abroad.



Does the bill meet these objectives? This is what we would like to know. Obviously, as the Bloc Québécois critic for international trade, I am extremely sensitive to everything that affects the flow of trade. Faster processing at the border clearly has a significant impact on our ability to export to the United States and around the world. In addition, as concerns imports, it is vital our companies be in a position to respond to customer demand and to have the resources, be they natural resources, machinery, technology or individual expertise, at the right time.

In principle, therefore, we do not oppose the bill, nor are we opposed to the desire to modernize our customs system, since the volume of transborder shipments now exceeds \$500 billion and over 100 million travellers enter or leave Canada annually.

As I mentioned, we agree in principle with the bill's objectives. The Bloc Québécois will therefore be voting in favour of this bill at second reading.

However, I must emphasize that there are shortcomings in the bill, which must be corrected before we will give our final approval, before the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of this bill at third reading.

There are four problems: the first has to do with security; the second with fair treatment of individuals and companies; the third with the resources earmarked for customs services generally; and the fourth with mail searches.

As was mentioned, the purpose of modernizing our customs system is to expedite the movement of passengers. Another purpose is to broaden accelerated licence programs, such as Canpass, so that companies identified as being low risk can take advantage of reserved border crossing lanes without having to undergo the usual questioning from customs officers.

These two programs raise some very legitimate concerns—and I think that after the events of September 11, we have a responsibility to be concerned—about security. Furthermore, what regulations will be introduced to provide a framework for putting these very laudable principles into practice?

These regulations are extremely important. I know that the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot raised this point on Friday; unfortunately, the present Liberal government has a tendency to favour using statutes as blank canvases for regulations, as the Minister of National Revenue put it. The result is that parliamentarians are deprived of the full information they need to make informed decisions.

● (1255)

This case is no exception, since the number of regulations set out in the act is not only significant in terms of numbers, but also in terms of quality.

Clause 11.1 (3) reads as follows:

The Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) prescribing classes of persons who may be authorized to present themselves in alternative manners;
- (b) respecting alternative manners of presentation;
- (c) respecting the requirements and conditions that are to be met before authorizations may be issued;

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(d) respecting the terms and conditions of authorizations;

(e) respecting the amendment, suspension, renewal, cancellation or reinstatement of authorizations; and

(f) respecting fees or the manner of determining fees to be paid for authorizations.

As we can see, the bill sets out a principle, but we know absolutely nothing, at this point in time, about how this principle will be applied. What means will be used, what methods and criteria will determine those who stand to benefit from this privileged treatment? Will these regulations guarantee a high level of safety without compromising the steady flow of trade that we require? We do not know this.

As long as we do not know this, we cannot comment on the substance of the bill, despite the fact that we support the principle.

It is the same thing when it comes to fairness. We know that these accelerated permit programs will give the businesses that have access to these permits an advantage over their competitors. We would not like this system and these programs to become a new way to help friends of the government. We would not want people to benefit enormously from this privilege, because it is just that, a privilege, and not a right.

Once again, we need to know what criteria the government will use to determine who will be eligible for these permits, and who will not. As long as there are no regulations, we are unable to judge the substance of the bill, again, even though we agree with the objectives being pursued.

Therefore, if we do not have the regulations, we will not be able to vote for the bill at third reading. As I mentioned earlier, the minister himself described the bill as a blank canvas. We do not want a blank canvas, we want the whole picture before agreeing to support bill S-23.

Moreover, we are not the only ones to wonder about, have concerns about, this blank canvas Bill S-23 represents. For example, Bob Armstrong of the Canadian importers and exporters association, said the following before the committee:

Although we are very supportive of the concepts of the action plan, the association is not without its concerns and reservations when it comes to the implementation of the programs, such as the Administrative Monetary Penalty System, AMPS, and the Customs Self Assessment initiative, CSA. There are inequities in the proposals that we have seen so far and there is not yet an operating plan available to ascertain what the actual impact of AMPS will be. There is much verbal discussion. Everything is still in a draft format so we do not know entirely.

That is exactly our impression today.

Also appearing before the committee was the president of the Canadian Society of Customs Brokers, who said:

There is still work to be done. We must see the proposed regulations. We must better understand the systems changes that will be used to monitor infractions and performance.

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That, I think, summarizes very well what we are asking of the minister and the government. We need regulations so that we may have a debate that is not only calm, but also democratic. Having only half or one-quarter of the information will not let us get a proper idea of the effects of this bill.

So, in order to have a clearer idea of the balance between security and fluidity of exchanges, between equity and fluidity, we want to see these regulations.

There was a third element, which I had mentioned at the start, in addition to security and equity: the government's commitment to injecting the necessary resources. Regardless of what the minister and the government may feel, reorganization of the system, using new technologies and pertinent information must not put us in a position where we cannot take advantage of savings in injecting new financial and human resources in order to ensure that our borders are indeed being respected, and our regulations and legislation as well.

• (1300)

Again, we are not the only ones to think so and I am quoting Bob Armstrong, the President of the Canadian importers and exporters association, who said:

Above all, what the Canadian business world expects from a customs action plan is accuracy, simplicity and profitability.

We feel that these goals will be achieved in the long term but, unfortunately, because of the lack of funding, this could take longer than the agency thinks. This is our other message. We hope that in the future the Government of Canada will provide adequate funding to its customs agency, so that its productivity can be as high as possible.

We should get a commitment from both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Revenue that the necessary resources to implement the act—which we hope will be improved on—will indeed be provided to ensure the administration of this legislation and the safety of Canadians and Quebecers.

One last thing I mentioned at the beginning, along with safety, fairness and the providing of the necessary resources, is the opening of mail. This is not something new. We cannot support this part of the bill. Last spring, when it was learned that employees at the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency were opening mail, it created an uproar in our democratic society, and rightly so. At the time, the privacy commissioner even made the following comment:

The fact remains that the opening up and the reading of mail without a legal warrant or consent are violations of privacy and are most disturbing.

Canada is a free and democratic country in which the opening up of our mail by the government is an extremely strong symbolism. Therefore it must be used only with the greatest—

• (1305)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Okanagan—Shuswap on a point of order.

[*English*]

**Mr. Darrel Stinson:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. On an issue of this importance I find it very strange that the House does not have quorum.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** As we now have quorum, debate resumes.

**Mr. Pierre Paquette:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his intervention. I am happy to see that not only can the number of loaves be multiplied, but that, in the House, the number of Liberals can be multiplied.

I was mentioning a final aspect of the bill, which we cannot support, and that is the examination of mail. I pointed out that the privacy commissioner had intervened, last spring, to criticize this. The current law permits the opening of mailings of over 30 grams in weight. Thirty grams represents a few sheets of paper. This situation, as I indicated, has already been criticized.

Instead of limiting the right of officials to conduct such examinations, the bill intends to give customs officers greater opportunities to open the mail of Canadians and Quebecers.

This amendment is found at clause 99.1 of the bill:

(4) Subsection 99(1) of the Act is amended by adding the following after paragraph (c):

(c.1) at any time up to the time of exportation, examine any mail that is to be exported and, subject to this section, open or cause to be opened any such mail that the officer suspects on reasonable grounds contains any goods the exportation of which is prohibited, controlled or regulated under any Act of Parliament, and take samples of anything contained in such mail in reasonable amounts.

As we can see, this significantly broadens the procedure that already exists under the current act. When she testified before the Senate committee, which was looking at this specific clause, the president of the Canadian Bar Association, Mrs. Dumont, said:

We are very concerned by the provisions of Bill S-23 that seek to significantly broaden the powers of the government regarding the opening and examination of mail. More specifically, we are concerned about the erosion of the right of Canadians to privacy and of solicitor-client privilege.

So, as I mentioned at the outset, we support in principle the objectives of Bill S-23. However, we will not be able to support it at third reading, unless a number of conditions are met, particularly as regards the tabling of regulations that would allow us to get a better idea of the balance between safety and the smooth movement of goods and people, so as to be sure, upon looking at these regulations, that individuals and businesses will be treated fairly and that we have a commitment on the part of the federal government that adequate funding will be provided to the customs agency and, finally, that the provisions allowing for the opening of mail will be withdrawn.

Unfortunately, if these changes are not made, we will have no choice but to vote against Bill S-23. However, I am convinced—and the minister already seems to be receptive—that, by third reading, such regulations will have been drafted and discussed, and the most problematic aspects of the opening of mail will have been eliminated.

[*English*]

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I get the impression from the member's comments that his greatest concern about what is in the bill deals with the issue of privacy. It does reflect on the content of the bill per se.

I am curious as to what the member might think about the amendment that was put forward by the Alliance dealing with the issue of terrorism and the freedom of movement between peoples south of the border. How would he go about securing this continent in a way that would be acceptable to Mexico, Canada and the United States?

• (1310)

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I have not had an opportunity to examine the Alliance's amendments in detail.

It is clear to us that we must work collectively to find a balance between the security of Canadians and Quebecers crossing the border and the necessary fluidity of commercial transactions.

In a context of free trade with the United States and Mexico, if it were to take several hours or days to clear goods at the border, we would lose the advantages these agreements were designed to produce.

From this perspective, there is no easy solution. It is also clear that this cannot simply be left up to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. There is a whole series of other conditions. The leader of the Bloc Québécois spoke about them during the special debate on the events of September 11. Canada in particular must assume its responsibilities with respect to world peace and the development of underdeveloped, or developing, nations, and ensure that the laws are actually respected.

With regard to the use of technologies, the bill proposes that the necessary resources be made available to ensure that these laws are respected. I think that the comments we have heard from those representing groups such as the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, or exporters, indicate that, as we speak, we do not have the resources necessary to enforce this law, even with all its shortcomings.

A law using additional new technologies and information will require resources. In this regard, we are waiting for the government to make a firm commitment during this debate.

[English]

**Mr. Art Hanger:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's response to the content of the bill. I will address my next question to one of his concerns about the bill and not the Alliance amendment. The Alliance amendment basically deals with security matters.

In the member's comments he made reference to the movement of manufactured goods between Canada and the United States. I have had the opportunity, as have other members in the House, to examine how goods actually move through the Canadian side to the American side of the border and vice versa. The Americans have stepped forward with some very state of the art detection equipment where they no longer need to tear everything apart inside a container or a truck to see what is in it. They have a device that can x-ray the truck to determine if it contains people, goods or other questionable goods, such as drugs.

When I was last at the border it was with the member for Wild Rose. We were very much aware that one in twenty trucks would be

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checked at the border but when the line-up became too long some would not be checked at all. They would just drive around checkpoints and away they would go. There were times when the police would chase one or two of these units but needless to say many got away without any check.

With the situation as it is today, with border security tightening up, it is not necessarily tightening up for manufactured goods going back and forth but for the threat of the wrong kind of people coming through the border points. They may slip south or they may slip north. If we do not deal with the security side of the matter our manufacturing side may get hurt too because of long line-ups and the demand from our friends to the south for restricting that movement until everything is checked to their satisfaction.

What should Canada do that would assist or augment what exists presently in developing a better security arrangement to move manufactured goods through that border point?

• (1315)

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we agree on the objectives of this bill in this connection.

Indeed, all shippers, all truckers, all manufacturers, cannot be treated in the same way. Clearly, a number of them, because of their past performance, their reputation, their credibility I would say, represent less of a risk than others who are less well known, because they have been in the business a shorter time or have had fewer contacts with Canada.

In my opinion, we cannot therefore be opposed in principle to this idea of having a concentration of resources toward companies or individuals which are considered to be a higher risk than others.

Now the question is whether we are going to differentiate between a high risk company, a medium risk company and a low risk one. While I agree in principle, I must say that I do not know the answer for the moment, since we do not have the regulations.

It seems to me that if the minister's approach is a serious one, he must introduce the mechanisms by which the department will indeed determine this and the method it will use to ensure that companies or individuals deemed to be low risk are indeed that—even if there will always be a minimum of checks to be carried out at the border itself—and will be differentiated from those of medium and high risk as far as security is concerned—and I share the hon. member's concerns—but also as a matter of equity.

A company that benefits from this special border-crossing right will have a competitive advantage over another company. This can become a very easy way to encourage undesirable illegal traffic. The very principle of a bill that is aimed at risk management at source, that is with the shipper, the manufacturer or the passenger, is an interesting one. That said, as long as we do not have the regulations, the principle remains one on which we cannot form an opinion.

That is why I have already said that, without the regulations, we will not be in a position to vote in favour of Bill S-23 at third reading.

*Speaker's Ruling*

[English]

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## CUSTOMS ACT—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before we resume debate, I am now prepared to rule on a point of order raised by the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons concerning the amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts, which is presently before the House.

The amendment, moved by the hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona, is in the form of a reasoned amendment. A reasoned amendment, according to *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, page 638, is one which “—allows a member to state the reasons why he or she opposes second reading of a bill—”.

Concerning such an amendment, Marleau and Montpetit states further, at page 639, “It must be relevant and relate strictly to the bill being considered”.

According to the summary of the bill, Bill S-23 seeks in part to amend the Customs Act by “—providing for the expedited movement of persons and goods into Canada—”.

The hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona objects to the second reading of the bill because, and I quote, “...the principle of the bill fails to specifically and adequately address national security at Canada's borders with respect to terrorist activities”.

Marleau and Montpetit also states at page 639:

A reasoned amendment may be declaratory of a principle adverse to or differing from the principles, policy or provisions of the bill...

The Chair has examined the amendment very carefully in the context of the purposes of the bill. I am satisfied that it does not contravene any of our rules or the usual practice of the House with respect to reasoned amendments. The amendment is in order.

• (1320)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to hear that the amendment is in order. I certainly hope members of the government will pay close attention to the reasoning behind that.

I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill S-23 today. In essence, there are some good aspects to the bill. Who could argue with measures that would allow for pre-approval of travellers and reduction at the border of waiting times for Canadian bound trucks. At the time of the production of the bill, not a lot of people could, but that was prior to 9.30 a.m., September 11.

In light of these tragic events, the principle of the bill fails to specifically and adequately address the national security at Canada's borders with respect to terrorist activities.

The world as we know it has changed. The Liberal government should be taking this time to revisit and review all its legislative proposals. This has become the most important issue of our time.

I want to take a moment to thank our frontline customs officers, especially those who, in the aftermath of September 11, have been working around the clock, checking thousands of travellers seeking

entrance into Canada. They have done a tremendous job with limited human, technological and financial resources. We really need to take a close look at what is going on.

I had the pleasure of visiting a number of the ports of entry across the western part of the country during the summer. The morale is very low, and there are a lot of good reasons why it is.

I will give an example of a letter I received from one of our frontline customs officers. He said “In light of the recent terrifying events in the United States, I feel it is time that we demand my employer, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, take the steps needed to equip me to do my job. I am now more afraid than ever to do my job.

Allow me to explain the current law enforcement related equipment that I have been issued. I have a pair of handcuffs and a bulletproof vest. I need pepper spray, a baton, a sidearm to do my job properly and protect the people of Canada and myself”.

He goes on to say “At present should I come into contact with a violent subject, including one who is threatening my life, I am to allow him to enter Canada and I am to contact the RCMP to deal with him or her”. This has to be the most ridiculous instruction that has ever been given to any law enforcement officer in history.

The letter continues “If at my location I release the subject, the RCMP would never find him. They are too far away and are so poorly staffed here there is no way they could contact the person. Furthermore, what would the taxpaying public think if they found out that a customs inspector just allowed a dangerous individual to come right into Canada, offering absolutely no resistance whatsoever.

I feel that the problem with customs is that we are a law enforcement agency being managed by people with no law enforcement background. They are more concerned with image and public and business convenience than they are law enforcement. We here are the front and the first line of defence for Canada. I for one would like the equipment to do my job with more competence”.

He continues on to say “If you would like examples of the image statement, let me inform you of the following:

• (1325)

Neither our shoulder patch nor our badge say officer or inspector, they simply say, Canada Customs. Our bullet-proof vests have a reflective strip on the back that also reads the same.

I looked at my U.S. counterparts this week during this time of extra security and their vests read in bold print “Police U.S. Immigration”. My silly lettering is a mere three quarters of an inch, a stunning example of image”.

He went on to say: “Presently, our officers at large ports have been issued pepper spray and batons, however, we at places where we work alone have not been issued these tools. This is an example of the backward thinking of the agency. They have issued the safety equipment to places where there is always another officer available for assistance, however, where I work alone, I am defenseless.

*Speaker's Ruling*

I would be happy to discuss this matter or any other customs related matter with you at any time. Just a quick request though. Please keep in mind that my agency is very heavily controlled by the Privacy Act and we have been discouraged from speaking to members of parliament. Please, in the interest of my career, could you please allow me my anonymity. Unfortunately we work in an environment where speaking out is very strongly discouraged”.

At a time of this tragic event, the fellows and women who put their lives on the line at the borders are being controlled. They are being told not to talk to members of parliament, especially if they are from the opposition or they will be in serious trouble. The same thing happens in the penitentiaries with prison guards and security officers. They are told not to talk to MPs. They discourage that, especially if they are members of the opposition because they might talk about the very things that this officer is talking about.

Talk about low morale. He is fearful of losing his career and being fired because he speaks out. These people who are on the front line should be speaking out louder than ever.

I recall the visit the member for Calgary Northeast and I had on a trip to Fort Erie on the border. We saw exactly what he was referring to in terms of free flow of traffic. We remember him standing on the edge of the bridge looking at the boats. We asked the officers what was in the boats that kept coming to Canada. They did not know. However, they said that if it looked a certain way it was probably cigarettes. If it looked another way it was probably whiskey, or guns or it was smuggling people. They did not know because they had no ability or resources to stop them and check to see what they were bringing.

The member for Calgary Northeast and I saw with our own eyes.

Who receives them when they land on the shores of this great country? Nobody. When I went to certain border crossings and talked to the customs officer, they said that. However, they said if I wanted to take a trip with them, we could go 200 yards to the east or 200 yards to the west and they could show me all kinds of trails of comings and goings because there were no officers.

● (1330)

The bill must not be brought forward at this time because, as our amendment says, it is totally obsolete. It does not address the needs of our time.

Last week the revenue and immigration minister attempted to put a principled plan in place, but the *Globe and Mail* published a confidential internal government bulletin issued to our border guards regarding risk assessment. Instead of these ministers immediately announcing an investigation was underway, they decided to waffle over the political correctness of racial profiling, and the *Globe and Mail* was busy defending its civil liberties. How can Canadians be confident that any other confidential documents are not going to be leaked during this critical time in our history?

There should have been an investigation announced immediately regarding this confidential crisis type information being leaked.

We are talking about law enforcement. Maybe it is time to take a look at the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency bureaucracy and those who work in it. They are not law enforcement officials.

Perhaps this whole area should be taken out of that portfolio and placed in the portfolio of the solicitor general or justice department. They have the criteria and the knowledge of law enforcement, whereas Customs Canada has no knowledge or experience with it.

Why is Revenue Canada now suddenly the body of people who will look after the major security of our country and our borders? I am afraid it does not make a lot of sense to me.

I will speak about another decision the revenue minister made this past week, which was a good one. The decision was made to suspend the Canpass program for motorists, small planes and boats entering the country. The program allowed prescreened motorists automatic border crossing and the pilots of small planes to land at Canadian airports after reporting to customs by telephone. The program was cancelled for security concerns. It will not be long, though, before this program is back up and running. How can we ever trust this honour system again?

Private aircrafts with less than 15 passengers are free to land at any airport, without customs inspections, merely by calling a central phone number to report their arrival. To make matters worse, the itineraries of these planes are considered confidential information by NAV CAN. Therefore, customs truly is working blind.

Does it honestly make sense to the minister of customs that we do not search all international flights? This mindset has to change. The world as we know it has changed.

Let me recount another story, with which I am sure most members are familiar. It was a story in the Windsor *Star* of September 18. This is an example of how far we have to go. It states:

“Have your ID ready”, Al Williams barked as the chartered bus emerged from the Windsor-Detroit tunnel and approached the U.S. customs.

Williams, a retired Daimler Chrysler worker, was looking forward to the Sept. 9 game between the Tigers and the Blue Jays at Comerica Park and he didn't want some bozo who couldn't find his birth certificate making them late.

He needn't have worried. The bus, one of five chartered from Transit Windsor by the CAW, wouldn't be going through the border routine so familiar to Windsor residents. Step off. Show ID to the bored officer. Hop back on. Nope. There would be no eyeball contact with a pistol-packing U.S. customs officer this time. No contact, period.

“Nobody came on board. The bus never stopped. They sailed right through and went straight to Comerica Park. What the (heck) is going on here?”

● (1335)

Williams had heard all the media chatter about erasing the border, but he couldn't believe it had gone so far as the junking of all controls on entry to the U.S.

He was especially intrigued because there were strangers on the bus who didn't strike him as being either baseball fans or CAW retirees. Curious, he looked for them at the ballpark. No sign of them. If they went to the game, they didn't sit with the others.

Two days later our world was turned upside down with the terrorist assaults on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and an angry Williams found himself thinking about how a mere baseball ticket had been a hassle-free passport to America.

The story doesn't end there. On the way back, several young males Williams had never seen before pounded on the door of the bus as it neared the tunnel. The door opened and they filed aboard.

Waived through.

*Speaker's Ruling*

Back in Windsor, A Canadian customs officer stepped up and asked if anyone was a U.S. citizen. Nobody responded. The bus was waived through and as it left the tunnel compound the young men were dropped off at their request on the nearest street corner.

The incident left Williams scratching his head. How could the gatekeepers in both countries be so lax? How could U.S. officials let people anonymously enter America just because they have a baseball ticket? How could Canadian officials let hitchhikers, who might or might not have been residents of Canada, enjoy a free and unaccounted for ride into this country?

In a lot of ways, both the U.S. and Canada have been living in a fool's paradise. I do not intend to be a scaremonger, but I truly believe the legislation must be reviewed and strengthened. This is a pre-September 11 piece of legislation. This is a post-September 11 world and the legislation must be changed quickly. It must reflect the need for top security at our borders. It must be a high priority.

