



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 137 • NUMBER 166 • 1st SESSION • 37th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, April 11, 2002

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

CONTENTS

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

All parliamentary publications are available on the
"Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire" at the following address:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, April 11, 2002

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

* * *

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is my honour to inform the House this morning that at a special ceremony held at the United Nations headquarters in New York earlier this morning the Rome statute of the international criminal court received its 60th ratification. This means that the Rome statute will proceed to enter into force and the international criminal court will become a reality.

[*Translation*]

Today's number of ratifications demonstrates the overwhelming international public and political support for the international criminal court as a means of ending impunity for the most horrific of crimes. Today's achievement of the required 60th ratification represents the culmination of more than half a century of efforts towards the realization of a permanent International Criminal Court.

[*English*]

Having been signed by 139 countries and now ratified by more than 60, the international criminal court will be a truly international court. The ICC will have jurisdiction to try genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in instances where countries are unable or unwilling to prosecute.

The Rome statute also contains significant developments in international law for the victims of violence in times of conflict.

The Rome statute will now enter into force on July 1, 2002, notably Canada Day. I think this is most appropriate as Canada is recognized as a world leader in the creation of the international

criminal court having been involved in the process from the very beginning.

Canada ratified the ICC in July 2000 and became the first country in the world to pass comprehensive legislation implementing it in the form of the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act.

Canadians have served in key positions during the negotiations and preparation of the ICC and, through our ICC campaign, Canada has provided assistance to countries to ratify and implement their obligations under the statute.

[*Translation*]

In informing the House of this landmark event, I would like also to reaffirm Canada's continued support of the establishment of the international criminal court. Canada will continue its involvement in creating the court and providing assistance to countries to promote the widespread ratification and implementation of the Rome statute.

[*English*]

Today is truly a milestone for international justice. I invite all members of the House and all Canadians to join me in congratulating all those, particularly my predecessor, Lloyd Axworthy, and members of the House, like the member for Mount Royal, who have worked so hard for the international court, and to celebrate with us this historic day.

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, we have no doubt that the ICC is well-intentioned by many and the establishment of specific tribunals to pursue and prosecute in the area of specific war crimes is also something that we know takes place in history and which we support.

However, a permanent court to try war criminals, though it sounds great, does present serious problems. Adequate accountability has not been identified. Mary Robinson, the UN high commissioner for human rights, has already accused NATO of acting illegally in the air campaign related to Kosovo. Many others share that view. Here we have a situation where Canadian soldiers should not have to fear international prosecution when they make decisions to defend Canadian national interests.

We also have comments from Philippe Kirsch, the Canadian chairman of the court's preparatory commission. Yesterday, at a briefing in New York, he admitted and agreed that after the court is established on July 1 states or political activist groups could demand prosecutions of world leaders or other individuals who they oppose politically. We have some concerns from that point of view.

Routine Proceedings

The concept of war crimes against peace and even a specific quote “waging aggressive war”, these remain undefined. How can Canada agree to a treaty when these concepts are undefined?

The United States also is not part of the ICC. The U.S. did sign the treaty under the former Clinton administration but the Bush administration does not support it and the United States senate will not ratify it. That has to throw into question this whole concept.

While we agree with some of the specifics, we are very concerned about the lack of defined terms. We are concerned about the possibility, as we see in some countries, including ours from time to time, a notion that citizens have some concern with judicial activism without properly defined terms of limits. We would hate to see that develop on a global scale.

The consequential bureaucracy that would have to accompany the ICC could have a ballooning effect on a monetary basis and that could create problems as we have seen in some areas of UN administration.

For those reasons and others we share our grave concerns with the permanency of this establishment and the announcement today.

• (1010)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Madam Speaker, in opening the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, held in Rome, Italy, from June 15 to July 17, 1998, at which the Rome statute was adopted, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations and Nobel Peace Prize winner, said the following:

In the prospect of an international criminal court lies the promise of universal justice...We ask you to do your part in our struggle to ensure that no ruler, no state, no junta and no army anywhere can abuse human rights with impunity. Only then will the innocents of distant wars and conflicts know that they, too, may sleep under the cover of justice; that they, too, have rights, and that those who violate those rights will be punished.

This morning, some four years later, the Rome statute criminal court received its 60th ratification, despite the opposition of a number of countries, which have concerns about their military officials.