We have witnessed and felt the hurt of what can happen with a group or network of people who have no regard for human life and who do not really care about rules and regulations. For us to sit, be cautious and say we must have a balanced approach is foolish. When we introduce legislation, the security of the country must be a major component. We must equip the people who guard our borders with the tools necessary to the job and remember that they are a law enforcement agency. They are necessary to protect the lives, property and welfare of all Canadians and we must treat them as such.

The day might come very soon when I will make some kind a motion and recommend that the government pull this organization out of Customs Canada and give it to a law enforcement agency that has some knowledge of what we need to do. We need to stop treating them with kid gloves. We need to stop looking for excuses and causes.

• (1340)

In the war upon our neighbours to the south thousands of lives have been lost. It is no time to sit around and be foolish with pieces of legislation like the bill before us today.

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member's words make me think of babies and bath water.

He talked about one of the most successful borders in the world. It has been in that position for decades and decades. It has been a remarkably successful border not because there is barbed wire, trenches, machine guns and minefields all along it, but because in a sense it has been open.

The member spent all his time talking about arming the police, meaning the customs officers, along the border. I do not want undesirables coming into Canada and I do not want us to send undesirables to the United States but to think of arming that wonderful productive border, it has been productive in economic terms.

Think of how the two economies have benefited from the border as it was. Think of how it has been in cultural terms, the exchanges, what the Americans have gained from us and what we have gained from the Americans culturally. Think what it would mean to a number of families. I would guess there would be some families in this room, including my own, who have relatives on the two sides of it. With reasonable security, over the years those families have been able to visit each other, to go back and forth for each other's Thanksgiving and that kind of thing.

I ask the member to think about this. These are very difficult times. People in Canada and in the United States are facing very difficult times. We are all upset. One of our jobs here is to show real leadership, which brings me back to babies and bath water. Does the member really want to throw the baby out with the bath water and make it a fortified border, ruining commerce, and social and cultural exchanges, or does he want us to proceed in some reasonable fashion? Let us by all means fill in the gaps, the problems that exist, but let us hope that in the end it will stay the largest unguarded frontier in the world.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, that does not surprise me at all coming from that side of the House. The status quo seems to be satisfactory because it has worked so well. I agree that before September 11 that was the case but because of the events of September 11, it is now time to seriously look at what we can do to secure our countries from terrorism. We need to keep up the flow of trade and those things that have been so good for both countries for a long time. My point is that this legislation will not do that. It is missing a very important principle. It has not dealt with it at all.

I have crossed the border probably as often as if not more than anybody. I lived 35 years in one country and then moved here. I am glad that Canada is my home now. At the border I like to see things flowing freely and with security. I would like to see the border as open as much as possible. What does not make sense to me, and the member certainly did not mention it, is what we will do in the meantime now that we know the capabilities of terrorist organizations. They exist and they are a definite threat to the innocent lives of thousands of people.

Is the member suggesting that we do not tighten up things, that we do not listen and that we do not put a better defensive system at the border? The guards themselves are asking for a better system.

Of course, the member probably does not know much about law enforcement and he would not dare listen to someone who has done it for a number of years. However, from his other comments it is easy to judge that he must never have been confronted with having to enforce a law that is being broken.

I am sorry but this is a time when we cannot play Mickey Mouse and pussyfoot around with such an important issue. I would love to see things flowing freely and openly at the border. However, we have to do a better job of making sure that those who are coming into one country or the other are not coming in for the purpose of destruction. We are not doing that with the legislation that is before us today. Now is the day to do it.

I can guarantee that the border points going south into America have quickly changed in structure and attitude as a result of the events of September 11. We need to see what is happening. We need to understand why it is being done. We must break the network of terrorism in this world and we must do it collectively. We can do it as long as the attitude that I just heard changes to some degree, and it will have to, like it or not.

*Speaker's Ruling*

• (1345)

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for his comments. It concerns me that if we continue with this reasonable approach to crossing the border which we have historically been able to maintain, we are in danger of losing the contacts in the United States that we already enjoy.

These people are serious. I look at the president of the United States when he says that there is no room for negotiation and no room for discussion on this issue. When the president says this is the way it is going to be, I believe him. I believe he means what he says.

It seems to me that we do have some choices. I do not want an armed border either. I enjoy freely crossing into the United States and back again. I have always had that pleasure at the border. I want it maintained. I want my colleagues in the House to know that.

It seems to me the choice is to be sure that nobody goes into the United States who will harm the American people or they are going to look after the job for us. It is going to be an armed border whether we like it or not.

It seems we have a choice for our ports and airports and those who would come in from other destinations outside North America. If we can assure that those who come to our country can go to the United States safely, our relations with the United States will be much simpler.

Having made those comments, I would like to ask the member for Wild Rose for his comments about how he sees the necessity of maintaining the security of Canada as well as the security of the United States in our immigration or cross-border policies.

• (1350)

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that a tragic event has to make us all stop and think about the situation. If the government decides to be firm and insists that for the safety and welfare of all citizens on both sides of the border things are going to have to be toughened up, there will be things we are not accustomed to in terms of policing our borders to protect people as best we can. In order to accomplish that we have to reflect once again on the tragic events of September 11. We must reflect on the determination, the capability, the lack of care for human life that is obvious in the mind of a terrorist. We must take all measures possible to stop a terrorist.

When I spoke about this the other day, what did I get from a Liberal? He said that we have to be cautious and take a balanced approach, that we need to get to the root cause. He said that we should not be like the member for Wild Rose who wants to jump on his horse, grab a posse and stamp them out.

If you suckers keep that attitude, I tell you, we will be in a lot of trouble.

**The Deputy Speaker:** To the member who last spoke, no one questions the strong views that can be held on a very important subject as is being debated in the House today. However, the member is a very experienced parliamentarian and I know he would normally make all of his comments through the Chair. I would seek his co-operation in being a little more judicious.

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Chair. I had a memory lapse as to where I should direct my comments. I think those members know how I feel about it and I will leave it at that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Wild Rose for his comments. I am sure everyone knows how everyone else feels. Not to take anything away from the importance of the subject matter, I will now resume questions or comments.

**Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I took note of the frontline research that the member for Wild Rose did as far as our customs and border systems are concerned. Over the past 15 years anyone taking a masters of business administration at any good school of management would get into total quality management. It states that if quality is improved then results are improved. It involves having a system which is continuously improved to get better results.

The system is improved by eliminating fear among the frontline workers. Another way of getting continuous improvement is by getting meaningful input from frontline workers. One thing that should not be done under that theory is dictating or ordering results. Results have to be managed and a team has to be in place to achieve that.

I detected a great deal of fear among our frontline workers in the customs department. The fear goes so far that they feel they cannot speak to a member of parliament about the problems they are experiencing.

Any modern management system in the private sector would say that these are signs of a system that is not working. It is based on fear and commanding results, and it does not work.

If we want a quality system then we have to throw that out and find a different way of doing things. This does not have the signs of a quality system. Would the member for Wild Rose have any comments on that matter?

• (1355)

**Mr. Myron Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, there is one thing that is certain. There is fear in the people who work at our borders and in our security systems. I am very proud of them and I take my hat off to them. When they explain to me the difficulties they are facing I get vibes that their fear is not for themselves but for the security of the country and its inhabitants. They are dedicated to doing a job that they know has to be done.

They are simply asking to be listened to in terms of how to do the best job they can. They are no longer interested in getting guidelines and information sheets from bureaucracies that do not deal with national security, law enforcement or those kinds of tools of the trade. It is a revenue agency.

It is time to get some guidelines from those who work in the field of law enforcement and national security. Let the guidelines come from and work through them. They should be given the freedom to openly discuss with members of parliament how they can best do their jobs and be allowed other opportunities they may have.

*S. O. 31*

It is shameful and discouraging that so many of the people working at the ground zero level in our protection, security and customs services are instructed not to speak with MPs, especially members of the opposition. That is a crime in itself.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### HOME CHILDREN OF CANADA

**Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise in the House to commemorate the Home Children of Canada. The role of these special children in building and shaping this great country of ours will never be forgotten.

On August 19 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada dedicated a plaque commemorating Canada's Home Children to the Annie Macpherson Home at 51 Avon Street in Stratford.

While Home Children were sent to virtually every corner of Canada, this Stratford home played a crucial role by receiving between 7,000 and 8,000 children.

In late 19th century Britain, cyclical unemployment and chronic poverty had a profound impact on the urban industrial working class. Families were forced to surrender some or all of their children to orphanages and rescue homes. Many of these orphans were sent to Canada as Home Children.

The experience of these children has had a profound impact in helping to change social policy in areas such as child welfare, child labour and immigration. I am pleased to commemorate the Home Children of Canada and acknowledge its national significance.

\* \* \*

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is meeting with President Bush today. Let us look at what Canada can offer under a Liberal managed military. The minimum number of troops the Americans would require is 5,000. Our army has not practised at that level in over nine years. The Department of National Defence said it would take at least three months to deploy and we cannot even sustain these numbers for longer than six months in the field.

Our airlift capability deployment is quoted as a near catastrophe by our own defence people. Nineteen of our thirty-two C-130 transports are 35 years old and in need of replacement. The navy has one functional support ship that it can send out. Due to our losses of manpower only seven can be sent out at any one time.

Our Sea King helicopters are 35 years old and falling out of the sky. Most of our CF-18 fighters are obsolete and cannot integrate with the American air force.

Nearly 40 Canadians died in the tragedy in the United States but our government has gutted the military and our ability to protect ourselves here and abroad.

● (1400)

### RICHARD JAROSZONEK

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Dr. Richard Jaroszonek of Peterborough died recently in a highway accident. Dr. J., as he was known, was a fine surgeon who was a beloved member of our community. He was a physician who took a personal and compassionate view of all his patients. The whole community misses him.

Dr. J. was born in the United Kingdom and graduated from the University of Toronto. He practised in Peterborough for more than 20 years. He was well liked and professionally admired by his colleagues. This is a great loss to our Peterborough medical system.

Our condolences go to Nancy, their children and other members of Dr. J.'s family. We want them to know that the entire community is thinking of them and praying for them at this difficult time.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### SOFTWOOD LUMBER

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, currently, France Gagnon, the CEO of Précibois, a family business in Barraute, in the great Abitibi region, is very concerned about the U.S. decision to impose harsh measures on her company.

As in the case of previous trade dispute over softwood lumber, it was vital that countervailing measures be applied to the primary mill price.

The U.S. decision to impose this measure on the last mill rate means that the unsubsidized remanufacture sector is hit first and hardest. If this measure remains, the industry could disappear.

For the good of the managers and forestry workers of this fine business, the Minister of International Trade must have this value added sector excluded from the trade dispute immediately.

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### CANADIAN FORCES

**Mr. Jean-Guy Carignan (Québec East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to draw the attention of the House to the Canadian Forces' parliamentary program, developed by the Minister of National Defence and aimed at making elected representatives aware of the day to day experiences of the military.

In early July, I had the opportunity to take part in the training given the soldiers of the 3rd battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment based at Valcartier in preparation for an upcoming mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[*English*]

By this visit I was able to notice the high level of satisfaction of the troops and their officers toward their lifestyle in general. This is the direct consequence of a \$3 billion investment from the Canadian government in the national defence department in the past three years.



S. O. 31

[Translation]

Throughout its history, Canada has carved an enviable place for itself internationally through its leadership in humanitarian aid.

Despite the very singular nature of last week's events in the United States, I believe the Canadian Forces will carry out this sort of a mission worthily if called on to do so.

I am proud of what our fellow citizens, the military, do here in Canada and internationally.

\* \* \*

[English]

### INTERNATIONAL AID

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it has been noticed that the government is contributing \$1 million to the UN High Commission for Refugees to assist refugees from Afghanistan. The question to CIDA is how and where will the UN spend this money? The government must be cautious as to where the money goes. Did CIDA discuss with the UN how it would disburse this assistance?

This is the time to seize the opportunity to develop a comprehensive social and economic assistance package for our central Asian allies. It is in the interests of the free world that we eliminate the breeding ground for terrorism. We notice that the U.S. has rescheduled its loans to Pakistan and lifted sanctions on India and Pakistan, which is a welcome development.

We stress the need for a comprehensive, long term social and economic assistance package for our central Asian allies.

\* \* \*

### TERRORISM

**Mr. David Price (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, September 11 will remain in our minds forever. We will remember where we were and what we were doing. I was privileged to be at CFB Trenton and to see firsthand the speed and professionalism of our Canadian forces.

During the first hours the command centre went into operation in preparation for any possible situation that might occur. Base security was increased. Our DART team went into a high state of readiness to respond to whatever task it was given.

Extra air and maintenance crews were brought in. Planes were readied and moved to strategic locations. The family resource centre prepared for extra child care services to accommodate military families whose shifts had been increased or changed.

On Wednesday I accompanied a Hercules to Halifax which was loaded with cots and blankets for those who would find themselves stranded in locations they never planned to be.

I was very proud to be a Canadian while watching our Canadian forces hard at work. This was not a drill. This was reality and they were ready.

● (1405)

[Translation]

### LUMBER

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the lumber issue requires a constant show of solidarity by all the parties concerned. A whole segment of our economy depends on it. Quebec's 1,318 sawmills and 40,000 forestry workers could be financially affected by the situation.

Until the final ruling is issued by the appeal body to cancel the unjustified retroactive duties of 19.3%, workers want assurances, for them and their families, that minimal protection will be provided during additional unemployment periods in forestry regions.

The federal government must follow up on the unanimous report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, so as to correct the employment insurance program and give it back its primary role of providing an income during periods of unemployment.

I say to the Minister of Human Resources Development, the Minister for International Trade and the Prime Minister that they must urgently take action on these unanimous recommendations, so as to contribute in a concrete fashion to the maintaining of the solidarity that will allow us to get justice for the whole lumber industry in Quebec and in Canada.

\* \* \*

### PROSTATE CANCER

**Mr. Jeannot Castonguay (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for men, prostate cancer is the second most common type of cancer and the second leading cause of death by cancer.

However, a recent discovery, made possible by funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, is raising hopes in the fight against this disease.

A team led by Dr. Jacques Simard from Laval University's CHUL research centre, and Dr. Johanna Rommens, from the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children, recently discovered a gene that causes prostate cancer.

This discovery is important because it is difficult to determine the specific genes that are responsible for diseases such as prostate cancer. While it is still too early to develop a genetic test to detect prostate cancer, this discovery will provide the key element for early diagnosis and a more appropriate treatment. It is a first step toward similar discoveries.

Drs. Simard and Rommens are true Canadian heroes. I am proud to be a member of a government that not only had the insight of establishing a body such as the CIHR, but also pledged in the throne speech to significantly increase its funding.

Investing in research today will make all Canadians benefit tomorrow.

*S. O. 31*

[*English*]

### NATIONAL SECURITY

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the flags have just been raised and the mourning called to an official end by the president of the United States to show terrorists that America is again at work. From the half-mast of sorrow, the world's efforts now turn to the resolve of war on terrorists, but what lessons have we learned from our past?

For years we have called on the government to strengthen Canada's armed forces, to make safer our porous borders from terrorists, and to make immigration more attainable to those who will abide by our laws rather than to the lawless.

Today Canada's security suffers from years of neglect. I call on the government to act today to set up a Canadian ministry of homeland security to demonstrate the will to improve our national security and to standardize North America's security efforts to erase the belief that Canada is North America's weakest link.

\* \* \*

### PESTICIDE AWARENESS DAY

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in June the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of municipalities and their powers to ban the spraying of pesticides for cosmetic purposes. To celebrate this landmark decision a pesticide awareness day will take place tomorrow in room 200 of the West Block.

Citizens' groups, environmental and public health organizations and interested parliamentarians will discuss their experiences of pesticide use reduction. Displays and exhibits are part of the program. Organic food will be served. Speeches starting at 6 p.m. will include an award ceremony in honour of the town of Hudson's pioneer role in banning pesticides. Tomorrow's event aims also at reminding the government of the urgent need for a bill to amend the Pest Control Products Act, now over 30 years old.

All parliamentarians and the public are invited to participate in tomorrow's day of celebration on the Hill.

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### AIRLINE SAFETY

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to relate a story to the House of Commons about something that happened to me this morning and to my leader as well.

We waited in an airport security lineup for over 30 minutes for dangerous articles such as nail clippers to be removed, boarded our aircraft and had a wonderful breakfast. They gave us a serrated knife to cut our eggs and our meat. Surely there is a bit of hypocrisy here in terms of our airline security.

The United States has moved very quickly to remove all metal cutlery from all aircraft within its borders. We in Canada, due to the circumstances of September 11, should take all precautions necessary and remove immediately from our aircraft any metal cutlery or metal objects that could pose any hazard to passengers.

As well, we call upon the government to take over complete control of pre-flight screening for boarding in every airport throughout the entire country as well as to initiate a process whereby all cargo and baggage is thoroughly x-rayed and reviewed before it goes onto the aircraft.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

### THE TALIBAN

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the ruling Taliban in Afghanistan took over the offices of the United Nations in Kandahar, in the southern part of the country, and seized all of the UN's communications equipment in Kabul, on Friday. While some of the UN's activities have been maintained, most of them have been disrupted or stopped.

According to a UN spokesperson, the Taliban also took over the offices of certain non-governmental organizations in Kandahar and uttered death threats to the employees found on site.

Such acts of aggression must be considered as attacks against the entire international community. These attacks heighten the climate of uncertainty and tension that exists in the region.

We condemn the Taliban action, as this hateful behaviour toward NGOs will diminish the services to local populations that are already so poor.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Saturday evening I had the privilege of attending a reunion of World War II veterans of the First Infantry Regiment of the Royal Canadian Engineers. These are our troops who worked so valiantly on the front lines to lead our troops to victory in two great wars and in many fields of conflict since.

Also present were three young men of today's generation of military engineers. Soon they too may be asked to risk the supreme sacrifice in defence of freedom and democracy to do battle against an enemy of unspeakable evil and brutality. Already their families live with fear and uncertainty of what may lie ahead for their sons and daughters.

I know I speak for all of us and for all Canadians in saying to our men and women of the Canadian forces and to their families and loved ones that we salute them, that they are our heroes and may God protect them.

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, one week ago today we set aside the business of the House to engage in a debate over the terrorist attacks on the United States and what impact those attacks would have on Canada.

A week has passed and Canadians still do not have any meaningful information as to what is specifically being done or planned to protect the lifestyle that we all enjoy and cherish. Among Canadians there is real angst about what the future holds. There is uncertainty, confusion, anger, anxiety and fear. Canadians want to protect the rights and choices that we enjoy as a democracy. That includes our democratic right to ask questions of our government.

The government has accused opposition parties of trying to score political points but since when is asking questions unpatriotic? If the government was willing, it could put an end to the questions and speculation by being more forthright with Canadians. President Bush demonstrated this resolve last week in his address to the nation, which leaves me and millions of Canadians wondering if some of that resolve will rub off on our Prime Minister following his visit to Washington today.

\* \* \*

### PROSTATE CANCER

**Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that there is renewed hope today in the struggle against prostate cancer. As a result of funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, a team of researchers recently discovered a gene that leads to prostate cancer. This is a significant breakthrough that will lead to further discoveries in the struggle against a disease that is the second leading cause of cancer deaths.

The government would like to congratulate Dr. Jacques Simard of Laval's Centre de recherche du Pavillon CHUL and Dr. Johanna Rommens of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children for their significant contribution to health research in Canada.

I am pleased to see such positive results of government support for programs such as the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

With the earliest diagnosis and more targeted treatment that such discoveries lead to, we will see a healthier future for all Canadians.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, while grieving over thousands of individuals tragically murdered in terrorist attacks September 11, Canadians also feel some economic insecurity.

North Americans finally seem aware that security at our borders must be tightened and terrorists and their fronts already within our borders must be stopped.

One major company has said it will build in the U.S. and not in Canada due to new difficulties of getting people and goods across the Canada-U.S. border. Trucks carrying freight commercially in

### Oral Questions

Canada now face very long lineups at the border. Since trucks haul about 64% by value of Canada's total trade with the U.S., such delays are already causing plant closings.

To improve public safety and preserve Canadian jobs, it is imperative that Canada, in co-operation with our U.S. neighbours, immediately increase our border security resources in manpower and technology and move toward the North American perimeter approach as advocated by U.S. ambassador Paul Cellucci.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### TERRORISM

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, earlier today U.S. President George Bush announced that he is launching a financial offensive in the fight against terrorism. The Americans have announced that they have frozen the assets of Osama bin Laden as well as those of other terrorist leaders, organizations and their charitable and fundraising support groups.

Canadians are wondering if the government is prepared to join in this first offensive of the war against terrorism by seizing the financial assets of these and other types of terrorist groups and organizations in Canada.

**Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the issue of being able to seize these assets, we are looking at the possible legal routes that might be taken. We have already undertaken those investigations, but I would remind hon. members of the House that we have already acted on the Afghan resolutions of the security council when we passed regulations in parliament on February 22 of this year allowing the seizure of all assets related to Osama bin Laden and any of his entities or associates.

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, possible other legal routes as the minister said, that is called legislation. That is what we need regardless of the UN resolution.

President Bush has also confirmed that two dozen different terrorist organizations connected to bin Laden are operating in North America. The security sources have already told Canadians that al-Qaeda, Armed Islamic Group and al-Jihad, all groups named by President Bush today, are operating in Canada.

Will the government move to ban these organizations and freeze their assets immediately? It has to be done right away.

**Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our fight against the use of terrorist funds, last Friday OSFI, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, sent a notice to all our institutions urging the co-operation of our financial institutions in this fight against terrorist money, naming the organizations that they were to go after.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Stockwell Day (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, we are asking the government for legislation, not friends to send notes urging them to do something.  
[Translation]

The Minister of Justice says it is highly unlikely that her new legislation will name and outlaw terrorist organizations. But the United States has just specifically targeted certain organizations and individuals.

Is this government prepared to do the same thing?

**Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have already held discussions with the agency with respect to money laundering. They are in the process of drawing up amendments that will accomplish precisely what is being asked.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, for years we have stood in the House asking the solicitor general to give CSIS and the RCMP the tools they need to protect Canadians, to protect them from all threats, including chemical and biological threats. CSIS has told us of the risk. The RCMP has told us of the risk.

I ask the solicitor general, why has he failed to act on the very report that he commissioned?

• (1420)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is referring to a report that was put together and written by my department. It was put together in order to make sure that the provinces, all municipalities and people who are directly responsible are prepared.

What we want to do is make sure that the systems are in place in order to deal with such events, and we took the lead to make sure that would happen, as we should.

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, he is correct. He did commission the report. The department brought the report forward but he has yet to adopt it.

In April of this year the solicitor general was told by CSIS that Canada is not prepared for any terrorist attack. The report recommended that the government develop better threat assessment and intelligence capabilities.

Why is the solicitor general failing to respond to the very report that he commissioned?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said last Friday in the House, we have a national counterterrorism plan in place. That plan is in place so that the federal government, provincial governments and municipal governments in any cities that need to be involved are involved.

We are making sure the proper procedures will be in place if they should need to be.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today, the Prime Minister stood beside President Bush and reminded people that terrorism is a problem faced by all countries of

the world and that it is therefore necessary to work toward the creation of an international coalition to fight terrorism.

Could the government tell us what specifically Canada has done to ensure that the international anti-terrorism coalition is as broad as possible?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have certainly consulted, I with my counterparts and the Prime Minister with other heads of government, in the various regions of the world, including the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and the Americas, to ensure that the coalition is as broad as possible.

What needs to be understood is that this is a coalition to combat terrorism using various means.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the United States and Great Britain have begun to take military action. A British commando unit has gone into Afghanistan and at least one U.S. spy plane has been shot down by the Taliban forces. Even President Bush's security adviser admits that the campaign has already begun.

Given the American and British military operations now under way in Afghanistan, what has the government done to ensure UN involvement in the fight against terrorism, something the Prime Minister indicated he would like to see?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the leaders of European nations noted on Friday, the United Nations Security Council has already issued a statement citing article 51 of the United Nations Charter. There is already a basis in international law for the actions the United States will be taking.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this morning President Bush announced that the assets of terrorists would be seized in the United States. No financial transactions would be possible.

I have a memo here from the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions of Canada. There is reference to co-operation in the area of information sharing. The banks are being asked to release information to the FBI investigators.

Since the announcement by U.S. president goes far beyond that, I am asking the Secretary of State for Financial Institutions whether we are going to go as far as the United States is, that is to block transactions and seize assets, or will we merely co-operate in investigations?

**Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that we are going to propose amendments in order to attain the goal the hon. member has referred to.

I must also state, however, that with Bill C-24, which is before the Senate at this time, the possibility exists to do exactly the same thing with the proceeds of crime and also to promulgate and implement in Canada declarations from other countries in the world without the process taking place here in Canada.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is also one other important point in the statement by President Bush in connection with foreign banks refusing to co-operate in this financial war against the terrorists. President Bush said these foreign banks would also be banned from the U.S. market.

I would like to know from the Secretary of State for Financial Institutions whether unco-operative foreign banks would be banned from carrying out transactions in Canada as well.

• (1425)

**Hon. Jim Peterson (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.):** Precisely, Mr. Speaker. There is a prohibition in place with the resolutions concerning Afghanistan. We have already brought in regulations here in Canada, in other words we are able to obtain and seize all assets of bin Laden and all of his colleagues.

[English]

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has received a letter from Geoffrey Pearson, distinguished diplomat, president of the United Nations Association in Canada and son of Lester Pearson.

It reminds the Prime Minister that under international law no country or group of countries has the right to retaliation or vengeance. Chapter 7 of the UN charter requires that any action affecting peace and global security be taken under the auspices of the United Nations.

Could the foreign affairs minister assure the House that the Prime Minister has forcefully presented that point of view to President Bush in Washington today?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member took note of what the European Union itself declared last Friday in considering the legal framework within which any response might be launched and recognizing both the security council resolution of September 12 together with article 51 of the UN charter which enables states to act in self-defence.

I am sure that in recognizing the numerous deaths that occurred on September 11 in the United States she will appreciate that the president understands fully not only the legal consequences of what he does but the legal framework within which he must act.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the foreign affairs minister once again what Mr. Pearson has said in his letter, that there should be no rush to judgment, no massive retaliation which would target innocent civilians of any country, and that all nations of the world must work together to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice; in other words, work through the United Nations.

Why is the government not respecting international law and living up to our reputation as true internationalists?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member's preamble but not with her question. We not only have been urging for but we have seen a massive multilateral response to the tragedies that occurred on September 11. We have seen the building of a coalition involving countries, not just members of NATO but members of the OAS, the European Union, Arab countries, Muslim countries and Asian

countries, all together saying that what the world needs is a campaign against terrorism.

We cannot allow events like we saw on September 11 to happen again. We must do everything in our power to stop it.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the acting prime minister. When the terrorist leaders are clearly identified, the challenge will be to have those persons tried under a system of justice that is trusted by the nation which suffered the attacks.

Countries harbouring terrorists may be reluctant to release them to the United States. Did the Prime Minister propose today alternate arrangements that would allow American law to apply in an acceptable third country? That was done when the accused Lockerbie terrorists were tried by Scottish law in Holland.

Is the Prime Minister making practical proposals like that which might produce the terrorists and perhaps avoid a military strike?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, certainly all options including the possibility of justice being sought in jurisdictions other than the United States are being considered by those involved.

At the same time it must be pointed out that Mr. bin Laden was already under indictment by the United States prior to September 11 for previous incidents and that the United States itself has suffered a grievous loss as a result of the events on September 11. I think in the first instance it will be seeking to see a trial of those responsible held on its own soil.

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, the question was whether the Prime Minister had proposed an initiative. I guess the answer to that is he did not.

In the United States democracy was struck directly by these attacks. The president immediately involved the leadership of America's political parties. The elected members of the U.S. senate and congress were put to work immediately, devising better ways to protect aircraft, tighten security and fight terrorism.

In Canada no committees of the House of Commons have been allowed to work on those issues. When the Prime Minister reports here tomorrow, as I trust he will, will he act also to let Canadian MPs get to work immediately against terrorism?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the right hon. member can make that assertion in the House. It seems to me that members on both sides have been preoccupied with this question for the last seven days. In fact we have had three days of debate.

I do not know whether this is a problem that is peculiar to the right hon. member for Calgary Centre or is a general problem. I would think that it is the former.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, on September 11 Canadian authorities arrested an individual with three false Yemeni passports on an airliner diverted from a flight to the United States. Charges have been filed against him in Chicago.

Is the minister able to assure us that she is able to move quickly to extradite this foreign national so that he can appear before the American courts to answer these charges?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that if the United States of America makes a formal extradition request we will move on this matter as quickly as possible under the existing extradition laws of this country.

**Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, is it not amazing that she can give us that assurance when she has never been able to act on any of the other thousands of requests?

Will the minister admit that she cannot rid Canada of foreign terrorists and criminals because she has consistently ignored her responsibility to provide Canadians with a secure and effective system to extradite these individuals?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in fact we enacted new extradition laws just two years ago in this country, ensuring that our extradition laws are some of the most effective, modern extradition laws in the world.

I can assure the hon. member that if we get a formal request of extradition from the United States of America that request will be acted upon with alacrity.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the United States immediately established an emergency fund of \$40 billion, part of which will be used to support the anti-terrorism campaign following the attacks on the World Trade Center.

Canada must take part in this anti-terrorism campaign, to the best of its abilities. Will the Minister of Finance tell us how much money he expects to spend to cover the costs of the military and security operations that Canada may be called upon to take part in as a member of the anti-terrorism coalition?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member must know that not all of the costs are known yet, neither the costs that we will incur here in Canada to protect national security, nor the costs involved in the international fight against terrorism. The United States and other countries have not yet given us an idea of the scope of what they have in mind.

That being said, I can assure the member that we have sufficient reserves set aside. In fact, I am able to give an example. In response to a request by the Minister of Transportation last Saturday, the government was able to help air carriers with their insurance.

**Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance himself mentioned the possibility of a deficit, which he indicated that he would try to avoid, as much as possible.

Given this statement, will the minister tell us how much he has budgeted, in a preliminary manner, to deal with the costs of Canada's announced participation in the anti-terrorism campaign that is about to begin?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that we will do everything possible to avoid a deficit.

That being said, I can also state that we will allocate the necessary funds for national security.

\* \* \*

• (1435)

[*English*]

**NATIONAL SECURITY**

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians want to know what special emergency funding will be made available to help Canadian forces make a meaningful commitment to fight against terrorism along with our NATO allies and to improve homeland security in Canada.

Could the Minister of National Defence explain to Canadians any emergency measures he has taken to help improve our military contribution to the fight against terrorism and to improve homeland security?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the response the Minister of Finance just gave deals with the question of funding. Certainly every measure that needs to be taken is being taken and is being reviewed extensively in view of what happened on September 11.

We want to make sure that Canadians are safe and secure. It is not just the Department of National Defence, but the solicitor general is the holder of the counterterrorism plan with participants in that counterterrorism plan as well. Safety and security are foremost for Canadians, foremost for the government.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is shocking that the minister cannot point to a single concrete measure he has taken to help improve homeland security in Canada or to help with our contribution to NATO.

The most likely contribution Canada will make will be our lead force, the JTF2, which totals 250 members. Will the Minister of National Defence tell Canadians whether he will keep enough members of the JTF2 in Canada in case of some event such as a hijacking or a hostage taking?

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, not only is that shameful fearmongering, but at the same time in the interests of national security we will certainly not divulge a lot of that kind of information to the benefit of people who could use it against us.

I am reminded of the words of President Bush earlier today when he said to the Prime Minister, and I think it applies here, it applies to the Alliance, "I guess somebody is playing politics with you, Mr. Prime Minister". I suggest those who try to play politics with my words drive wedges between Canada. We understand now is not the time for politics.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the military operations in which Canada would participate in Afghanistan, alongside with the anti-terrorist coalition forces, could require the deployment of a number of troops.

However, the Canadian army is limited in terms of the personnel available.

Can the minister tell us if, in the various scenarios being considered, it is possible that Canadian troops already taking part in peacekeeping missions might be recalled to take part in military action in Afghanistan?

[English]

**Hon. Art Eggleton (York Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is always a possibility. Various options are possible. Canada does not have the size of the military of the United States. Nor does any other country, for that matter, but we could make a significant contribution if we were called upon to do so.

There have not been any decisions made about specific military action. The United States has repositioned some of its troops but has made no decision about military action at this point in time.

As I have said time and time again, ultimately this will not be won as much by military action as it will be by a number of other measures in the fight against terrorism.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, given the limited numbers of our personnel in the regular armed forces, is the Minister of National Defence now thinking about calling up reservists to have the necessary personnel for a possible participation in the international anti-terrorist coalition?

[English]

**Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again no specific military action has been designed. We have not been asked by the United States that is leading the planning effort to provide any specific troops.

We have a number of capabilities, niche capabilities. We can make a significant contribution if need be. We could also make a significant contribution on the diplomatic front and on the economic front in terms of what is being done to cut off the funds that go to terrorists.

We have significant influence through the Commonwealth and francophonie which the Prime Minister can help bring to bear on this whole issue. There are a lot of different ways we can fight terrorism.

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**AIRLINE SAFETY**

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, since the September 11 terrorist attack on the United States, Canadian airport security has been beefed up. While Canadians may need to be reassured at the current time, many feel that this heightened security may fade just as it did following the Air India 182 and Pan Am 103 bombings.

Could the Minister of Transport tell this House that the current security measures, contrary to the message being sent in his own department's website, will remain in place and how the increased security costs will in fact be financed?

• (1440)

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that what happened on September 11 will change the nature of air travel and our department across the country when we travel. That is why these measures that we have announced will be in force indefinitely.

We believe that there should be more enhanced measures. I hope to be announcing enhanced measures as the days go ahead. As to the cost, I think it is more important to deal with the security at this time rather than worry about the cost.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the recent terrorist attacks on the United States greatly affected the airline industry in business interruption costs, a decline in consumer confidence and the added price of increased security. The government has also decided to cover the industry's war and terrorism insurance costs and is considering a huge bailout of Air Canada. Apparently the transport minister has seen new budget numbers from the finance minister that the rest of the country has yet to see.

The Prime Minister has said that committees are where these important questions are to be answered but the House has been in session for a full week and the committees have not been struck yet. Given the grave nature of the serious issues that this country has to address, why is that the case?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I hate to remind the hon. member of the rules of this House, but when parliament is reconvened in September, after 10 days the committees must be re-struck. Our party intends to co-operate with all other parties in the House for a rapid re-start of the committees pursuant to our rules, the standing orders of parliament.

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**CSIS**

**Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the solicitor general.

Last Thursday the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, perhaps inadvertently, distorted my position and that of Mr. David Harris, a former CSIS employee, on the matter of a foreign intelligence agency for Canada. Both Mr. Harris and I have called for a public discussion on Canada's future intelligence needs.

Could the solicitor general offer any comments with respect to the need for a more public dialogue on security and intelligence issues?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my hon. colleague from Nepean—Carleton. As I said before in this House a number of times, CSIS does operate abroad. CSIS investigates threats to Canada's security inside and outside of this country.

*Oral Questions*

On the other question, I can assure him that this government and myself certainly welcome any suggestions that would help in the long term or short term response to the horrible events of September 11.

\* \* \*

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for International Cooperation.

As the minister knows, millions of Afghani citizens are fleeing both from the terror of the Taliban regime and in fear of a possible United States bombing. The United Nations has appealed for a humanitarian coalition to help these desperate people.

I want to ask the minister what action our government is taking to urge neighbouring countries not to seal their borders to these desperate people, and will we be committing significantly increased resources beyond the \$1 million that was committed last week to these people?

**Hon. Maria Minna (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the atrocities that are happening are horrific. I immediately announced, as the hon. member said, \$1 million to the call of the UNHCR to assist with refugees that are amassing in Pakistan. As well, we are in contact at all times with our partners. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has written us a letter to thank us for being the first country to respond. We talk with him on a regular basis and of course we will be looking at increases as the need arises.

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

U.S. senator Jesse Helms, the ranking Republican on the foreign affairs committee, said yesterday that the United States is very close to a military attack on Iraq, whose people are already suffering of course from sanctions and from bombing. I want to ask whether Canada will speak out strongly against any such attack. Will this minister assure the House that before any Canadian troops are committed to a response to the September 11 terrorist attacks there will be not just a debate but a vote in this House of Commons?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, generally, unlike the hon. member, I do not take my information from Jesse Helms. That is an interesting theory that he is proposing.

The hon. member should know that we have certainly raised with the U.S. administration our concern that whatever action is taken with the very carefully constructed coalition, including Arab and other countries, that has been put together for this campaign against terrorism, it is not jeopardized.

He knows that we will always consult parliament before we dedicate military resources.

• (1445)

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Canadian Medical Association released a report showing that it is in the field of specialty care that Canadians are having the greatest difficulty obtaining the services they so badly need.

Rather than launching a royal commission of inquiry, or another human resources study, when will the federal government take specific, ongoing and verifiable action to address the real weaknesses in the health care system?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we already took such action one year ago. We substantially increased annual cash transfers so that the provinces could put the necessary changes in place.

Tomorrow, I intend to meet with my counterparts in Newfoundland, and we are going to continue to work together to improve the health care system throughout Canada.

[English]

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, according to the Canadian Medical Association Canada lags far behind most OECD countries in accessibility to necessary medical technology.

Our country now ranks 14th of 18 countries in terms of access to CT scanners. We also rank 14th in terms of access to MRIs. It is just unacceptable.

Will the minister table a report in the House detailing how the \$1 billion in the health technology fund has been spent and why it is that critical shortages continue to plague the delivery of specialty medical care here in Canada?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the member for the question. In fact one of the items that I have asked the provincial ministers to address tomorrow is just exactly how they have spent the billion dollars.

I wrote to them some months ago and I asked them to let me know so that we can report to the public what has been done with the money.

I can tell the member I will happily table with the House information I get from provincial ministers about how they have met this responsibility for making high tech equipment available to Canadians in our health care system.

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**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the immigration minister.

The government's own backbench MPs recommended that all surprise refugee claimants be detained either until they are accepted as legitimate or deported.



Why did the minister refuse to accept the recommendation of her own backbench in the writing of Bill C-11?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we were very clear in Bill C-11 and we have the tools in order to detain wherever we are unsure of anyone's identity, wherever we believe there is a fear of flight or, most important, where we feel there is a security risk.

We can and we do detain whenever we believe that someone falls into any of those three categories, but particularly if they pose any security risk to Canada we detain and we argue for continued detention.

**Mr. Paul Forseth (New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I think the immigration minister is overselling the merits of Bill C-11.

The American ambassador told us all this week that no nation can be sovereign without being secure. The minister knows that her own department has really failed on that score.

Why is the government not taking a leadership role in either meeting or exceeding American or other countries' refugee screening standards?

**Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I reject completely the assumption in the member's question. I would also suggest that he look at the facts.

The facts are that Bill C-11 streamlines our ability to process applications. What we want to do is make sure that anyone who is in genuine need of protection is offered assistance in Canada as soon as possible, but for those who are not genuine refugees, for those who pose a risk to Canada, they will not be given access. Canada's refugee determination system is considered a model for the world.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### THE ACADIANS

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said, on the weekend, in Bathurst, that the government would probably not support Motion M-241, which calls for an apology from the British crown for its treatment of the Acadians.

How can the minister subordinate the importance of such a motion for the Acadians to the affiliation of its mover, my colleague from Verchères-les-Patriotes?

• (1450)

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can do no better than to quote the member for Madawaska—Restigouche:

The introduction of M-241 is further testimony to the paternalistic, offensive, insulting and hurtful attitude of the separatists in the Bloc. Acadians form a dynamic community, proud of its roots and open to the future. We need no self-proclaimed guardian.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this motion received the support of, among others, the member for Acadie—Bathurst, the Société des Acadiens and the Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick.

#### Oral Questions

How does the minister explain his lack of openness to the consensus of the Acadians.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to that I think the Minister of Labour has provided a fine answer "I never want to see Acadians used as political pawns. No one, least of all the separatists, is going to play games with the Acadian culture".

\* \* \*

[English]

#### TERRORISM

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has launched a resolute offensive against the terrorist threat. Because of this Canadians face a new security problem. Criminal elements now illegally in the U.S. will be looking for a new base of operations. Canada is widely seen as weak and vulnerable to manipulation by lawless individuals. The government and its ministers have a very poor track record in this vital area.

I invite the government to tell Canadians what specific measures it is now initiating to deal effectively with this new, serious situation.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is virtually impossible to respond to such an outrageous allegation. As the hon. member should know, we in fact have some of the toughest and most modern extradition laws in the world. We have mutual legal assistance agreements with the United States and many other countries.

I have indicated in the House that we are one of the few nations of the world that has signed all 12 UN conventions against terrorism. We are going to ratify and implement the remaining two, including the convention on the suppression of terrorist financing.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if the best Canadians can get from the Minister of Justice is a lot of huffing and puffing, then we are in serious trouble.

It is true that the U.S. is actively seeking individuals who may have terrorist training and intent. These people are going to flee. We know they are looking at Canada. The minister must know this. What is the government doing to make sure that our country is not the recipient of these undesirable elements? What is it doing specifically?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, first of all we have some of the most modern and toughest extradition laws in the world. Therefore if people come to Canada and a request is made to extradite them, we will extradite them.

As I have indicated before we have mutual legal assistance agreements with dozens of countries, including the United States of America. We work closely with our allies in the United States to ensure that we share information between our intelligence organizations, that we share information between our police, and the Department of Justice in this country acts closely with the department of justice in the United States.

*Oral Questions***FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS**

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Given the global economic slowdown and the financial uncertainty stemming from the attack on the United States, Canadians need to know whether the federal government will maintain its commitment to the fundamentals of health care and education. Could the minister tell the House whether transfers of payments to the provinces for education and health will be protected?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the many benefits of the prudence with which the government has proceeded is that Canadians in fact can rest assured that the basic social programs, the foundation of the country, are fully protected.

It was a year ago September that the government signed an historic accord for \$23.5 billion in transfers to provinces for health care and education. I can tell the House that \$2.8 billion will be transferred this year, \$1 billion to the member's province alone.

As a result of the courage with which the government has operated, Canadians can rest assured that their basic programs are fully protected.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

**SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBERS**

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian public is becoming increasingly concerned over safety and security issues. Photo ID is lacking on essential documents in Canada, for instance, our social insurance cards. When will the HRDC minister implement security measures to protect Canadians?

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has acted in a number of significant ways to protect the integrity of the social insurance number. This has been recognized in the auditor general's report of December 2000. In the last two years we have conducted approximately 7,000 investigations per year, up from earlier levels of 2,500 investigations per year.

We have resources within the government and within the department that are specifically dedicated to protecting the SIN from abuse and we have specialized equipment to detect false identification documents.

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, that just shows how bad the situation is getting.

Canadian citizens are vulnerable when it comes to forged documents. Last November HRDC had access to software that would have provided security to social insurance cards. This software would have been less intrusive and cheaper than other technologies but the department did not use it.

When will HRDC decide to improve the security of Canadians?

[Translation]

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we have implemented many measures to protect the social insurance number, as the auditor general has recognized.

The member is referring to a business that provides a certain type of technology. But I believe that the use of such a system raises concerns about the protection of personal information.

We want to be sure we continue to detect fraud and abuse and to protect personal information.

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**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in response to a request by Air Canada, the Minister of Transport has indicated that the government would be assisting the airlines by assuming a portion of their increased insurance premiums, a direct result of the crisis caused by the attacks in New York.

Are we to understand that any assistance the government intends to extend to Air Canada will be extended to the other carriers, Air Transat in particular?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, no decision has been reached on financial assistance to the airline industry, outside of Saturday's announcement by me related to insurance.

[English]

**Mr. Tony Tirabassi (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a result of the tragic events of September 11, Canadians have expressed concerns about air travel.