On July 1 of this year, the international criminal court will see the light of day. It will sit at the Hague and will have jurisdiction over the worst crimes, that is war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of genocide committed after its creation. Some see this as a weakness in the court, but we must agree that its creation is a great victory.

The independent nature of this court will put an end to the criticisms by some that the existing international courts responsible for judging those responsible for these atrocities apply the justice of the winning side. The fact that the statute calls for the national courts, with their newly acquired universal jurisdiction, to have primary responsibility for judging the authors of these crimes and for the court in the Hague to intervene only in the event of a refusal to apply the law should allay concerns that the creation of the ICC will constitute interference in our justice system.

The Bloc Québécois enthusiastically supported Bill C-19, which implemented the Rome statute. I recall the work that was done in

committee, when the bill was examined, by my colleague representing Beauharnois—Salaberry, who is no longer in the House, Daniel Turp.

We are equally enthusiastic today in greeting the news of its 60th ratification, which sets off the process for its implementation.

The United Nations was created “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. With the creation of the international criminal court, we can perhaps hope to save them from the most terrible scourges that war brings.

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege and a great honour to take part in this debate highlighting the historic importance of the creation, at last, of the international criminal court.

[*English*]

It is an honour for me to participate on this historic day as the 60th country has now officially ratified the statute that would bring the international criminal court into force.

I want to pay tribute today to those many individuals and groups who have made this possible. I think it was an outstanding partnership between civil society and many NGOs, both here in Canada and internationally, including the dedicated officials in Canada's foreign affairs department who worked long and hard to make this statute a reality.

I would also like to particularly underline the contribution of ambassador Philippe Kirsch who did such an outstanding job, particularly in Rome in 1998 at the key conference at which the statute was adopted.

Finally, I would like to commend parliamentarians as well.

• (1015)

[*Translation*]

My colleague, the member for Mercier, mentioned the contribution of parliamentarians from all parties. I share her thoughts on the contributions of Daniel Turp, who is no longer here, of our colleague from the riding of Mount Royal, who has worked very hard on this, and of his predecessor, Sheila Finestone, who also did so much to ensure that this court would become a reality.

[*English*]

I also want to commend the work of the former minister, Lloyd Axworthy, and the current minister in his capacity as chair of the foreign affairs committee who worked very hard to make this day possible.

We are sending out a very important message as a community of nations that there will be no impunity and no safe hiding place for those who are accused of war crimes, of genocide or crimes against humanity. They must now know that they can no longer hide behind the concept of state sovereignty. We saw an early signal that the world is changing with respect to Augusto Pinochet's responsibility. If I have any regrets about this, it is that this court will not have jurisdiction over the war crimes committed by Augusto Pinochet. That is a tragedy which we cannot deal with at this point but I hope the Chilean courts will deal with that.

In conclusion, I want to voice my sadness and regret that the United States has not yet signed this landmark treaty and is threatening to withdraw its signature to the treaty. Even worse than that, the republican administration, under president George Bush, is supporting legislation that would threaten to cut off American aid to those countries which have not yet ratified the international criminal court if they ratify. I would hope that members in this House would vigorously and strongly reject this kind of blackmail.

The fact that this court will be in place will give us an opportunity to provide for an alternative to war. I had deeply hoped this court would have been in effect to ensure that instead of going to war in Afghanistan, we would have been able to try as crimes against humanity the perpetrators of those terrible crimes that took place on September 11.

Other crimes are unfolding before our eyes, war crimes in the occupied territories and elsewhere, but certainly today is a day that we celebrate this historic accomplishment. We encourage all other countries to join in signing and ratifying this important and much needed statute for an international criminal court.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Madam Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative Party, I want to express our tremendous support and our accolades for the many individuals, countries and organizations that have helped bring this very significant day about.

The international criminal court is something that has been contemplated now for many years and Canada has played a significant role. I personally had the opportunity to attend the UN conference and meet a number of Canadians who had worked extremely hard to establish this court. Individuals, like Madam Justice Louise Arbour, have continually made a mark internationally as Canadian judiciary and Canadian individuals. In the case of Justice Arbour, she has worked as a prosecutor of war crimes and of crimes against humanity,

Canada has had its say and continues to have its oars in the water on such issues. We are uniquely positioned. We have an opportunity to assert ourselves as a nation internationally to bring about the type of world that we all envision.