Could the Minister of Transport please tell the House what steps the government has taken to ensure that aviation services will be maintained uninterrupted.

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this does follow from the last question. The fact is that we did respond to the decision by the international insurers that they would no longer provide levels of war risk liability currently in place. If we had not done anything about it, it would have meant that all airports and all airlines in this country would have been shut down as of midnight tonight. A similar occurrence would have occurred right around the world.

That is why on Saturday I announced, on behalf of the government, indemnity for third party war and terrorism liabilities for essential aviation service operators in Canada for a period of 90 days while everyone negotiates with the lenders.

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**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The inshore shrimp fishery in Newfoundland is in a state of crisis. Fishers cannot afford to fish and processors cannot afford to operate their plants. One of the main reasons is the 20% tariff charged for Canadian shrimp going into European markets.

What steps has the minister taken to make sure that this inequity is corrected?

• (1500)

**Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are concerned with the European tariff of 20% which makes shrimp products less competitive. I know the Minister for International Trade has been working very hard on this as well.

We have allocated a quota on shrimp so we can continue to be competitive in the European Union. The government is doing everything it possibly can to have the European's look at that again so they can get rid of the 20% tariff that our producers have to face.

\* \* \*

#### AIRLINE SAFETY

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while Canadians line up for what seems to be an awfully long time at security points to have their nail clippers removed from their baggage, on board the aircraft all too willing flight attendants are giving us metal serrated knives and forks. The United States has decided through the FTA to remove all metal cutlery on board aircraft due to the concerns of September 11.

Would the Minister of Transport not think it prudent for Canada do the same and remove all metal cutlery from aircraft for the safety and protection of all travellers?

**Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is fully the intent and where it has not been done it will be done forthwith.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since the events in the United States of last September 11, the economic downturn has been heavily felt in the shape of significant job losses.

What is keeping the Minister of Human Resources Development from providing the unemployed with some sort of security by acting on the unanimous report on employment insurance tabled by parliamentarians last May 31?

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have received the report by the House of Commons committee and are studying it. As agreed, we will be making a public response.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATIONAL REVENUE

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the *Globe and Mail* published a confidential internal document bulletin issued to our border guards regarding risk

#### Speaker's Ruling

assessment. This incident occurred five days ago and I am sure the investigation by the Minister of National Revenue is well underway.

I want to know how this sensitive document was leaked.

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of National Revenue and Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the question of risk assessment, as I have said on numerous occasions, is part of our daily job. Facing tragic malicious events, like the one we know so well, we must get involved and proceed with the tools that we have at our disposal.

Talking about risk assessment, what we want to do in the near future is use additional tools. In order to use additional tools we need Bill S-23, which is being blocked in the House of Commons by those opposition members. They are irresponsible. They do not pay attention to the security of Canadians and we do.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### PRESENCE IN GALLERY

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I wish to inform the House of the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Michel Sapin, Minister of the Public Service and Government Reform of the Republic of France.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** I also wish to inform the House of the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Cheick Amadou Camara, Minister of the Economy and Finance, and of His Excellency Lamine Kamara, Minister of Employment and the Public Service of the Republic of Guinea.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

• (1505)

[English]

#### POINTS OF ORDER

##### PC/DR COALITION—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** I am now prepared to rule on the point of order raised by the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough concerning the status in the House of the Progressive Conservative/Democratic Representative Coalition.

[Translation]

First, though, I want to thank all hon. members for their gracious co-operation with the Chair when the House met last week. This co-operation made it possible to make appropriate interim arrangements without prejudice to any decision on this matter, and facilitated the orderly conduct of urgent business by postponing to an opportune time full consideration of this point of order.

*Speaker's Ruling*

[English]

The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough referred to a letter he had written to me concerning the establishment of the 20 member Progressive Conservative/Democratic Representative Coalition, its membership and the appointment of its officers. Meant to function, as he says, “within the machinery of the House of Commons”, the coalition seeks to be recognized officially in the House for certain procedural purposes. It is requesting “all of the privileges and rights” associated with recognition as the “fourth largest political entity” in the House, namely with respect to seating in the House, precedence and the allocation of time in all deliberations.

[Translation]

I thank the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough for having raised the matter on behalf of the Coalition. I would also like to thank the House leader of the official opposition, the House leader for the Bloc Québécois, the government House leader, the House leader of the New Democratic Party and the hon. member for Fraser Valley for their contributions to the discussion.

As various members and many pundits have pointed out, the situation facing us is, in many ways, unprecedented, and I would ask for the House’s indulgence as I try to untangle the skeins of argument that have been presented.

[English]

Let me deal first with the suggestion that this is perhaps a matter better decided by the House than by the Speaker. In this regard, members have referred to the 1963 ruling by Mr. Speaker MacNaughton concerning the fragmentation of the Social Credit Party and the resulting claims of the *Raillement des créditistes*. That ruling is of some assistance and I will return to it later in my remarks but, like so many other references, it is not entirely on point. In the almost four decades since that ruling, our practice has evolved and I do not believe that it is inappropriate for the Chair in the present case to consider the matters that have been laid before it. Indeed, I believe that to do otherwise would be to shirk the Chair’s undoubted responsibility to protect the rights of all minorities in the House.

Thus, I find it difficult to understand why, if it was appropriate for the New Democratic Party to argue for recognition before the Speaker in 1994, it is inappropriate for the coalition to put its case to the Speaker today. In my view the Speaker must rule on these matters as he did in 1994.

[Translation]

I draw to members’ attention the words of Mr. Speaker Fraser, as reported in the *Debates* of September 24, 1990, on page 13216:

I think we have a great tradition of protecting the rights of minorities, and I can assure the hon. member that the rights of minorities will be protected by the Speaker in a way that is fair and equitable for all other members.

Before we consider the arguments for and against the case for recognition presented by the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, let us set aside the many points raised during the discussion that may be of peripheral interest but that are not relevant—let alone illuminating—to the question to be decided.

[English]

For example, there were several references made to the definition and recognition of political parties in statutes, notably the Canada Elections Act and the Parliament of Canada Act.

Of course it is a long held principle that the Speaker does not interpret matters of law. Nonetheless, political parties are a fundamental part of our electoral process and detailed requirements concerning their registration are set out in part 18 of the Canada Elections Act. The hon. House leader for the New Democratic Party said:

I do not think the House of Commons can be completely isolated from what takes place outside it and from the status people enjoy outside the House.

To be sure there are political parties outside the House and there are recognized parties and caucuses inside the House and these may be closely linked. In matters relating to the status or designation of individuals or groups in the House, the House makes its own decisions without necessarily limiting itself to standards and definitions used outside the House of Commons. Definitions used in the House of Commons are not drawn from statute; they are drawn from the practice of the House.

After a general election, the statutory focus shifts from the Canada Elections Act to the Parliament of Canada Act which later act, for example, stipulates the composition and role of the Board of Internal Economy. The bylaws of the board in turn govern the execution of those statutory responsibilities through the administration of the House of Commons.

The arguments advanced by hon. members referring to either of these statutes to the bylaws of the board of internal economy or to the board’s responsibility for matters of finance and administration do not concern us here. The hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough has rightly explained that he intends to raise these issues with the board in due course, so these statutory and resourcing matters need not detain us.

The hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona implied in argument that recognition by the House involved an application of the rules surrounding a marriage ceremony. The hon. member is an expert in holy matrimony with wide experience in performing marriages. His comments were of great assistance to a Speaker untutored in these matters. However, I would remind him that even common law relationships sometimes attract a sort of legal recognition. Society may recognize certain things. The House is another matter.

● (1510)

[Translation]

Let us turn to the crux of the problem, that is, whether House of Commons procedure will permit the recognition of what the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough has described as “the fourth largest political entity” in the House, the PC/DR Coalition.

It might be helpful to return to first principles here, because so many extraneous elements have been invoked on this question in the widespread speculation that this controversial, highly publicized situation has provoked.

[English]

Let us return to the opening of a parliament and the convening of a newly elected House. Once a general election has been held and the writs of election issued, attention turns from external political realities to the internal realities of a new parliament. The political focus shifts from the electors and the election to the elected MPs sitting in the House of Commons and its committees.

Deliberations in the Chamber and in committee are governed by the standing orders and by House procedure and practice. In these procedural authorities the terms “party” or “recognized party” refer to a group of members with a number of identifying features: first, there are at least 12 members in the group; second, they appoint a slate of House officers as their official spokespersons; third, they work as a cohesive unit; and fourth, they serve under the same banner.

In a newly constituted House for the duration of a parliament, each individual for whom a writ of election has been received will work as an MP usually within a party. The machinery of the party caucus, that is, its officers, staff and research bureau, will serve to organize each party's work in the House and in committee.

During the course of a parliament we have seen members change parties, members suspended from caucus and members expelled from caucus. Each member was elected to the House. Each member elected to the House may live out the vicissitudes of that parliament as he or she sees fit. Indeed, each member may self-designate his or her affiliations or lack thereof.

[Translation]

In this regard, a basic question is how a member will be identified. It is an accepted part of our practice that individual members and groups are permitted to select the manner in which they will be designated for parliamentary purposes. As Mr. Speaker Fraser stated in the *Debates* of December 13, 1990, on page 16705:

—the Chair must advise that it can find no prescription limiting the designations inserted under political affiliation in the Appendix to Debates to those parties officially recognized as such pursuant to the Canada Elections Act.

The absence of such a limiting prescription must be weighed against the combined weight of our past practice in this regard and our longstanding tradition of respecting the word and legitimate demands to self-definition of individual members.

• (1515)

[English]

In the case before us we have 12 members of the recognized Progressive Conservative Party and eight independent members who comprise the Democratic Representative caucus, in total a group of 20 MPs who have identified themselves to the Speaker as members of the Progressive Conservative/Democratic Representative, or PC/DR, Coalition. This is the title of the caucus under which they will henceforth be known.

The coalition composed of these 20 members has further announced that it will function as a group for parliamentary purposes and has informed the Chair of its slate of officers. Here

### *Speaker's Ruling*

again these are matters that the House has always left entirely to the discretion of MPs. They identify themselves as individuals and are free to identify themselves as a group. Their spokespersons are theirs to select. Neither the Speaker nor other members has a say in such matters.

Therefore I have concluded that the officers named by the PC/DR Coalition will be recognized as the coalition's spokespersons in the usual operations of the House and its committees. They are: the right hon. member for Calgary Centre as leader; the hon. member for Fraser Valley as deputy leader; the hon. member for Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough as House leader; the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River as whip; and the hon. member for Edmonton North as caucus chair.

Just as I must conclude that the coalition's officers must be recognized, I can find no procedural objection to the request that members who share the PC/DR designation and the leadership of these officers should be seated together in the configuration that their whip may determine. In my view this is not a matter where the Chair has any grounds to object or to intervene.

However what I have granted to this point is not all of what is being sought. On the basis that it possesses more than the basic 12 members required for status as a recognized party in the House, the coalition seeks additional recognition. Specifically it argues that by virtue of its 20 member composition, the PC/DR Coalition should have precedence over the 13 member New Democratic Party. In other words, the coalition seeks to be recognized as the fourth party in the House, or seen another way, as the third party in opposition.

It is here that the Chair encounters considerable difficulty. Earlier I listed what can be extrapolated as the hallmarks of a party or a recognized party under our procedure and practice, namely at least 12 members with a set of House officers working as a cohesive unit, serving under the same banner.

My problem is simple. By its very name the coalition acknowledges that it is a composite entity. An analysis of the arguments finds it successfully passes the first two tests set by our practice for any recognized party, and to the extent that a single set of House officers are its spokespersons, it can be said that it meets the third criterion of working as a cohesive unit.

Yet the coalition has declined to present itself as a party in this place. It may speak as a party does, it may operate as a party does, but until such time as its members present themselves as a party, the recognition the coalition seeks with regard to precedence and allocation of time must remain at best a matter for negotiation between the coalition and the four recognized parties.

In discussing the process of debate, Marleau and Montpetit states at page 506:

The Speaker subsequently “sees” Members from opposite sides of the House in a reasonable rotation, bearing in mind the membership of the various recognized parties in the House, the right of reply, and the nature of the proceedings.

*Government Orders*

In determining the allocation of precedence and time during debate, during question period and statements by members, in the distribution of allotted days and the composition of committees, the Speaker receives the advice of the House leaders and whips who negotiate agreements on these matters based on party strength in the House. Agreements reached through the negotiations of House officers greatly facilitate the work of all members here in the House and in committee and are of immeasurable value to the Chair in its presiding role.

For such negotiations to be genuine, all officers concerned must be given an equal opportunity to participate. I am sure that the hon. House leader and the other officers of the PC/DR Coalition seek no more than this and I know they will be afforded the usual courtesies by their counterparts. Only under the most extreme circumstances where the fundamental rights of members were threatened would the Speaker feel compelled to intervene in such matters.

I remind the House of the words of Mr. Speaker Macnaughton in the Journals of September 30, 1963, at page 387:

It is not (a situation) where the Speaker ought by himself to take a position where any group of members might feel that their interests as a group or a party have been prejudiced. Nor should the Speaker be put in a position where he must decide, to the advantage or to the disadvantage of any group or party, matters affecting the character or existence of a party, for this surely would signify that the Speaker had taken what was almost a political decision—

• (1520)

In summary then, after careful scrutiny of all our precedents and of various analogous situations in the United Kingdom and in the Commonwealth, the Chair has concluded that our practice has uniformly dealt not with the recognition of groups but with that of parties.

The Chair acknowledges and recognizes the PC/DR Coalition as the regrouping of, on the one hand, a recognized party, and on the other, a group of dissident members, together operating as a single caucus. The officers of the coalition will therefore be recognized as the official spokespersons for the coalition and the members of the coalition will be permitted to sit together in any arrangement they wish. Since the Progressive Conservatives retain their status as a recognized party, the PC/DR Coalition will continue to enjoy the precedence afforded to the Progressive Conservatives.

However, the Chair is unable at this time to grant full party recognition to the PC/DR Coalition since I cannot extend recognition as a party to a group which disavows that title and which is clearly an amalgam of a party and a group of independent MPs.

[*Translation*]

If circumstances change, the Chair will of course be prepared to revisit this question.

[*English*]

I thank hon. members for the contributions they made on this difficult and important question and of course for the free advice offered over the past few months by our media.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*English*]

**PETITIONS**

VIA RAIL

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present another petition from citizens of Peterborough who would like to see VIA service re-established between Toronto and Peterborough. They see this as improving the environment, reducing pollution on the highways and improving the business status not only of Peterborough but of the greater Toronto area.

BIOARTIFICIAL KIDNEY

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition. This petition is from citizens of Peterborough who are concerned about those of our citizens who suffer from end stage kidney disease.

These people support research on the bioartificial kidney. The bioartificial kidney is an implant which will greatly improve the life of those who have kidney disease. Work is going ahead in the United States. There is support for it in Canada.

The petitioners call upon parliament to support research on the bioartificial kidney, which will eventually eliminate the need for dialysis or transplantation for those suffering from kidney disease.

FALUN GONG

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from the citizens of Yukon from the supporters of Falun Gong who are opposed to the torture and murder of the members of that sect who are simply standing for truthfulness, compassion and tolerance. The petitioners would like Canada to set up a rescue team to help support these people and free Falun Gong practitioners who are now in prison.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

**CUSTOMS ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other Acts, be now read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

*Government Orders*

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this bill, especially as the elected representative of a riding that has experienced remarkable industrial growth over the last few years.

Indeed, we have seen an increase in trade in recent years. In this context, a review of our customs policies has become necessary. Changes are required so that both people and goods can move more freely and more rapidly at our borders. I will come back to the situation in my riding, which has some concerns with regard to Bill S-23.

Quebec, its government and the Bloc Québécois are in favour of the freer movement of goods and services between countries. We supported NAFTA and we support the FTAA, as long as individual and cultural rights are respected.

However, Bill S-23 confers regulatory powers that we think leave too much room for ministerial discretion. In fact, it seems to be this government's way of doing things. There is the act, and then there are regulations that are added later on, which makes it impossible to have an overall picture of the act and its impact.

As legislators, we do not like giving so much power to a minister. This situation raises questions on a number of points relating to security. Customs clearance measures will in fact be defined by the minister's regulatory powers in future regulations. Accordingly, we cannot know exactly what the law will provide in this regard.

We agree with the government's intent to modernize customs procedures to promote and more importantly to facilitate trade. However, there must be some balance between procedures and security. In this regard, the events of September 11 in the United States gave rise to a tightening of border control measures. In some instances, transportation industry workers spent more time waiting at the borders than doing their delivery.

Trade between the States and Canada represents approximately \$2 billion a day—about 100 million people cross the border annually—hence the importance of keeping our borders open and operating. Canada should also consider sharing customs controls with the United States. But as it stands, Bill S-23 does not allow us to accurately assess the balance between security and the modernization of procedures, because it leaves too much to the discretion of the minister.

Bill S-23 also provides for the establishment of two programs that will enable travellers to clear customs more quickly. Automated points will appear in airports and will help “approved” travellers pass quickly through the formalities of customs and immigration. Those who regularly cross the border, under expanded streamlined clearance programs, will be given the pass we know today as the Canpass.

This is happening at a time when, at airports and border crossings, authorities have decided to increase staff for the single purpose of tightening control and safety measures. Right now, every vehicle that crosses the border is inspected. The director of the Canada project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Christopher Sands, recently told a journalist:

No border between countries as rich and developed is so little advanced technologically, so mediocre as ours.

This is a sad comment. Is it also the minister's intention to invest financially to improve the situation?

Earlier, I mentioned that I wanted to talk about my riding, because the two go together. Currently, people in my riding are very concerned about this bill, which would change customs services provided in my constituency and which would probably adversely affect these services.

I will begin with a brief description of the area. Drummondville is located at the intersection of highways 20 and 55, which provide direct and quick access to Montreal and Quebec City, major U.S. highways, local and international airports, seaports and ports along the seaway. Drummondville is itself a central location for towns such as Victoriaville, Granby, Sherbrooke, Richmond, Saint-Hyacinthe, Sorel, Trois-Rivières, Thetford Mines, and so on.

Rail transportation is well structured and operates with intermodal. Over 20 transportation businesses have their terminal in Drummondville or in the area.

Local industries serve a growing number of consumers in a radius of 100 kilometres. They include a significant number of importers and exporters. For example, out of 653 importers who cleared customs in Drummondville last year, 173 are locally based.

The administrative region of Centre-du-Québec includes a majority of small and medium size businesses that are not inclined to use the CADEX system. This means that they depend on manual ways of doing things and on the proximity of points of service.

Already in a letter dated February 19, 1996, Deputy Minister Pierre Gravelle explained why it was beneficial to move to Drummondville services that had until then been provided in Victoriaville, this after a thorough review of the situation.

Three customs inspectors work full time at the office located in Drummondville, the only town in the region of Centre-du-Québec that provides customs services.

● (1530)

This includes regular and fast-tracked customs release; the clearance of highway and rail freight; customs clearance at six sufferance warehouses; a highway sufferance warehouse; customs clearance for air passengers at the Drummondville and Victoriaville airports; service to the public; small craft licensing.

In a letter he wrote to me last year, the Minister of Revenue indicated as follows “Canada Customs and Revenue Agency operates on a risk management basis and would like to reallocate its resources from low risk customs offices to higher risk offices”. This means, to all intents and purposes, that we could cease having any customs inspectors in Drummondville, on the pretext that the security risk there is low.

*Government Orders*

If this statement could perhaps be at least somewhat supported last year, it is at the very least highly debatable at the present time, for three reasons: the increased cross-border trade; the intensification of organized crime activities; the acts of terrorism in the United States, of which we are all aware.

To address the increase in trade, as everyone no doubt is aware, the Drummondville area is in such a rate of economic expansion that it is now considered the driver of Quebec's economy. International trade is on the upturn, particularly with the U.S. That is why we have two customs brokers in our area: Affiliated Customs Brokers and Fritz Starber Inc.

As well, we have two private schools giving courses on international trade: Ellis Business College and Abrimex.

The number of commercial customs releases is evidence of this. From a level of 12,965 in 1997-98, and of 14,179 in 1998-99, it has been constantly on the increase, despite new technologies and simplified procedures.

It is obvious that the opening up of markets and the free trade are going to accelerate this phenomenon. We cannot see how an increase in goods being shipped and of persons crossing the border can reduce the security risk.

Let me now turn to the increase in crime. Initially, the RCMP considered shutting down its Drummondville detachment, but given the notable rise in crime and the recommendations of an internal working group, it has decided rather to maintain its existing services and even got, nationally, an additional \$59 million "specifically to fight organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, smuggling and people smuggling."

Clearly recognizing the increased risk, the solicitor general indicated at the same time that he wanted the RCMP to be better prepared to fight organized crime and transborder threats to the safety and security of the population.

Again, we are having trouble understanding how Canada customs could conclude that the risks were low when the RCMP believes they have increased and has acted accordingly.

The tragic events that have recently affected the U.S. have made us realize that we are not as safe as we thought we were and have led the U.S. to reconsider the superiority of high technology over human action, which is why we might be asked to review our procedures.

Finally, given the recent tragedies, I feel that things have changed and that the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, which focuses on risk management, should take that into consideration and avoid any hasty conclusion.

I would urge the minister to consult with the people in my riding before making any changes to the customs services, as he promised to do in his letter dated May 5.

•(1535)

He said this:

Senior officials from the agency will organize consultative meetings on this issue with political leaders like you, as well as with the mayor, city councillors and members of the community.

I wonder what will happen if Bill S-23 is passed without our being aware of all the regulations, if the minister closes customs offices in a riding like Drummond, where we need these resources and these services because of an increase in both imports and exports, if, because of the whole issue of security, staff is reduced and employees are laid off.

Rumour has it that it is senior officials or "small bosses" from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency who want to repatriate the powers in their areas, including Cowansville and Granby.

People from Drummond are at the mercy of those who want to repatriate services closer to them, saying that, thanks to new technologies, all problems will be solved. We are worried. If the minister chooses to proceed in this fashion, there will be a public outcry and he will never hear the end of it.

If his vision is to close offices where we need these resources to install more sophisticated systems at the border, maybe he should think about the terrorist attacks in the United States. They may have had all the new technologies and all the most sophisticated instruments, but they forgot about the importance of human resources in the field. If we forget that, our security may not be as stable and effective as we would like.

Although the objectives of the programs mentioned in Bill S-23 are good, there is still no provision for the security problems I mentioned earlier. Either security or savings will require compromise. The minister will have to tell us which approach he intends to choose and especially clarify S-23 in order to gain our support.

The two programs mentioned earlier, one of which is known as Canpass, will be established through regulatory means. It is as if we are being asked to sign a blank cheque. The underlying idea is a good one, but when it comes to applying and implementing the bill and the security aspect of it, the government seems to be saying "Trust me".

Officials will submit regulations, and we will have to sign the blank cheque. I do not think it works that way. We, the legislators who represent our ridings, do not much like being asked to let things like "Trust us" pass. We are here to make laws. We are entitled to and we have a right to know what we are voting on.

In the current context, the public has the right to know and to debate such essential issues as customs clearance. I want to know how it will work at customs. The people want to know too, and they are concerned. We do not want to reach the end of the process to hear "We will be identifying you by your iris, and you will have this and that".



*Government Orders*

● (1540)

This also includes people's private or personal information. Can we expect that this information will be protected? This is what we want to know. It is not mentioned in the bill, which only says "at the minister's discretion". Regulations will be made; this will be regulated by the minister. But he is the one who will decide. Will the minister decide on the spur of the moment or after the fact? It is not normal to proceed like this.

Customs employees also have a right to know when and how these procedures will affect them in their daily tasks. Out of respect for our constituents—as I said earlier and I will conclude with this since I only have one minute left—we cannot, if nothing changes with this bill and if we do not have the regulations before us, sign a blank cheque.

● (1545)

[*English*]

**Ms. Sophia Leung (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear the hon. member express a lot of concern regarding the regulations such as AMPS, COMPASS and CSA. I am pleased to inform her that the CCRA will prepare a detailed draft regulation this week.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry but I really did not understand the hon. member's comment. I am sorry.

Still, I would like to remind her that, in my riding, the concern stems from the fact that when we talk about technological measures and changes, we must really include procedures. It goes without saying that changes are necessary. We must try to greatly enhance movement at our borders.

As I was saying earlier, there are trucks right now that are spending more time clearing customs than it delivering their goods. So, some changes are definitely required. But we really have to know what will happen.

We have a bill that seems to reflect good intentions, but there are no regulations. Everything is at the minister's discretion. In an area like mine, where, for the past four years, there have been rumors that customs services in Drummondville will close, this does not make sense.

Should that become reality, there will be public outcry because the whole riding of Drummond, which is made up of 22 municipalities, is against the closing of the customs office in Drummondville. That office serves region 17 in Quebec. We need it. It is not a big office, with only three customs officers at the moment. But why close this border crossing and move it to a non-neighbouring area where the situation is totally different from ours?

Why make such a decision? Human resources are being replaced by technology at a time when we need even more customs officers. We need people to ensure our safety. Right now, most Quebecers and Canadians are worried. Now is not the time to circulate rumours to the effect that our customs offices will be closed.

In response to the member's question, I can say that people in my riding are worried because Bill S-23 wants to take away human

resources that are very important in light of the recent terrorist attacks in the United States.

I think there is a lesson to be learned from that. Now is not the time to remove people from the field. Yes, we do need new technologies, but we also need to keep our customs officers and even to double their numbers, because these people who work in the field know their job.

[*English*]

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's presentation and found the issue of open borders and trade to be a compelling argument.

Any community actively dealing with its trading partners in the United States should be very concerned over the issue of security. The rumours the member heard about customs officers being pulled from the port of entry would certainly affect her riding. Whatever province in Canada we come from, close to 90% of our goods and services are tied to the American market and security should be examined closely.

I will ask a question I have asked several times in the House and one which I have not received much of a reply. On the one side the Customs Act wants to streamline legitimate cross border trade and travel by using new technology, electronic monitoring, self-assessment and advanced information for approval.

On the other side of the coin there is something that I believe needs to be addressed. I know there is an answer but I have not yet heard anything from the government side nor from the opposition side. I refer to the statement by the director of CSIS, Ward Elcock. He called Canada one of the world's pre-eminent terrorist targets. He further elaborated by saying "With perhaps the singular exception of the United States, there are more international terrorist groups active here than in any other country in the world". I can see why, given our proximity to the United States.

With that security issue looming before us now, how can we streamline things on one side and also provide security on the other?

● (1550)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard:** Mr. Speaker, I truly respect the opinion of the member of the official opposition. I do not have the answer to that question either.

As far as I am concerned, this has nothing to do with Bill S-23. I know that security at our borders needs to be tightened up. People close to me who have worked at crossing points in Quebec have often told me that it is very hard to control everything and to ensure public safety without the appropriate human and financial resources and the technology required.

*Government Orders*

Of course, what happened is very troubling. Given the tragedies that occurred in the U.S., Customs and Excise needs to reconsider things. The government has no other choice but to review all the services it provides at crossing points in order to ensure better protection and avoid as much as possible unlawful entry of persons in Canada, like traffickers who come and go between Canada and the U.S.

Canada's borders have often be called open sieves. It is not the first we hear such a thing. We know how easy it is to falsify Canadian passports. It looks like it is also very easy to come here and then travel to the United States.

We have to be very careful and very serious about this issue. As I said earlier, this is not the time to lay off the officers who ensure our safety, who see to it that travellers are well served, just because of the emergence of new technologies. Technology will never replace people in the field.

• (1555)

[English]

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC/DR):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts. I will speak specifically to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona.

When I think about the bill I must reflect on what has happened since September 11. I recently read a detailed schedule of what the Prime Minister did immediately after the attacks of September 11. I do not remember his exact words but the first thing he said was that nothing would be the same and that everything had changed.

However that is not true. Bill S-23 is still the same. Nothing in the bill has changed despite the events of September 11. The government has taken no initiative to change the bill to address all aspects of terrorism in the wake of the attacks on New York and Washington. The timing of the bill is wrong because it ignores the events of September 11.

We in my party therefore agree with the amendment. The bill should be pulled back, tabled, reviewed and rewritten to consider all the other approaches that will need to be taken to deal with the new world we live in. I think we all acknowledge that it is a new world and nothing will ever be the same. We have heard those words many times in the House.

Bill S-23 was written some time last year in a completely different set of circumstances. It was passed by the Senate in the spring and does not reflect the situation we find ourselves in now.

The bill is contradictory to many of the things we are now discussing such as increasing security and security perimeters. Bill S-23 would do the reverse of that in many ways. It would lean more on technology than on the ability of people to determine when there are contraventions of the Customs Act, falsified passports and so on.

We in our party think the bill should go back and be completely reviewed over a period of time. We support the amendment for that reason.

We are all facing new challenges which we did not face a few weeks ago. As I mentioned earlier, the United States is committed to

a secure perimeter. Canada will either be inside the perimeter or outside it. The United States is not speculating on the perimeter; it is saying it will have it.

It is important that we adjust our customs regulations and customs act to recognize this. It will make a fundamental difference as to whether we are inside the perimeter or out.

Many technical aspects of our relationship with the United States will need to change. The U.S. wants us to review our extradition laws. I am sure that is one of the subjects the Prime Minister discussed today with the president of the United States. The U.S. is concerned about the long process illegal immigrants must go through when they find themselves in Canada. When the Liberal government takes exception to their presence it takes a long time to address the issue. That will need to be dealt with.

Many people say the government did not react properly in the first seven days after the attacks. My theory is that it has not reacted well in the last seven years. It has cut back spending to intelligence agencies and the military. It has had seven years of neglect on both counts. The government is depending more and more on technology. This has proven to be poor policy.

The previous speaker talked about the possible closure of a customs office in her riding. Two customs offices in my riding have been closed. They had been there for 100 years and are now gone. They are not there any more to perform the valuable service they used to provide. The government is focusing on technology instead of on people to do the job.

However many things will need to be dealt with in addition to customs and immigration. There are things like air traffic safety and aircraft regulations. An issue was raised in question period today about cutlery on aircraft. Locking cockpit doors is an issue that will need to be addressed. There was an immediate knee jerk reaction to this issue, a reaction with which I agree. However cockpits must be protected from encroachment.

• (1600)

On the question of air marshals, if the United States is to have air marshals on its aircraft does that mean Air Canada must have air marshals on its aircraft when they fly in the U.S.? Transponders were shut off in the four hijackings that took place recently in the United States. Will those regulations be changed? Will those airplanes be changed?

Many questions must be dealt with in addition to and including customs, airport security, access to luggage, access to airplanes, the people who groom the airplanes and the people who deal with the freight that goes on them. How will these be changed and adjusted? What legislation will we bring to the table to address this new world?

In light of the incredible circumstances experienced in the United States it is wrong to try to put through obsolete legislation which was written last year. I agree with the Prime Minister. Everything has changed, especially in terms of security, immigration and customs. It is important that we treat things differently than we did before September 11.

*Government Orders*

In that regard the amendment is the right way to go. We must stop the bill, go back and review it in light of all the other changes that must be made. It must be dealt with as a comprehensive package. It cannot be dealt with as a single issue. We must deal with extradition, immigration, border crossings, customs funding, intelligence funding, military funding, extradition laws and a legal process for illegal immigrants.

The bill is obsolete and it would be wrong to pass it under current circumstances. Our goal is certainly freer trade with the United States. However if we do not build our new environment with respect to the Americans and what they are doing, we may find ourselves with tougher trade instead of freer trade.

One thing that impressed me was the ability of the enemy we are now dealing with to fool intelligence agencies around the world. It took years to put the attack together. They did it through several countries. Some of the hijackers and terrorists lived in Canada, at least for some time, and we missed them. They lived in the U.S. and they missed them. They lived in many countries in Europe. They gathered together all kinds of explosive materials, information and training through these countries and no one caught on.

This is an intelligent group of terrorists. We must deal with that. We must be prepared for it. We cannot assume we will succeed because we have technology, spy satellites and all kinds of communications experts. That does not work. It does not count. We missed the boat. Our intelligence services completely failed to detect that this incredible terrorist act would take place.

The enemy is well prepared. It can take advantage of our rules if we are not careful. We must adjust our rules and amend our laws to prevent terrorists from contravening our systems and getting away with it.

It is most impressive that it took so long to put the attack together. It involved people crossing our borders into the United States and people entering Canada and the U.S. from other countries. No one caught them. Customs officers, intelligence agencies and the military failed to catch them.

I will wind up by saying that we in my party support the amendment. Amendments should be tabled to the Customs Act until a comprehensive approach to the whole new world situation can be established.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the emphasis of the hon. member's presentation was somewhat different than that of many others who made their presentations today, not so much on this side but certainly on the Liberal side and among Bloc members.

The member expressed concern about terrorism, organized criminal activity and the like. That will certainly be a focal point. If anyone in the House believes there will be a streamlining in the movement of goods and people south of the border which does not answer the security issue, their heads are buried in the sand.

Given that these two things are playing out right now before us, the movement of goods will affect the economy one way or the other. If goods are held up at the border and customers are lost our economy will be hurt substantially. We have seen this happen over the last few days with the slowdown at border crossings. It is making

its impact on our economy and will certainly do so with the Americans.

The issue of security has still not been addressed in its total form. How does the member think we can have a streamlining of goods and people across the border and still meet all the needs of security?

• (1605)

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. My feeling on this is and always has been that we should not just be doing what the United States tells us to. We should be establishing our own rules in consultation and collaboration with the U.S.

We have an obligation. We could be the next victim. We are in effect a victim now. Everything we do has changed. The hon. member mentioned lineups at the border. How about the 9,000 or 10,000 people who landed in Halifax unexpectedly? How about disruptions to our transportation system and all the changes we have had to make in security?

The terrorist attacks did not happen in Canada but they affected us in a tangible way. Maybe the next act will be in Canada. We must be philosophical about deciding what to do. The secure perimeter that the United States will establish could include us. This would protect our relationship with our biggest trading partner and allow for continued safe and secure transportation of goods back and forth.

If we establish rules that do not reflect the concerns of our partners in the United States, the U.S. may establish borders that prevent Canadian goods and services from going back and forth without a great deal of inspection and examination. This would effectively eliminate our most favoured nation status.

Our overall approach must be comprehensive. We cannot say we will deal with the customs aspect this way and the aircraft aspect that way. It must be a comprehensive approach.

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said we are now victims. We were victims the day the acts of terrorism took place. It was not only Americans who died but a large number of people of other nationalities including Canadians. When it comes to trade with the Americans we must realize that this is where Canada's bread and butter is.

If we do not live up to our obligations as the Americans see them they will curtail our trade quite substantially. The Americans have set up what is called homeland defence, a special committee or organization to address the security of their nation.

*Government Orders*

Should the government not be looking along the same lines? Should it not be working hand in hand with our American brothers and sisters on the issue instead of taking a different avenue? That is my question for the member.

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I agree that it is a delicate matter. We in Canada must establish our own rules but they must fit with what the United States is doing. We cannot let the United States tell us to do things, but we can come up with approaches to the issues which satisfy their concerns and allow us to maintain our sovereignty, our culture and our control over the issues.

As the hon. member said, the U.S. has established a homeland defence division and appointed a special secretary who answers directly to the president. That is the level of priority the U.S. is putting on security. If the Americans get a head start on us and start establishing rules without our input we will be left in the dust and unable to reflect our concerns. We will be in a very difficult position when we deal with the United States.

We should be in on this now. We should have our team in place and be in consultation with the Americans at this moment.

• (1610)

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to speak on Bill S-23, particularly in view of the events of September 11. Those events have changed the whole complexion upon which this debate has taken place and will take place.

All members of the House have had an opportunity to focus on many of the issues, which have been neglected for a long time, and how we can ensure the security of Canadians at home and abroad.

The bill is a balancing act. Basically, it is about ensuring that we have rapid and easy movement of goods, services and people across our border to the United States. At the same, it is about preventing individuals and elements which are of risk to Canadians from crossing the border. That is the challenge. The bill manages to address that to some extent.

Economic exchange between Canada and the United States is \$500 billion a year and 108 million people cross the border every year, which is massive. However, the our current situation is less than ideal.

Before I go into that, I would be remiss if I did not make some comments on the events of September 11 and how they relate to our own internal security.

The Osama bin Ladens of this world did not materialize out of thin air. They are the sharp and extreme edge of some very real problems that, to some extent, have been neglected by the world. Foreign policy challenges have been perceived to have been dealt with in a fair and even-handed fashion.

People like Osama bin Laden and the individuals who follow him see the sword as their only recourse, and there is no room for negotiation. They decided to blow up the negotiating table rather than sit at it.

Those individuals who are filled with hatred, as is this man, who are able and willing to twist a beautiful religion like Islam into something it does not represent, have made a very clear decision and

have sent a very clear message to other countries that they are not willing to engage in peaceful negotiations. Therefore, a multifactorial response, including military, international financial institutions and other levers will be required to stop these individuals.

Once we take Mr. bin Laden out, no doubt he will be replaced by others of his ilk. I believe a lot of people who follow individuals like Osama bin Laden would be able to change if our foreign policy took a bit of a different tact, along with foreign policies of other countries being changed somewhat.

There are a couple of issues that I would like to address. Western countries have to at least be perceived as fair-minded in their dealings with international problems, be it the Palestinian-Israeli question, or Saudi Arabia, or Iraq or others. It must be perceived that we are dealing with these issues and problems in a fair and even-handed fashion.

People like Osama bin Laden or those individuals who were celebrating the mass murder of innocent civilians in the United States, as we saw on television, use this type of manipulation. Curiously enough, a lot of the information they receive is through a very thick sieve or a thick prism which warped. Therefore, the information they are fed often bears absolutely no resemblance to reality.

I have heard outrageous allegations against the west, the Israelis and other Arab states from individuals who support the likes of Osama bin Laden. They are a complete and utter fabrication. If we were subjected to only those fabricated messages of hate which try to stimulate a group of people to suggest that another group will kill or threaten them, perhaps other people would respond in a similar fashion. I would hope not.

• (1615)

It leads us to believe and leads us to show that communication and how communication is used is essential for those individuals who try to stimulate people with that kind of hatred. Therefore within that is an opportunity for west to try to get the message out to the people in the Middle East that the west has been a friend to Muslims. The west tried to defend Muslims in the former Yugoslavia. The west tried to help the Kurds in northern Iraq who were being massacred by Saddam Hussein. The west tried to be fair minded with respect to the Palestinian-Israeli situation. Canada has supported a policy of an independent Palestinian state and an independent Israeli state living side by side in peace. Canada has not tried to take sides and we have tried to be even-handed.

Unfortunately, this message does not get out to the shantytowns of the West Bank nor does not it get out to the types of individuals who Osama bin Laden and people like him who they try to curry favour. It does not get through to some people in Afghanistan. Therein lies the challenge for us in the west.

We have to improve communication, improve connection and improve discourse. We have to have a greater number of meetings between people of different philosophical backgrounds. That is the only way we will be able to achieve a measure of peace. By doing so, we will be able to remove some of the supporters of terrorists like Osama bin Laden. It will not remove all of them. As I said before, individuals filled with that kind of hate, who are willing to completely warp and misrepresent a faith like Islam and who are willing to lie to their people are individuals beyond the pale and stage of negotiation.

With respect to our border security and our ability to deal with this problem, this will require a multifactorial approach. This will not only include foreign policy initiatives with our allies and the Americans to root out individuals such as Mr. bin Laden, to root out his support and to root out individuals who think it is acceptable to hide and coddle him, but we will also have to go after the money, which is essential in trying to cut the support to these individuals.

We can do that through the international financial institutions. The IFIs and their countries, or the international family which includes all of us, have to develop a comprehensive plan of action to find out the economic resources and sources of money that support these terrorist groups. Once we find them, we have to apprehend those funds. Cutting off the money supply is one of the most effective ways to weaken these terrorist organizations. It is absolutely essential.

My colleagues have repeatedly, in very eloquent statements, brought out what has happened to our defence forces. The Prime Minister has gone to the United States to speak with Mr. Bush, presumably to articulate some of the things that Canada can do in this initiative against terrorists. The Prime Minister knows full well that for over eight years he and his government have gutted our military to appalling degrees.

In the 1994 white paper an obligation was made by the government. It said it could put in the theatre in short order a battalion plus a brigade or 6,000 plus people. According to our defence forces, it would take a minimum of three months to introduce a brigade into the field. Furthermore, we could not sustain that brigade for six months. That is a terrible indictment, not on the men and women of our military who put their lives on the line and who are working under extraordinarily difficult circumstances, but on this government's willingness to gut our military.

With respect to our navy, at this point in time we are able to put one frigate in the theatre, in part because we have had a massive loss and attrition of skilled individuals able to man our frigates.

Furthermore, our ability to promote their strength has been severely hampered by the fact that we do not have functional Sea Kings.

• (1620)

Our Sea Kings are more than 30 years old. Some are dropping out of the sky. We do not have faith in functioning of those helicopters, which severely compromises the ability of our forces.

With respect to our land forces, the hardware such as tanks, et cetera necessary to back them up is severely lacking.

### *Government Orders*

With respect to air, according to the 1994 white paper, Canada was supposed to put a minimum of 24 to 48 fighters into the theatre, if called upon. Can we do this? No, we cannot. Furthermore, the CF-18s we have are becoming incompatible with their American counterparts because of the high tech hardware that each of those planes requires. That means our CF-18s cannot nor will they be likely to function appropriately, other than in a token fashion, in any kind of required air effort. I wonder if the public is aware of what is going on. Our military men and women know about this because they have been labouring under it for a very long time.

We also need to look at our internal security mechanisms. CSIS is the agency we rely upon for internal security, yet over the last seven years its budget has been cut by at least 30%. Furthermore, it has had a 28% cut in manpower, which has severely compromised our internal security forces to engage in surveillance and apprehend, along with the RCMP, individuals who are a threat to our security and international security.

A gentleman who used to work as a very high level intelligence officer made the comment that Canada had become an aircraft carrier jihad for those groups that were willing to engage in terrorist activities abroad. This did not happen overnight. This happened over years because terrorist organizations knew they could easily gain access into Canada. Our ability to engage in surveillance has been severely compromised.

We understand the economic restrictions that the government is under and we support balanced cuts. However, we do not support activities and actions that compromise the security of Canadians at home and abroad. As a party, we are asking the government to put money back into the security elements that we desperately required yesterday, not two years from now. We will continually ask for and demand this.

We know that hardworking individuals in our immigration services have been frustrated for a long time. Over the last few years, my colleagues have repeatedly put out constructive suggestions to strengthen our immigration so that true refugees can come into Canada under what we feel are our humanitarian obligations. We have also asked that those individuals who are a security risk and those refugees coming here under false pretenses be prevented from entering into Canada.

Time and time again we have demonstrated that the government has failed to initiate in the House an effective immigration bill that would allow us to accomplish those objectives. We have also asked the minister of immigration why there is not proper surveillance of individuals, who claim refugee status, once they come to Canada.

Other models in the world work better than ours. Although Australia has its own difficulties, we can learn from some of its lessons which will enable us to streamline our immigration procedures.

*Government Orders*

My private member's bill would put the onus of identification, barring any extenuating circumstances, directly on the shoulders of persons claiming refugee status. They would be required to prove their identification as opposed to coming in claiming they did not have identification. Ninety per cent of individuals who are false refugees come through our borders by way of our airports. I do not know why we have not introduced that.

My colleague made a very impressive comment in her statement by members today requesting that Canadians have a photo identification card, a universal card, that would allow us to be identified from other individuals.

• (1625)

If our social insurance and health card numbers were on that card it would go a long way to removing fraud which costs the health care system and HRDC a lot of money. My colleague's suggestion is very intelligent and easily managed, and one that the government could do almost overnight. This would save tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars and add a very important element of security into our system.

Another purpose of the bill is to reduce the amount of illegal drugs coming into Canada. I was in Costa Rico and in Colombia earlier this year meeting with President Pastrana. What we have in front of us right now is a grand opportunity to address the trade in illegal drugs. What we can do is as follows. First, we have to recognize that the war on drugs that we have today is a failure. If we think we can go to Colombia and burn all the coca and poppy crops that are growing there and somehow believe this will solve the problem, it will not. Those crops will spread to Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela and Brazil, which is what is happening now.

If there is one thing the Taliban has done correctly over the last few months it has been to burn its poppy crops. We know the smuggling of heroin is still a serious problem in those countries but how do we deal with it? We must accept the fact that trying to address this problem at the production source will not win the so-called war against drugs.

Senator McCain of the United States made a very interesting comment when I was there. He said that we need to decrease consumption in North America. He could not be more right. If we want to address the war on drugs we must deal with it in our own house in Canada and indeed in North America. We need to decrease consumption.

Europe has some exciting models that would work very well. It has some new treatment modalities which look at addicts, not in a punitive or criminal fashion but from a medical perspective. Some of those models have a 60% one year success rate for the worst of the worst heroin addicts, which is extraordinary. It works very well.

Canada can use another avenue which has widespread support but it requires some leadership. It is the introduction of import-export permits for the precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of cocaine and heroin.

A few months ago Canada's knuckles were wrapped publicly and internationally, along with Norway and some other European countries. The reason was very interesting. We, as countries, were wilfully and knowingly selling the precursor chemicals required to

produce cocaine and heroin. We know we are selling these chemicals to individuals who are using them to produce drugs but we say that it is not our problem. It is our problem and we can do something about it. We can do something through the introduction of import-export permits. In other words, a company would need an export permit for the bulk export of these precursor chemicals and the recipient would need an import permit. This would enable us to track and identify the individuals producing these drugs. Then we could stop it. If they do not have the chemicals to produce the cocaine and the heroin they cannot produce those drugs. We would cut it off at our side, which is doable.

Another thing we can do is implement something called the RICO amendments, the racketeering, investigation and criminal organization amendments, that they have in the United States. This would enable us to go after the money. It would enable us to go after those organizations that are engaging in criminal activities. It would choke off the money supply for them.

In conclusion, a number of elements need to be added to the bill in terms of strengthening our borders. We need to strengthen our defence forces, CSIS and our immigration borders. We also need to ensure that our customs officers have the ability to apprehend from a criminal perspective, not just be individuals who are trying to collect money for Revenue Canada.

• (1630)

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to respond with care to the comments of the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. In the context of this debate on customs legislation, he made some interesting points about the impact of the tragic terrorist attacks on September 11 and how they might affect this legislation and Canada's response to it.

In looking at that response, I suggest there are two fundamental elements that we have to address. One is the issue of accountability and the other is the issue of prevention. In terms of accountability, it needs to be done within the framework of international co-operation; to hold the perpetrators of these terrorist acts to account, as well as their accomplices and those who harbour them.

In the context of prevention, there are two aspects. One is more effective surveillance combined with other security measures to enhance public safety. Certainly we have to look very seriously at that. The second is attention to the social, political and economic conditions that promote or are conducive to terrorism.

I want to be very clear. I am not speaking in any manner to suggest that this in any way defends acts of terrorism. It is precisely the opposite. If we want to understand and prevent terrorist attacks, as I heard the hon. member say, it is essential to look at what breeds the desperation, hopelessness and despair that ultimately drives people to suicide bombings or to this terrible terrorist act of September 11.

I want to take issue with the hon. member's reading of history. He referred to the question of why it is that the Muslim community, for example, in many cases, hates the United States, its foreign policy and western foreign policy. He said that they should not do that because the west has been supportive of them in a number of respects. I think we must be cautious and accurate in our review of history.

*Government Orders*

When the member talks about the west's support for the Kurds in northern Iraq, what about the Kurds in Turkey? When he talks about the tragic situation in the Middle East and the Palestinians, surely he has to recognize that the United States has been supporting the Israeli policy of illegal settlements and occupation for far too long.

Does the member not recognize that is the tragic history and not what he has recounted, as well as the impact of sanctions on the people of Iraq?

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, my friend from the NDP made a number of points. However I do take issue with him that poverty is the root cause of why Mr. bin Laden and his group engage in what they do. Mr. bin Laden is worth \$300 million. If Mr. bin Laden is worth \$300 million, it refutes the idea of poverty being the root cause.

If he is talking about poverty as a root cause of this, then presumably they would have numerous terrorists coming out of the Congo, Liberia or Sierra Leone but that is not the case.

I agree to some extent with the hon. member when he says that there has been a perception on the part of individuals in certain parts of the Middle East of an unfair application of foreign policy. To some extent that is a failure of communication and we have not been able to get our message out to the individuals concerned.

Yes, he is right when he says that we have turned a blind eye to the illegal introduction of settlements in Palestine, which we do not support in any way, shape or form and believe we should take a much stronger stance on. However, the issue is much more complicated than that.

The Osama bin Ladens of this world are the sharp edge of some very rare problems and we cannot negotiate with those individuals. Even if the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict were to be resolved, it would not be enough because Osama bin Laden hates western culture. He perceives the west as being a threat to the tenets of Islam. That is a central issue for people of his ilk.

On the issue of economics, the member should know that the leaders of the Taliban are quite affluent. While the Afghani people have been suffering beyond comprehension for years and live in grinding poverty, members of the Taliban have been lining their pockets with money from illegal trucking in the southern part of Afghanistan and through the sale of illegal drugs. That is how they are actually living. They drive around in Mercedes Benzes while their people are starving to death. I would ask the member to consider those points.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Lanctôt (Châteauguay, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am stunned to hear nothing in the remarks of the official opposition, following the discussions and questions that we have asked of the government today, about whether or not they have a budget and about how much it was going to invest in terms of dollar figures to implement better security without hindering the steady flow of goods and services. We need to allocate more money and more staff, not simply change the technology. Yes, there is missing infrastructure, but there is also a lack of staff at customs and at the border. We

would like to congratulate the customs agents, given what has happened since September 11.

However, I would like to ask the member what kind of money would be necessary to improve border security.

[*English*]

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have repeatedly made representations to the government on how we can increase the funding and where it should go to make a more effective customs and revenue agency. I echo the member's comments to say that the men and women who work for customs and revenue have been trying to do a very good job under very difficult circumstances.

For years my colleagues have repeatedly put forth suggestions to the government on how to improve the system but they fell on deaf ears until this catastrophe took place. We will continue to put forth suggestions on how to improve both domestic and international security.

On the issue of defence, we have advocated a \$2 billion infusion into our defence budget urgently.

The House may be interested to know that in terms of ourselves and NATO, Canada spends the second lowest amount of all NATO countries in terms of a percentage of our GDP on military. That is sad. We have known this for a long time. A year ago NATO rapped our knuckles because we were unable to meet our commitments internationally.

We have asked for a \$2 billion infusion into defence. We would like to increase our percentage of GDP from about 1% today to at least 1.5% in the future. We feel that is a reasonable amount to bring our armed forces up to snuff.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, I am the critic for customs at the border crossings, and I have visited a number of these crossings in the last little while. Every time we get ideas or solutions from the grassroots level at the crossings for what they feel needs immediate attention, such as the situation they are now facing, they are looked upon by the government as simplistic. It is not a long term solution but there are definitely some immediate needs.

I would suggest the problem exists because it is an operation that is run by Revenue Canada, which has very little knowledge of law enforcement and the apprehension of these type of criminals. I believe these should be shifted to law enforcement bureaucracies, such as the solicitor general and justice. I wonder if the hon. member would comment on that.

**Mr. Keith Martin:** Mr. Speaker, we have for some time lamented and made some strong comments on the fact that the judicial aspect of customs officers has been removed to make them revenue collecting officers rather than individuals who are able to uphold the law.

*Government Orders*

I know my colleague from Wild Rose has been travelling from coast to coast and meeting with the grassroots. I would encourage the government to listen to his suggestions as well as those of the grassroots, the men and women who work at customs and revenue. They have a lot of good suggestions to put forward that would improve the system. We are also not listening to the men and women in our defence forces. They also have some excellent suggestions on how we can improve our department of defence.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester, Trade; the hon. member for Lanark—Carleton, Infrastructure.

• (1640)

[English]

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to state that the prayers and concerns from the people of Okanagan—Shuswap with regard to the September 11 terrorist activities in the United States have been overwhelming. Support in my office has also been overwhelming. In regard to Bill S-23 and more important the amendment, it states:

this House declines to give second reading to Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts, since the principle of the bill fails to specifically and adequately address national security at Canada's borders with respect to terrorist activities.

I want everyone to be assured that I do not think there is anyone in the House who is against streamlining the border if we could.

The bill was drafted before the September 11 tragedy, and I believe that it is outdated. The government's first and foremost priority in any country has to be to the safety and well-being of its law-abiding citizens. We have not achieved that goal since my coming to the House in 1993.

Countermeasures against terrorist and gang related activities were mentioned in the form of bills over the course of the past two years. However time and again the government refused to act.

It is not nice to talk about this in hindsight. If we had enacted legislation that was put before the House when the concerns were first raised, maybe we would not be trying to get the government to act on legislation that all of North America is in very dire straits to have. The 2000 CSIS report states:

Individuals with links to international terrorist groups use foreign countries, including Canada, as a base to plan terrorist acts and provide logistical support for terrorist activities in their country of origin or against other target nations. In Canada, supporters of terrorism engage in fundraising, planning operations, and transferring money and materiel overseas...Canada belongs to international institutions and bodies, participates in peacekeeping missions and hosts major international events, all of which are potential targets for terrorists. Canada remains a world leader in accepting refugees and immigrants, and will continue to receive a steady flow of people from regions of strife. Some will bring the politics of conflict with them. For Canada, politically motivated violence remains largely an extension of overseas discord. Individuals with links to international terrorist groups use Canada primarily as a base from which to orchestrate terrorist activities abroad. The intelligence services of certain foreign governments continue to be active in Canada—

Martin Collacott, a former Canadian ambassador to Asia and the Middle East, said that Americans had genuine concerns about the ease with which international terrorists entered and remained in

Canada with the intent of mounting attacks on the U.S. He also said that Canada gave a low priority to identifying, tracking and removing suspected terrorists.

Travel and commerce across the U.S.-Canada border is important to both countries. There is no doubt about that. No one wants to disrupt these flows, yet a crackdown on terrorists will be meaningless without a serious push in Canada toward greater security regarding immigrants and refugees.

• (1645)

Canada shares vulnerability to terrorist infiltration. All open societies pay a price for tolerance and civil liberties. According to John Thompson, director of the Toronto Mackenzie Institute specializing in organized crime and political instability, the thing that makes Canada different from the British, French and Americans is that we tend to be more politically immature. We have a political culture that does not go to war. We have had a view since the 1930s that we are in a fireproof house. We are supposed to be the international boy scouts who are trusted by all other countries.

He went on to say that it has coloured Canadian attitudes toward security. He noted that until this week the largest terrorist strike was the downing of the Air India jet in 1985 where more than 330 people were killed. He goes on to say that the fundamentalists who drove a truckful of explosives over the Washington border in 1990 was one such arrival.

Mr. Ressay arrived in Canada and was caught with a fake French passport. He claimed refugee status and then renounced his claim. He had a history of associations with terrorists and yet the government did nothing about deporting him.

Mr. Collacott said the Ressay case brought out the fact that terrorist suspects could enter the country easily and that there were problems that were still not removed.

Do our brothers in the states have concerns about what is going on in Canada? After reading these CSIS reports they certainly do. Not only the Americans have concerns but people in Canada have the same concerns. They want to know what the government will do to address the problems. It has done nothing. Instead it has decided to study the issue.

Terrorists do not study the issue; they act. While we are in the House I guarantee that they are already making plans. The British foreign secretary said:

We come together and we work out how they face that choice, but one thing is very, very clear. As soon as we know, or have a very good idea as to who is responsible for this action, those states which harbour terrorist activity, in the words of the United Nations Security Council Resolution, have to be held to account and cannot any longer have the kind of easy ride they have had in the past.



*Government Orders*

I could not agree more. If any country allows terrorist organizations to raise funds to be taken out or used within that country and use funds to make bombs and killing devices, that country has to be held accountable.

We have overwhelming evidence, not only from CSIS but from other reports that the government knows, that there are over 50 terrorist organizations actively working in Canada and yet nothing is being done.

I question the wisdom of the government when last Tuesday it voted against a motion brought before the House by the official opposition. It stated:

That this House call upon the government to introduce anti-terrorism legislation similar in principle to the United Kingdom's Terrorism Act, 2000, and that such legislation provide for:

- the naming of all known international terrorist organizations operating in Canada;
- a complete ban on fundraising activities in support of terrorism, and provisions for the seizure of assets belonging to terrorists or terrorist organizations;
- the immediate ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism;
- the creation of specific crimes for engaging in terrorist training activities in Canada or inciting terrorist acts from Canada;
- the prompt extradition of foreign nationals charged with acts of terrorism, even if the charges are capital offences; and
- the detention and deportation to their country of origin of any people illegally in Canada or failed refugee claimants who have been linked to terrorist organizations.

● (1650)

I have to question, if the government's first and foremost priority is to the safety and well-being of its law-abiding citizens, why it voted against the motion. I do not understand it.

I see I am out of time, although I have a lot more information I would like to share with the House.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the debate on Bill S-23 has certainly been very revealing in one sense. I know a lot of it has focused on the amendment before us which would include the issue of terrorism in the bill that would streamline the movement of people and goods across the border.

As I sat and listened to the comments of various members in the House it became very noticeable that they are all free traders. They want to see the movement of goods and services north and south in this country.

The NAFTA, struck by governments previous to one that sits in the House today, has become so essential to our economy, to our well-being, to who we are not only as Canadians but as people who share the North American continent, that we do not want to see any hindrance to the flow of goods and services within the North American continent.

That is very important to note because with that there will be a will to make sure that does not happen, that goods, services and people will not be hindered in their movement north and south.

In retrospect I recall campaign promises in the past to bury such things as NAFTA and any free trade rules or agreements. The reality is that now we have such agreements which are so essential to our well-being and we want to protect them.

I have certainly brought forward the one question that has been asked not just by myself but by other members of the House. How can we have streamlined, legitimate, cross-border trade and travel almost unhindered and still deal with the issue that has been brought before us by the amendment from this side of the House concerning the security of our combined countries?

I will repeat again the words of Director Ward Elcock who in 1998 called Canada one of the world's pre-eminent terrorist targets. He elaborated by saying that with perhaps the singular exception of the United States there are more international terrorist groups active here than in any other country in the world.

That is quite a statement to make. Apart from the United States, we have more terrorist groups and cells working here than in any other country in the world.

If he were the only one who said that, maybe we could say the statement was taken out of context or that it was slightly exaggerated. However he was not the only one who said it.

In 1999 after a special Senate committee on security and intelligence reviewed the issue of terrorist groups, the CSIS chief of strategic planning, David Harris, referred to Canada as a big jihad aircraft carrier for launching strikes against the United States. We had two individuals saying that very same thing in slightly different words.

I can remember coming into the House for the first time in 1994 and listening to the then solicitor general who now sits in the House as Deputy Prime Minister.

● (1655)

He said at that time that serious concerns had been passed on to him by CSIS about the instability which could result from groups that were actively involved in this country, that if they were to rise up they could destabilize the country. That is quite a broad statement to make, that they could actually destabilize the country.

Here is the issue which is before the government and every member of the House. We want the movement of goods and services to flow along so that our economies and our businesses do well. At the same time we want to provide security that will please not only our neighbours, because they are the ones that can take action against the movement of goods and services, but we also have to consider and please the citizens of our country. That is the issue at hand here on everything we say and do from this point forward. On every piece of legislation, whether it is through Revenue Canada and customs, whether it is through transport or even our security agencies, that is the question that will have to be answered.

How can we do it? Some time ago, prior to the Reform Party coming into parliament, a previous government tried to address that issue. Just before that party was voted out of power, it did come forward with a similar kind of concern and tried to address it as a government. Unfortunately those efforts were all cast aside when the Liberal government took over in 1993.

*Government Orders*

In my opinion there is only one way to address the issue of having a security network set up that would please the citizens of Canada and our American counterparts and also achieve the goal of almost unhindered cross-border trade. Until that issue is addressed, I do not think we will see unhindered movement of people and trade.

We must harmonize our policies with the United States and consider it in the same way that the NATO alliance works, that a strike against any one member of the alliance is a strike against all members; a strike against any one is a strike against all. In other words we should have a policy that is in harmony with our neighbours to the south. If they are concerned about security in a certain way, we should be just as concerned about it. We must harmonize our policies so that we have a security network. Two years ago at a united alternative meeting I suggested that we have a security network that falls under one ministry. A new ministry should be created that will look after the security network. I can give ample reasons for us to do that.

One thing I have discovered through the nine years I have been in parliament and being part of the different committees that examined the groups, agencies and enforcement areas is that they are all working independently of one another. Often information is not being shared. Their enforcement areas are all treated independently by the government.

Some groups should be bolstered up and lifted and resourced properly. Unfortunately the government takes the opposite point of view and they fall flat and later are disbanded or quietly removed from the scene. That is one area we should work on as a government, not only the government side, but the opposition side as well.

• (1700)

We should start planning now and work toward having one ministry that is in charge of our national security and even further, our North American security network.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, we are here today to address Bill S-23. This is a bill to facilitate trade between the United States and Canada. I will spend a few minutes talking about trade in agriculture since that is one of the areas I have an interest in.

Trade in agriculture, exports and imports between the United States and Canada, runs into the billions of dollars. For example, we export billions of dollars per year in grain and oilseed foodstuffs alone. We import almost \$300 million in bulk grain alone from the United States. We export \$1.3 billion worth of livestock and import more than \$150 million in just live animals from the United States. We export more than \$600 million worth of pork products and import \$100 million.

In the past we have had conflicts on our border regarding agricultural issues and products. The cattle industry has been affected a couple of times by R-CALF, an organization in the United States that has come forward to try to challenge the import and export of animals to the United States. Durum wheat has been challenged often by senators along the border states, particularly along the border of North Dakota and Manitoba. We see recurring problems with softwood lumber across Canada.

For those of us who live on this side of the border, it is necessary for the border to be open. Not only is it necessary for us but for the people of the United States as well, because we are their biggest trading partner taking a full 25% of their exports.

The border serves several functions. My riding is located right along the Montana border and it has always been an area of interest to the locals. Many of the people who have settled in our area came from Minnesota. They came from Scandinavian countries, moved through Minnesota, came up through Montana and settled right along the border. The early pioneers were used to going back and forth across that border.

My grandfather talked about unloading a three wheel tractor in Chinook, Montana and trying to bring it across the prairie. As they drove it north they tipped it twice and had to go to one of their U.S. neighbours to get a horse to pull the tractor back onto its wheels. Building supplies were often shipped into small Montana towns such as Turner, Harlem, Chinook and then the products were brought up to Canada. The border was also an interesting place to be during the prohibition era. There were a lot of products brought back and forth that often were not approved by customs.

We have friends on both sides of the border. When I was growing up I would travel to the United States regularly. The border was open. Often it seemed that we had more connections north and south than we did east and west. Lately traffic to the U.S. from our area has been curtailed since our dollar has fallen to the level it has. Many of the people in our area have quit spending as much money as they used to in the United States.

We also have programs in our area such as Canpass. We have been talking about setting up electronic crossings. Those programs I understand are now under review.

We need to have trade with our biggest trading partner. Because of terrorism and the brutal treatment of innocent people which has taken place, the border has changed. It has changed the ability of people and goods to move back and forth across the border.

I want to spend a couple of minutes talking about the type of border crossings. I ask members present, what would it be like to be a customs agent at an isolated border crossing in the conditions that we have now? What would it be like for a customs agent to be overseen by an agency that has a lack of direction toward its employees?

I am not sure if members are aware, but it took two days for the agency to let the local customs agents know that they were supposed to fly the flags at half-mast, but they had already done it. They were given directions to search all vehicles but were given no directions about what they were searching for.

As we heard earlier today, employees have also been told that they should not be speaking to MPs, particularly opposition MPs. What would it be like to be an employee in an isolated area and feel there is no recourse to bring out concerns?

What would it be like to work in an isolated area and know there is a lack of protection? The RCMP in many of these areas are miles and miles away. They can be from 15 to 70 miles away from a border crossing.

*Government Orders*

•(1705)

In our area alone, the RCMP officers themselves have to cover huge areas. There is one officer on duty and that is it for an area that covers approximately 2,000 to 2,500 square miles. The officer's job is to cover that area as well as the border crossings. I do not think it is realistic to expect that person to do that job.

We also have to ask what it would be like to be at an isolated crossing with improper training and equipment. I understand at the larger crossings agents are being trained in the use of batons and pepper spray but that training will not be given to the agents at the smaller crossings. Where else would it be needed? At the large crossings there are a dozen agents on duty and there are people to back them up. At the small crossings this protection is required.

A question that also arises is whether or not agents should have sidearms. We have heard today that we need to take this agency out of the revenue collection business. It is not just a revenue collecting group. This group is expected to provide law enforcement. These people need to have protection. On the American side of the border there are agents with sidearms, agents with fully automatic weapons, agents with bulletproof vests on the backs of which the word "police" is spelled out in six-inch letters. On our side, the agents finally do have bulletproof vests but there is nothing to indicate that people should stop or respect them.

We have actually been accused of trying to make political points on this, but it is important. For almost 10 years, first the Reform Party and then the Alliance party tried to talk to the government about the need for reform of Canada's criminal justice system, the immigration system and the border crossing system. The government has chosen not to listen and in some ways those chickens are now coming home to roost.

Another problem is the lack of proper allocation of funding. The government is only too willing to overtax people and to take 50% of their income. It tries to restrict businesses through its taxation policies. It is committed to regional economic development programs that often do nothing but waste money. There are entrenched attitudes in the bureaucracy. There is an improper allocation of resources and because of that people who are on the ground cannot do an adequate job.

Looking at the structure of a pyramid, it works far better if the base of the pyramid is sitting on the ground. Looking at a business model, businesses want to have most of their people on the ground doing the work and fewer people involved in the decision making and those kinds of things. The bureaucracy at Canada customs seems to be almost the opposite. The people at the bottom are trying to do their jobs, to provide law enforcement and collect revenue. They are being run by bureaucrats and are given their instructions from above and the instructions often have very little to do with their jobs.

Canada has a porous border and we need to do something about it. Government needs to show leadership in this area. Canada has a poor immigration set-up. We need to do something to get those people who consistently break our laws and who think they can stay in Canada out of our country so they are not a danger to our citizens.

In conclusion, we need trade. It is obvious to all of us that we need to have trade. We also need a reasonably secure border. The time for

playing around, studying and consulting is over. The government has been in power long enough that it should be able to bring in policy that is effective. We need to deal with the lack of direction, protection and proper allocation. We have the time and the opportunity now. Let us not throw that away.

•(1710)

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to partake in this debate on Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts.

The bill proposes to streamline legitimate cross border trade and travel through electronic monitoring, self-assessment, advance information and pre-approval.

As already pointed out today, the official opposition hesitantly supports Bill S-23 but does so reluctantly given the government's poor record in maintaining the integrity of our borders, particularly the long, mostly unprotected border we share with our neighbours to the south.

Canada is a trade dependent country and as such the economic viability and stability of manufacturing companies operating within Canada rely on the ease with which goods flow between Canada and the United States. A threat to the openness we enjoy along the Canada-U.S. border is a threat to the billions of dollars of trade and the tens of thousands of jobs we appreciate and have here in Canada. Over 87% of our trade is done with our neighbours to the south, the United States.

This weekend the governor of the Bank of Canada warned that the fallout from terrorist attacks on the United States may push our weakened economy into a recession. David Dodge warned the government against trying to bail out the economy with additional spending or being foolhardy and going back to deficit financing, which Minister of Finance Paul Martin has indicated he may have to do.

Mr. Dodge stated:

—economic growth in the third quarter will likely be close to zero or slightly negative, and we will continue to feel the adverse effects into the fourth quarter.

Furthermore, the governor of the Bank of Canada said that it is certainly possible that the economy will slip into a recession, which as we all know and has been discussed here lately is commonly defined as two quarters of negative growth.

Last week the Minister of Finance said that he will not rule out a deficit if it protects Canada from terrorism. Claiming that the number one priority for the government is to protect Canadians, the finance minister says there will have to be additional spending in terms of our national security.

The official opposition fully supports increased spending for our security and for our intelligence agencies. We have pointed out numerous times in the House, and not just in the wake of the horrific events of September 11, that CSIS and the RCMP are underfunded and underresourced.

*Government Orders*

Having said that, we would counter that we do not need to be plunged back into a deficit situation if the finance minister and his government would simply prioritize spending, something that should have been done years ago. It is time to put to an end the frivolous spending on such things as fountains and golf courses and reallocate our scarce dollars to support the front lines of defence, CSIS, the RCMP and national defence. These three have been financially starved for far too long.

As stated earlier today, we cannot consider liberalized border procedures without first considering how to best restore the integrity of our borders. A company based right here in Ottawa is developing a passenger screening system that it says could have foiled last week's terrorist attacks. The system developed for the transport department by the Ottawa branch of a United States based corporation, Intrinsic Corporation, combines video cameras, reservation computers, metal detectors and x-ray machines to help identify potential terrorists. The company says that its system, which works by networking all of those elements together, would have triggered security alerts when hijackers boarded four flights in the United States last week.

• (1715)

In last week's Ottawa *Citizen*, Claude Clouthier, manager of the Intrinsic Ottawa office, said that the strength of the airport security data fusion system is that it displays all the information on one computer screen. Mr. Clouthier reported to the Ottawa *Citizen* that Transport Canada was funding development of the system through an agreement with the United States to create new anti-terrorism technology but that the project had apparently been stalled over cost concerns. "Cost is always the issue, because it is a very complex problem", said Mr. Clouthier.

We would agree with Mr. Clouthier. When we deal with national security or when we deal with CSIS and RCMP, funding and resourcing is a problem with the government.

Furthermore, the Intrinsic manager said that he believes Transport Canada has a renewed interest in the project since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and at the Pentagon on September 11. Intrinsic received a \$140,000 contract in February 1999 to develop a working prototype of the system. The Intrinsic preliminary report on the system recommends that Transport Canada install video surveillance cameras at check-in counters and boarding gates. The report noted that the lack of integration of security machines makes it difficult to track a passenger's bags through an airport without sending a security guard to make a physical check.

It is absolutely appalling that a system such as this one developed by this Ottawa based company has not been used in Canadian airports and that only now, after the attack on America, has our government decided that perhaps it should bring forward some precautionary measures.

The Liberal government's failure to continue funding for such systems is indicative of its relaxed attitude toward security in Canada. Unfortunately we have a government that is reactive, not proactive, regarding the security and the safety of our citizens. It is for this reason that we are reluctant to support a liberalization of our border controls. We are also reluctant to entertain loosening border controls due to the large volume of illegal migrants currently

crossing our border so freely, illegals who may ultimately provide a stream of terrorists gaining entry into the United States by circumventing Canadian and United States border controls since we have no exit controls.

No exit controls, as I pointed out in April of this year, mean that it is impossible to calculate how many people remain in Canada illegally, how many have slipped into the United States or how many have returned to their countries of origin or have gone elsewhere.

As of October 23, 1998, there were 6,110 warrants for removal issued against persons deemed to have abandoned or withdrawn their refugee claims. Of these, 640 warrants were executed and the persons were removed from Canada; 240 warrants were cancelled, that is, they were no longer deemed refugees so they were cancelled; and there was no action taken on the remaining 5,272.

Six thousand, one hundred and ten applications and five thousand, two hundred and seventy-two warrants still sit in a dusty, dingy corner somewhere because we do not have the resourcing to deal with those warrants, or the backbone. Quite obviously this is a very serious problem that must immediately be rectified to restore our border integrity.

More than nine million commercial shipments enter Canada each year, 75% at land border ports and the rest at international airports, marine ports, postal facilities and bonded warehouses. Approximately one million marine containers enter Canadian ports annually and another 200,000 enter by truck or rail after being off-loaded in United States marine ports.

I would like to point out that most illicit drugs arrive in Canada by aircraft, marine container and truck. At least 100 tonnes of hashish, 15 to 24 tonnes of cocaine and 4 tonnes of liquid hashish are smuggled into Canada each year.

I do not think I need to point out that drugs are synonymous with organized crime. Drugs and organized crime are very relevant when we refer to the fundraising of terrorist organizations.

• (1720)

An Ottawa *Citizen* article dated March 3, 1999, under the title "RCMP battles to halt flow of Colombian drugs", states that Canada is particularly vulnerable to drug trafficking, the principal source of revenue for most crime groups. According to the drug analysis section of the RCMP, smugglers are attracted to Canada because of the low risk of arrest due to limited police resources that "have stymied investigations":

Smugglers are attracted by the sprawling, largely unmonitored Canadian coastline, the low risk of arrest and the relatively light penalties—

I therefore reiterate that we support measures aimed at liberalizing trade but we do so only as we ensure that all necessary measures are in place to effectively control organizations and terrorists and those who support them.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of Surrey Central I am pleased to participate in the debate on Bill S-23, an act to amend the Customs Act and to make related amendments to other acts.

*Government Orders*

The people of Surrey Central live in very close proximity to the U.S. border and they travel to the U.S. Many transport merchandise in trucks while others go for pleasure. Bill S-23 has a direct impact on their businesses as well as on their lifestyle.

Over 85% of our GDP comes from exports to the U.S. and our bilateral trade is over one and a quarter billion dollars per day. More than 108 million people cross the border between our two countries. Security is of paramount importance due to the situation that unfolded on September 11.

As a past member of the subcommittee on organized crime I know the kind of stuff which is not only scary but also very challenging. At one time only four RCMP officers patrolled the entire B.C. border with the U.S. Bill S-23 becomes particularly important but nothing has changed in Bill S-23 since September 11.

From time to time members of the Canadian Alliance pointed out the deficiencies in government policies. One would think that with this momentous event the government would wake up. It only shows that the weak Liberal government does not have the political will to be proactive and improve the border security in the best interest of the people of Canada as well as of America.

I am not suggesting a knee-jerk reaction. However the overall approach of the government has been a culture of neglect. There has been neglect on the budget, health care, defence, agriculture, foreign policy, safety and security, anti-terrorism legislation, et cetera.

Bill S-23 does not take into account the events of September 11 which have fundamentally changed the landscape of our customs policy and border security. We need legislation that recognizes that fact. Instead of recognizing that and amending the bill, the government pushes ahead as if nothing happened. This approach will not do.

The hon. member for Edmonton—Strathcona proposed an amendment to the bill that would block second reading. Bill S-23 amends the Customs Act and other acts to allow for preapproval of people and goods for low risk Canada-U.S. travellers. The bill speeds up the flow of low risk traffic across the border. It focuses the limited resources of the CCRA on traffic of higher or unknown risk. How would the government make that distinction?

Another problem with the bill is that it focuses on risk management. In the case of CSIS, risk management was just a code word for making do with less, of policing on a shoestring budget, and thus risking the lives of Canadians in the process. Let us call it what it is.

There are more problems however. I express serious doubts about the intent of the bill. It highlights the don't worry, be happy approach of the government. Furthermore, if the government refuses to support the amendment, it would be a blatant reminder of the arrogance of the government.

● (1725)

We face a unique problem in Canada. If we fail our brother and pass a bill flawed in its intent, we risk the economic benefits the bill is supposed to protect. Bill S-23 as it stands now would result in a backlash against Canada. Our exports could be affected with

negative repercussions that could jeopardize the goodwill between our two nations.

Ambassador Cellucci of the United States has said that Canada and the U.S. need to harmonize their immigration policies. Legislation coming out of the House needs to reflect that intent. The U.S., in answer to our reluctance to deal with the security issue, may apply the dreaded section 110 of its immigration laws, resulting in long lineups at the border and further problems for Canadians, low risk or otherwise, trying to enter the U.S. Section 110 would create chaos at the border if implemented.

The security issue will be dealt with, if not on our terms then on American terms. Either we deal with it here or the U.S. congress will do it for us, and we should not blame it for that.

Free trade was supposed to bring the best of both worlds by being free and fair. It was supposed to bring access to more goods and services as well as increased economic integration with our friends to the south, but it will be threatened if we fail to balance it against the safety of Canadians and Americans.

Economic benefits are vital but we must not lose sight of our long term relations and security interests. We have an opportunity before us today to turn the clock back in some small way to ensure that the laws we implement deal with today's realities which have changed our world dramatically. Any failure to do so would bring us blame for generations to come.

The chief target for terrorist acts lives next door to us. Canada could be a target one day. The Americans are our major trading partners and the source of most foreign direct investment in Canada as well as the biggest destination of investment by Canadians.

The weak and arrogant Liberal government that lacks vision is clueless. This means that Canadians would pay a terrible price of job losses, border delays, plant closures and forgone economic activity until Ottawa cleans up its act. Now is the time to do that job.

● (1730)

**Mr. Gary Lunn (Saanich—Gulf Islands, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill S-23 on behalf of my constituents of Saanich—Gulf Islands. The bill is a very important one considering the events of September 11. When the bill was first introduced it was brought in so we could streamline legitimate people travelling across our border between Canada and the United States and allow pre-approval mechanisms for the transfer of goods between Canada and the United States.

*Government Orders*

Today \$500 billion of trade travels across our border each year. It is important for the economies of both countries that this continues to happen in a very timely manner. There is merit to the bill. However, as we have witnessed in the last few weeks, it is also important to ensure that the perimeter of our two countries is absolutely secure.

The bill is designed to help streamline this process so that energies can be funnelled on the people of concern. We have an opportunity to strengthen the bill. It should go back for more amendments so that the technologies available to us today can have a much greater control of what is actually moving across our border, both in people and commodities. This would allow for the movement of legitimate travellers but with a much higher security level.

We should be looking at strengthening our security approaches. Immigration policies in this country must be generous but they must be very stringent as well. When we screen people who are coming into our country we should ensure the safety of all Canadians and all landed immigrants who come before them.

There is a serious problem not just in our country but in many of our allied countries such as Great Britain, France and the United States. They are not immune and neither are we. We have faced horrific events in the last few weeks. I am sure every member in the House recognizes that there are terrorists in Canada as well as our allied countries who want to commit these horrific acts.

It is time to look at a bill like this one that wants to streamline the process and make it very rigorous so that the screening process applies to all people going across the border.

That does not mean we have to slow it down. With technologies and preapproved processors there are all kinds of opportunities. However we want to make sure that we know who is going across our border in both directions, that we can instantly track suspected people, people with criminal records and a history of concern, people who have tried to come into our country with any type of false passport or any type of irregularity. All that information would flash up immediately.

The same thing would apply to people who move commodities across our borders. If there were any irregularities or dealings that were of concern they would be flashed immediately. The men and women of the CCRA who are manning our borders should be given the proper tools to do their job.

I would argue that the standards are not there and it is time to change that now. I am not criticizing our own country but our allied countries as well who are facing this very serious problem. On September 11 these people took control of four planes and there were others that tried to do so as well. It is very clear that we should be investing in a North American perimeter and that we make provisions against something this well organized that can slip through the system so easily.

• (1735)

We have a bill which was brought before the Senate long before September 11. Its intent was to streamline and make things go smoother, to arguably pre-approve people and use the technologies available. However, we have an opportunity now to send it back and say that we have a serious problem in this country. We should be

sitting down with our American friends discussing how we combat this problem on a North American-wide system and how we bring in systems where all the data is exchanged.

I would argue that needs to be a priority. It is my understanding that the government has not done this. I have some concerns with that. We should be looking at that right now and bringing these screening measures into place.

From a purely economic standpoint, there is the whole question of security, which is paramount to the safety of our families, our homes, our ridings and the safety of Canadians. That is absolutely reason enough.

It is also important, when we have trade of \$500 billion a year between Canada and the United States or half a trillion dollars, that we have systems in place to allow trade to move through. Obviously the economies depend on some of these shipments. We cannot have a bottleneck system at our borders. There have to be systems in place to move these goods freely but in a very safe manner ensuring that the information is there and there is pre-approval.

We have an opportunity to revisit this and bring in systems that will absolutely ensure our families at home in our ridings can feel very safe. We need to become very aggressive about this, so do our allies. It is hoped that we can work together.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** In my opinion, the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Call in the members.

*And the bells having rung:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** A recorded division on the amendment stands deferred.

*Government Orders*

[English]

### INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY WATERS TREATY ACT

**Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (for the Minister of Foreign Affairs)** moved that Bill C-6, an act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Stephen Owen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to address the House on third reading of Bill C-6, an act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act. I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade for the careful consideration given to Bill C-6.

Over the past four decades every Canadian government, whatever its political stripe, has declared opposition to bulk water removal projects. This has responded to concerns expressed by Canadians that all levels of government should take action to assure the long term security and integrity of Canada's freshwater resources. However, there has never been any legislation to back up that policy. Today we have an opportunity to correct that situation.

I would like to describe briefly the main features of Bill C-6 and then address a few broad questions which have been raised during committee stage of the bill. The amendments have three elements: a prohibition provision; a licensing regime; and sanctions and penalties.

The prohibition provision imposes a prohibition on the bulk removal of boundary waters out of their water basins. While the scope is narrow because Canada's jurisdiction in this field is also narrow, the impact is significant. The prohibition covers the Great Lakes, the largest system of fresh surface water in the world. Many of the bulk water removal projects over the past few decades, up to and including the Nova project of May 1998, have included Great Lakes water.

During committee hearings, one witness urged members to reject completely Bill C-6 because it would prohibit a project still on the drawing board for redirecting freshwater in Northern Ontario to Lake Superior and from there to other parts of Canada and the United States. Stopping this type of project in boundary waters is exactly the objective of Bill C-6.

By adopting this bill, the House will send a clear and unequivocal signal to anyone thinking of developing these schemes; it is prohibited under federal law. It will also send a strong and welcome signal to Canadians that our water is not for sale.

A licensing regime will cover projects in Canada, such as dams or other obstructions, in boundary and transboundary waters. Under existing provisions of the treaty, these types of projects must have the approval of the Government of Canada and the international joint commission, the IJC.

Over the past 92 years there have been about 60 such projects approved without any problems. In essence, this process is not changing except that for the Government of Canada's approval it will be formalized in a licence. I would also like to stress that the licensing regime is entirely separate from the prohibition.

The question has been raised whether the licensing regime permits the approval of bulk water removal projects outside of water basins, in effect going around the prohibition. The answer is no.

The language of Bill C-6 is absolutely clear on this matter. Any proposal for diversion of boundary waters outside of the basin would be captured by the prohibition provision, not covered by the licensing regime. The prohibition in Bill C-6 excludes bulk removals out of water basins from the licensing regime expressly and imposes a prohibition on such projects binding on the government.

Finally, Bill C-6 provides for clear and strong sanctions and penalties. This will give teeth to the prohibition and ensure Canada is in a position to enforce it.

I would like to address three broad issues that have been raised regarding Bill C-6 and Canada's strategy on bulk water removal.

First, is the scope of Bill C-6. Second, is why not an export ban on water? Third, is working with the U.S. to protect the Great Lakes.

With regard to the scope of Bill C-6, we have never claimed that it is the single answer to cover all of Canada's waters. At the outset, we recognized that to completely protect our freshwater resources from bulk removals, all levels of government had to act within their jurisdictions. This recognizes the important role that provinces must play as the owners of natural resources.

In 1999 the Minister of the Environment proposed action by all levels of government in Canada to prohibit bulk water removal out of major Canadian water basins. We have made significant progress. In May 1998 only two of fourteen federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions in Canada had legislation to prohibit bulk water removal. Today all fourteen have put into place or are developing legislation and policies to prohibit bulk water removal.

I believe that the action of the provinces, complemented by our action today, will set up a strong legislative framework to protect Canada's freshwater resources. That is the goal we must all work toward.

● (1740)

Some people have advocated federal unilateral action through an export ban on water. Such an approach is wrong. It is unrealistic, especially in the federal-provincial context. It would be ineffective. Worse, it would actually undermine the goal we all share.

*Government Orders*

Unlike Canada's approach, which is focused on comprehensive environmental objectives in a manner that is trade consistent, an export ban does not address the environmental dimension. It also has possible constitutional limitations, and may be vulnerable to trade challenge. An export ban would only regulate the cross-border movement of water once it has become a good and would therefore be subject to international trade agreements. It would likely be contrary to Canada's international trade obligations.

Under Canada's environmental approach, water is protected and regulated in its natural state, before the issue of exporting arises and before it becomes a commercial good or a saleable commodity. This approach is consistent with Canada's international trade obligations.

Canadian governments have full sovereignty over the management of water in its natural state, and in exercising this sovereignty are not constrained by trade agreements, including the NAFTA.

Finally, it is self-evident that we must work closely with U.S. jurisdictions, both federal and state, to ensure that the regimes on both sides of the border are as consistent and restrictive as possible.

Canada and the U.S. agreed on a reference to the International Joint Commission to investigate and make recommendations on consumptive uses, diversions and removals in the Great Lakes. The IJC in its February 2000 final report made recommendations which provide the basis for developing a consistent approach to protecting the Great Lakes on both sides of the border.

The eight Great Lake states are opposed to large scale removals out of the water basin. Also, each governor of the Great Lakes states has a congressionally affirmed power to veto any new diversions.

Also, in the years ahead the boundary waters treaty will remain a critical instrument in protecting Canada's rights, as it has for more than 90 years.

By adopting Bill C-6, parliament will set down in law an unambiguous prohibition on bulk water removal in waters under federal jurisdiction, especially in the Great Lakes. This is a forward looking action which places the highest priority on ensuring the security of Canada's freshwater resources. It demonstrates leadership at the federal level. It affirms an approach which is comprehensive, environmentally sound, respectful of constitutional responsibilities and consistent with Canada's international trade obligations.

I urge all members to support Bill C-6.

● (1745)

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to join in this debate today on a subject very dear to myself and certainly to most Canadians because of recent events that have affected a great number of Canadians, that is, the matter of water and the protection of our water resources.

Certainly the bill is supportable and our party intends to support it, but it is really unfortunate that this is the best we could do. The bill comes forward to amend a law in Canada that has been on the books since 1909, I believe. It really does not address the real issues surrounding water that Canadians are so concerned about.

The bill comes forward as a result, I think, of a dismal failure on the part of the Mulroney government of some years ago to protect

the sovereignty of Canadian water in the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. I remember that there was a lot of discussion at the time and a lot of concerns were expressed by Canadians. In fact, a part of the negotiations that was so important to Canada was the protection of water. There was a lot of rhetoric flying back and forth as to whether or not water in fact was included in the free trade agreement. It has certainly since been concluded that it is not exempted from the free trade agreement and that in fact Canada has a real problem with the protection of its sovereignty over water resources.

We all remember very clearly, during the federal election campaign of 1993, the current Prime Minister's pledge to open up the free trade agreement with the U.S. to include water in one of the articles as being exempted from the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. Of course that did not happen and I think most clear thinking Canadians knew it would not happen, that it was not possible to make it happen without opening up the agreement and addressing a number of issues that the U.S. government was willing to look at and wanted included. I think probably one of those issues that is very dear to Ontario and Quebec is the issue of supply managed industries that receive protection under the free trade agreement. As a result we really did not get any of the protection we were looking for.

Since 1993, of course, there has been a lot of attention paid to water and its protection, not only protection from export and interbasin transfer but certainly protection from pollution, as well as the safety of water for human consumption. More than ever Canadians and people all around the world now are beginning to recognize the value of their water resources. Water is a primary ingredient for life on this planet and while years ago we did not give a lot of thought to it in Canada because we had such an abundance of it and it was so pristine, we never gave a lot of thought to the need for protection of our water supply. The events in Walkerton that resulted in a number of people losing their lives and many more people being very ill because of a pollutant in a water supply, and then again events this last summer in North Battleford, have brought home in a real way how precious our water resources are and how we Canadians must move to protect them in any way possible.

● (1750)

As a youngster growing up in rural northern Alberta and northern Ontario, I found that it was not uncommon when we were camping or engaging in business in remote and wild parts of the country to simply access without any treatment whatsoever the water supply available to us for drinking, cooking and bathing. For thousands of years Canada's aboriginal people accessed the water supply in Canada on just such a basis, never giving much thought to whether that water was safe to drink or safe to cook with. That certainly is no longer the case.

It does not matter whether we are in the densely populated regions of Ontario or in the wilds of the Canadian Arctic, it can no longer be taken for granted that we can kneel down and drink the water that is before us. That water could make us sick or perhaps even kill us.



*Government Orders*

It has come to the forefront of everyone's thinking that we need to do something to protect our water. The bill, minimal as it is, certainly is at least an attempt to do something to protect at least waters under federal jurisdiction, the boundary waters over which we have shared jurisdiction with the U.S. government. It is a small step in the right direction but we need much more. We need to go much further. In essence we need to protect the sovereignty of Canada's water. I do not mean simply banning these grandiose schemes to export Canada's water to other countries or other basins.

In Canada we have a huge supply of fresh water. I believe we have something like 9% of the world supply of fresh water. We should have every right to use that water and those water resources for the benefit of Canadians. I firmly believe that those water resources will become even more valuable than the natural energy resources that Canada is currently and has for a long time been developing. This freshwater resource has the potential to be one of the most valuable resources in the world. I think we must have the right as a country to manage those resources, firstly for the benefit of Canadians. Under the free trade agreement with the United States, if we try to use those water resources for the benefit of Canadians immediately we are open to legal action for not allowing equal access to those water resources to Americans.

Because of the failure of the past two governments to address this issue, we already have hugely costly legal action filed against Canada under the free trade agreement resulting from a scheme to move glacier water from British Columbia to the United States. Those schemes will continue to come forward. The bill only addresses any such schemes that would take place within the boundary waters of shared jurisdiction, but there is a lot more water out there than those boundary waters and it does need that protection.

This summer I travelled through southern Alberta, southern Saskatchewan and across the northwest regions of the United States, all of which are suffering from a severe drought that has been happening in those regions over the past year or two. It becomes more and more evident how valuable that water resource is. Those parts of southern Alberta and Saskatchewan and the northwestern United States simply are turning into deserts. Very little is growing. These huge areas that once were such valuable food producing regions are severely restricted because of the lack of water to grow crops.

• (1755)

Certainly if one travels through those areas that have access to irrigation supplies and can actually put water on the land the difference is absolutely amazing. It is like an oasis in the middle of the desert. Those areas are producing huge crops with great economic benefits for the regions and the people involved.

I suspect this will continue to be the case or will even get worse, to the point where the United States will look northward with an eye to accessing our freshwater supplies to help produce the food the people of their country need. Before that happens I believe that we as a country and a government have a responsibility to be prepared and have in place regulations and laws that will in fact allow Canadians, first and foremost, to benefit from those water resources. Only afterward, if we as a country so decide, should we benefit from the

wealth that we might obtain by sharing that resource with areas that need it to produce food.

That may not happen in my lifetime or for a long time, but at some point, if water continues to become scarcer in northern California and throughout the northwest and midwest U.S., it is inevitable that people will realize the potential to be gained from the use of our water resources, huge amounts of which flow every year into the Arctic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, Hudson's Bay or the Atlantic Ocean. At some point, I believe, we will look at what benefit could be gained from the development of that flow of water and from directing that water resource to areas of the world that desperately need fresh water to feed their populations. Again, I certainly think we have to be prepared to do that.

Unfortunately, as I said, the bill amends a treaty signed between Canada and the United States back in 1909 and is simply a feeble attempt to address the concerns of Canadians about water and the NAFTA agreement and how it affects us. As long as we in Canada can prevent water from being traded, either interprovincially or internationally, then the concern over how it is treated under NAFTA is not an issue. However, the minute we allow water to become a commodity it becomes part of the NAFTA agreement and we then have no right under that agreement to restrict the use or the development of that water to Canadians only. We will have to open it up, certainly to the U.S. as well, but the provisions in the bill for licensing and the penalties that would be imposed for breaches of this particular law should be adequate and should do the job.

I have been in the House for some nine years now. Again, like almost every bill that has come through the House, the bill vests more authority in the governor in council, the Prime Minister and his cabinet to govern and to change laws through regulation rather than bring the issues back to the House to let Canada's parliament debate them and vote on the amendments. That is the wrong way to go. I believe that for the sake of spreading knowledge and gaining the support of Canadians these issues should be dealt with by parliament. That is what our job is and that is what we should be doing.

• (1800)

I am disappointed this is the best the government could do to address the concerns of Canadians about our water supply. It should have been done a long time ago. The government should be pressing much harder through the international trade minister, the foreign affairs minister and the natural resources minister to address issues not addressed in the bill such as water other than boundary water. However we in the Canadian Alliance will support the bill when it comes time for the vote. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after the word "That" and substituting the following therefor:

Bill C-6, an Act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act, be not now read a third time but that it be read a third time this day six months hence.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** Debate is on the amendment.

*Government Orders*

•(1805)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am particularly pleased to speak to Bill C-6, an act to amend the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act.

I will not be telling those listening anything new if I say that water, like air, is a vital and essential element which we should in no way compromise. Water is such an essential element that having too little is as bad as having too much. When there is none, things dry up, and when there is too much, things drown. A balance must therefore be maintained, both in quantity and in quality.

I would like to back up a bit and talk about when I was a municipal councillor in Sherbrooke for 12 years. During that time, I had the pleasure of chairing the CHARMES management corporation. This was a corporation that looked after the Saint-François and Magog rivers in Sherbrooke. I was therefore quite quickly introduced to the concept of a water basin involving a good many people. Everything that comes from upstream and everything we send downstream has repercussions everywhere. I quickly understood that we were responsible for the quality of the water that flowed past us downstream, just as we had rights with respect to the water that flowed to us from upstream.

I remember when I was about ten years old swimming in the Saint-François river under the supervision of the recreation committee and the water was of impeccable quality. When I began working with the CHARMES management corporation, we could not really swim in the Magog river. It was necessary to take specific action to improve the quality of that river's water.

For 12 years, therefore, the importance of water in terms of both quantity and quality was brought home to me. In Sherbrooke, I was also responsible for water and water treatment services. To all intents and purposes, the municipality of Sherbrooke supplied water to approximately 130,000 people—even though the city had only 78,000 inhabitants. The amount of water we drew from a reservoir, Lake Memphrémagog, 27 kilometres from Sherbrooke, was considerable: approximately 60,000 cubic metres daily, or 21.9 million cubic metres a year.

We know that this water is used by industry, by institutions and by municipalities, either for domestic or for sanitary services. When it comes to the importance of water, what is surprising is that life—we all know that the human body is almost 92% water—

**An hon. member:** Except if one weighs 300 pounds.

**Mr. Serge Cardin:** No, it is not important, it is relative. If one weighs 300 pounds, it is 92%; if one weighs 100 pounds, this should be about the same, unless the person is drying up.

In terms of the water that we use directly, that we drink, this would represent, according to analyses, less than 1% of the water required for domestic and hygienic uses. We see then that the water we use, whether in the industrial or the institutional sector, and for all the other domestic uses, including washing clothes and dishes, cooking, using the toilet, showering, bathing, there is less than 1% left for drinking. There are also exterior uses, that is, for watering the grass and the garden, washing the car and cleaning the yard. It is often in

domestic uses that people are being asked to be careful about the amount of water they use.

•(1810)

So, it is always people who are being asked to make some efforts, but it is rarely industries, institutions, and probably even less people who would think about selling water. We know this could be quite a lucrative business.

For example, concerning water treatment, we get water for free. Of course, infrastructures have been built; 27 kilometres of pipes represent major infrastructures. There is no value to add at this stage, but there is a treatment cost of about 30 cents per cubic meter. So I figure that some people would be tempted to sell bulk water.

Still in my introduction, I would also just like to inform members of the House about a small example of an environmental disaster, of a troubling situation in the Aral Sea, and I quote:

The problem of the vanishing Aral Sea has become a serious ecological problem, a national catastrophe even. The origin of the problem dates back a very long time, but it has taken on a new dimension in recent decades.

The construction of irrigation systems throughout central Asia, and particularly the development of water supplies for major residential and industrial sites, has caused a terrible ecological catastrophe: the death of the Aral Sea.

Not long ago, governments were still boasting about the new irrigated lands recovered from the desert and the steppes, forgetting that the water used had come from the Aral Sea and its two sources. Today, the entire area around the Aral Sea has been affected by this ecological disaster. Between 1911 and 1962, the depth of the Aral Sea was 53.4 metres. The water volume was 1,064 cubic kilometres and the sea's surface 66,000 square kilometres. At that time, the sea played a central role for transportation, industry and fishing, and also regulated the climate.

Around 1994, the water depth dropped to the 32.5 metre level, from 53.4 to 32.5. Its volume was less than 400 cubic kilometres—as opposed to 1,064 it had dropped to 400—while the surface had been reduced to 32,500 square kilometres—a drop from 66,000 to 32,500.

This is a true ecological disaster. Judging by the great thirst some in North America have for the water of Quebec, the water of Canada, the water of the Great Lakes, there is a potential risk of ecological disaster here as well.

As we know—despite the rain outside at the present time—we tend to think of the water levels in lakes and rivers staying the same. This is absolutely wrong. The levels of the seas are rising, constantly, while the levels of lakes and rivers is dropping, and rapidly at that. This is not even taking into account all the analyses that could be done on water tables and the impacts of industry and agriculture, and particularly of high population densities in a given area, requiring heavy demands for water to be met.

There is runoff water. When a drop takes I do not know how long to reach a river after falling on earth, it is purified, contributes to the water table and goes down the river. It could take a fairly long time. Now, a drop falls on the sidewalk, on the asphalt and reaches the river in a few minutes or hours.

This is a sort of introduction, to describe my involvement in matters involving water.

*Government Orders*

Let us move on now to setting the context of this whole issue of water and the treaties on boundary waters.

●(1815)

As I said earlier, water is a limited resource, despite what we might think. For example, the report prepared by the International Joint Commission in 1999 provided that:

Although the total volume in the lakes is vast, on average less than 1 percent of the waters of the Great Lakes is renewed annually by precipitation, surface water runoff, and inflow from groundwater sources. Under the circumstances, we must recognize that, while the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River system represents one fifth of the earth's fresh water, this resource is not unlimited.

Furthermore, in recent years, discoveries and research on the greenhouse effect and the potential risks of increased temperatures have made underscored the great fragility of the resource and the pressure it is under.

Because of climactic risks, increased desertification worldwide, limited supplies of drinking water around the world and energy development based on this resource, the idea of exporting large quantities of water on tanker ships or of diverting rivers has emerged as a serious option in the past ten years or so in Quebec and Canada.

So, to environmental threats to water supplies is added a new and significant threat of bulk water exports and large scale diversion of our lakes and rivers.

There is no doubt that bulk water exports offer significant economic possibilities. It is because of this potential that some provinces have examined the possibility of issuing to companies permits allowing them to consider bulk water exports.

In the early eighties, following a drought in California, British Columbia delivered such permits to five Canadian and one American companies. However, over the years, the province changed its position and, concerned about the possible impact of such trade on B.C.'s natural resources, it decided to prohibit bulk water exports through provincial legislation.

We know that the possibility of issuing similar permits was examined by other provinces. The case of Newfoundland recently made headlines. The province quickly gave up the idea, but the possibility remains. This, combined with the recent lawsuit by the California-based company Sun Belt Water against the government of British Columbia, raises concerns and brings back the issue of trade risks associated with exporting this resource.

In this context, the federal government has been promising to legislate for the past year. But what about the federal strategy so far?

The federal government announced in early 2000 that it intended to act more directly in the matter of water export and introduced a three pronged strategy. That strategy follows from a motion on water protection passed by the House of Commons on February 9, 1999.

There are three parts to the strategy: first, changes to the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act in order to give the federal government regulatory power over the bulk removal of boundary waters; second, a joint reference, with the United States and the IJC, to investigate the effects of consumption, diversion and removal of water, including for export purposes, in boundary waters; and third, a proposal to develop, in co-operation with the provinces and territories, a Canada-wide accord on bulk water removal so as to protect Canadian water basins.

●(1820)

On February 10, 1999, Canada and the United States appointed the IJC. After noting a growing number of proposals to export water from the Great Lakes and other areas of the United States and Canada, the two countries agreed to ask the commission to study the issue and make recommendations within the next year. A preliminary report was tabled on August 18, 1999 and the final report of the IJC was tabled on February 22, 2000.

In its preliminary report, the International Joint Commission recommended that during the next six months it would need to complete its study, the federal, provincial and state governments prohibit bulk removal or sale of water. It emphasized a number of points worth mentioning here.

First, it indicates that there is no surplus in the Great Lakes system and that bulk removal of water could reduce the system's resiliency, or resistance to stress.

Second, information on removal of underground water is definitely inadequate. There is a problem here, because underground water can have a major impact on the integrity and quality of ecosystems.

The report also points out that it is impossible to forecast the demand for water. Moreover, the possibility of climate change and, more recently, all sorts of natural factors make it impossible to evaluate with any degree of certainty the level and rate of flow of the Great Lakes over the next few years.

In its final report entitled "Protection of Waters of the Great Lakes" of February 2000, the IJC concluded that the Great Lakes needed to be protected, especially in view of cumulative uncertainties, pressures and repercussions of removals, of consumption and of demographic and economic growth, as well as of climate change.

The report includes the following conclusions: first, the water of the Great Lakes is a critical resource. On an average annual basis, less than 1% of the water in the Great Lakes system is renewed.

Second, if all interests in the basin are considered, there is never a surplus of water in the Great Lakes system; every drop of water has several potential uses.

Third, International trade law obligations, including the provisions of the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, WTO agreements, and the GATT, do not prevent Canada and the United States from taking measures to protect their water resources and preserve the integrity of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem, to the extent that decision makers do not discriminate against individuals from other countries in implementing these measures. Canada and the United States cannot be forced by trade laws to jeopardize the waters of the Great Lakes' ecosystem.

*Adjournment Debate*

Let us have a look at Bill C-6 and examine the context briefly. This bill is the direct result of the strategy the federal government made public in February 1999. It concerns its will to regulate the removal of water in boundary waters.

The federal government says that the intent of this bill is to facilitate the implementation of the boundary waters treaty, a treaty that also deals with other issues arising along the border between Canada and the United States. Thus, the amendments prohibit water removal and the transfer of boundary waters out of their watershed.

Also, under the proposed amendments, activities affecting the flow and the natural level of water on the American side of the border would depend on the delivery of a license by the foreign affairs department.

•(1825)

So the federal government suggests adding sections 10 through 26 to the International Boundary Waters Treaty Act.

Sections 11 and 12 deal with the licences required when boundary waters are used, obstructed or diverted in a manner that affects the natural level or flow of the waters. These two sections specify that such licences do not apply in respect of the ordinary use of waters for domestic or sanitary purposes. The licensing allocation plan would not apply either to the traditional uses, like the removal for agricultural or industrial uses within the basin.

In the same way, no person could, except in accordance with a licence issued under section 16, construct or maintain any remedial or protective work or any dam or other obstruction in waters flowing from boundary waters, or in downstream waters of rivers flowing across the international boundary, the effect of which is or is likely to raise in any way the natural level of waters on the other side of the international boundary. This provision would not apply in respect of the exceptions specified in the regulations.

Section 13 prohibits any bulk removal of boundary waters from the water basins. The general provisions of this bill specify that sections 11 to 13 do not apply to projects undertaken before the coming into force of these sections, unless the effects are still perceived after their coming into force.

Clauses 16 through 20 set out the minister's powers and provide an overview of his ability to issue and revoke permits and to charge penalties.

Clause 20 states that the minister may, with the approval of the governor in council, enter into an agreement or arrangement with the government of one or more provinces respecting the activities referred to in sections 11 to 13, although not specifying what such an agreement would be.

Clause 21 addresses the regulations under the act which would guide the minister's decisions. Among other things, it states that the minister could, with the approval of the governor in council, make regulations defining water basins, specifying exceptions, and unlike the old bill C-15, the government can identify exceptions from clause 13(1), which is the heart of the bill, prescribe classes of licences and determine persons eligible to hold such licences, and the form such applications and licences must take.

What are the issues involved in Bill C-6?

Although the entire population acknowledges that water resources need to be protected, it is far from obvious that Bill C-6 will actually protect them any better. In fact, one would be justified to wonder whether the Liberal government is not taking advantage of the panic situation about protecting our waters to grab powers that are outside its jurisdiction.

There are three major problems that must be raised in connection with the bill we are looking at today. The first relates to the definition of water basin. The second concerns the number of powers assigned to the federal minister in connection with exceptions and with licensing activities. The third relates to the pointlessness of the bill we are looking at.

Because of these three, Bill C-6 goes beyond federal areas of jurisdiction and encroaches on provincial jurisdictions, including those of Quebec, of course.

How much time do I have remaining, Madam Speaker?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The hon. member still has a few seconds left, but when debate resumes next time, he will have 17 minutes.

**Mr. Serge Cardin:** I will conclude for now, Madam Speaker. When the House sits next time, we will look again at the three elements I have just defined, namely, the catchment basin, the many powers granted the federal minister to determine exceptions and activities requiring permits and the usefulness of the bill under study.

In revealing these three well defined points, it will no doubt be clear that the Bloc Québécois does not support Bill C-6. Water, as I said earlier, is vital.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

•(1830)

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC/DR):** Madam Speaker, we had earlier consultations and we will not follow through on the issue during adjournment proceedings tonight. I informed the clerk's desk earlier.

\* \* \*

### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am rising today in the House to ask the Minister of Transport about the serious state of highway 7 which extends southwest from Ottawa and cuts through my riding of Lanark—Carleton.

Highway 7 is the most direct route between Ottawa and Toronto. As such it is an important commuting, trucking and bus route. It has the potential to be used more than it currently is although the highway is quite overloaded.

*Adjournment Debate*

The Ottawa area has experienced an economic boom in recent years. Businesses and commuters have started to spread beyond Kanata and into the towns of Carleton Place and Perth. This movement of people and capital has served to increase traffic and trucking volume on highway 7 which is becoming an increasingly important artery.

The mayor of Carleton Place, Brian Costello, has been very vocal in calling for a widening of the roadway into a four lane divided highway. MPP Norm Sterling, who is my counterpart at Queen's Park, has signalled that the highway is a top priority for the provincial government.

On behalf of all the residents in my riding I thank both those gentlemen for their hard work. However the people of Lanark—Carleton need to see results. There have yet to be any funds allocated or a completion date set.

I last stood in the House and spoke to the issue on two occasions in April and May of this year. I asked for a serious federal commitment to infrastructure spending so that long overdue projects like the widening of highway 7 could go forth.

When I addressed the issue in April I spoke of safety as a primary concern. I said at the time that highway 7 had seen 11 fatal accidents in Lanark—Carleton in the past few years. Since I made those remarks the same stretch of highway has seen three additional deaths over the summer as well as a series of serious injuries related to traffic accidents. This is not just a question of commuting and commerce. It is a question of life and death.

The province of Ontario has earmarked \$70 million for infrastructure improvements in the Ottawa area. What has the federal government done?

The U.S. federal government collects \$25 billion in gas tax revenues and spends \$21 billion of it on roads and highways. Eighty-four per cent of the revenue is dedicated to road and highway improvement. What about Canada?

Canadian federal gasoline taxes have increased by more than 500% between 1985 and the present, from 1.5 cents per litre to 10 cents per litre. The tax was originally intended to be a direct source of revenue for highway improvements.

Over \$4.7 billion was collected in federal taxes last year. Yet only 4% of the funds were returned to the provinces by way of provincial transfers for road and highway development. The dollar figure was in the area of a mere \$190 million. As though that were not bad enough, 96% of this pittance was spent east of the Ontario-Quebec border. That means that Ontario, by far the largest source of highway improvement taxes, is getting virtually nothing for its highway needs.

Federal transfers for highways continue to drop in dollar value while gas tax revenues, ostensibly highway improvement revenues, go up by hundreds of millions of dollars.

I fully realize that the federal government has many competing demands on the treasury. However this is an issue of fundamental importance to economic expansion, prosperity and human safety.

Could the Minister of Transport tell us what is happening to the \$4.7 billion in highway improvement taxes? How many more people must die before the federal government uses the money for the purpose for which it is being raised: to expand and improve the safety of our highways?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Harvey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, allow me to pay tribute to the member, who is interested in improving the highway system.

First of all, I wish to point out to him that, when it comes time to decide which projects to fund, the responsibility of provincial governments is definitely a key element in defining priorities.

There is no question that highway 7 is a major highway in the Province of Ontario, but it is unfortunately not part of the national highway system. National highways are defined as those which promote interprovincial economic development. This responsibility therefore falls to provincial governments.

In any future funding, Transport Canada will obviously give priority to highways which are part of the national highway system.

The Province of Ontario has itself decided that highways 416 and 401 would form the segment of the national highway system between Ottawa and Toronto. The program to improve the national highway system, which was announced a few months ago, will obviously encourage development of the regional highway system, including Highway 7, with respect to tourism and economic development.

By announcing its \$600 million Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program, Transport Canada will certainly be able to help improve the main national highway system.

Ontario will receive \$160 million. It must be understood that it is not Transport Canada's responsibility to define the provinces' priorities. Transport Canada will have to accept the priorities already identified by the provincial governments. I think that everyone will agree that these priorities must be respected by the federal government.

Official negotiations will soon begin and I hope that we will have an opportunity to help improve the national highway system which, in turn, will have an impact on regional highways.

● (1835)

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.37 p.m.)



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