This is certainly a day of pride and a day of accomplishment. As was previously mentioned, this has great support internationally. There is hope that member countries will expand and that other countries will embrace this initiative.

Members of the House of Commons should applaud and laud the individuals who were able to bring this about. Countries like Rwanda, Bosnia and, sadly, the wartorn Middle East, continue to shock the world with horrible images of crimes against humanity.

Today in the House we should show solidarity. This is certainly a day of non-partisanship, a day in which there has been a huge accomplishment and a huge step forward to a world in which individuals can live free of oppression. When horrific things occur there is now a forum, a place in which individuals can go to seek justice to see that those who refuse to abide by the laws of humanity which bind us all are brought to some form of justice.

Routine Proceedings

This day should not be the end or the fruition of a simple accomplishment. It should be the beginning of a process that will continue to expand and embrace other countries in this regard.

* * *

• (1020)

PETITIONS

TRADE

Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition which was signed by hundreds of residents of British Columbia, including many constituents from my constituency of Burnaby—Douglas, on the subject of the proposed free trade area of the Americas.

The petitioners voice their concern about the secret negotiations that have been conducted on the proposed FTAA. They note that the FTAA would expand the NAFTA to the entire hemisphere, and they raise concerns about that. They point out that the proposed FTAA would block the ability of governments to create and maintain laws, standards and regulations to provide universal public education and health care, to protect the safety and well-being of their citizens and the environment, and they raise other concerns as well.

They therefore request that parliament, among other things, reject any trade deals including the proposed FTAA that would propose NAFTA-style provisions which would put the rights of corporations and investors ahead of the rights of citizens and governments.

Finally, they urge that we adopt a new approach to globalization that places social, economic and ecological justice above the profits of multinational corporations and establish an alternative rules-based system that promotes and protects the rights of workers and the environment, respects cultural diversity and ensures the ability of governments to act in the public interest.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Question No. 122 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 122—**Mr. Gerald Keddy:**

Can the Department of Natural Resources provide: (a) the number of commercial woodlot owners by province; (b) the number of private woodlot owners by province; (c) the total acreage owned by each group; and (d) the amount of revenue the federal government receives from capital gains taxation of commercial woodlot owners?

Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): (a) Whether a woodlot owner is considered commercial or non-commercial is determined by the Canadian Customs and Revenue Agency, CCRA, on a continuing basis. To help in its determination the CCRA uses the interpretation bulletin IT373R2.

While Natural Resources Canada, through the state of the forest report, does report on the amount of private forest land in each province, it does not distinguish between commercial and non-commercial woodlot owners. However, data is available for the estimated number of woodlot owners by province

Government Orders

b)

Province	Estimated number of woodlot owners ¹	Area of private forests (hectares) ²
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,500	280,000
Nova Scotia	30,000 to 35,000	2,710,000
Prince Edward Island	12,000	273,000
New Brunswick	40,000	3,097,000
Quebec	120,000	9,216,000
Ontario	169,000	6,394,000
Manitoba	13,500	526,000
Saskatchewan	15,000	432,000
Alberta	7,500	1,527,000
British Columbia	20,000	2,165,000

¹ The number of owners for most provinces are estimates based on estimates by provincial forestry agencies, the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners as well as management plan figures and past surveys.

² One hectare equals 10,000 square metres, or 2.471 acres.

(c) See table above.

(d) That amount is not available. However, as indicated in the 2001 federal budget, facilitating the inter-generational rollovers of commercial woodlot operations that are farming businesses will reduce federal revenues by an estimated \$10 million annually.

NOTE: While the questions posed relate to woodlots per se, the questions deal with tax law, policy and revenue, and would be more appropriately addressed by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and the Department of Finance.

[English]

Mr. Geoff Regan: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statement, government orders will be extended by 14 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL CODE (CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AND FIREARMS) AND THE FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from April 10 consideration of the motion that Bill C-15B, an act to amend the Criminal Code (cruelty to animals and firearms) and the Firearms Act, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment.

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Madam Speaker, we have before us today Bill C-15B which has

been divided into two parts. As a former member of the justice committee Madam Speaker, you would know that this bill has been a long time coming to fruition.

This is a piece of legislation dealing with a section of the criminal code going back over 100 years. I am quick to add that the legislation is very much needed. It deals with a very serious issue that horrifies Canadians. They recoil in horror at some of the images they have seen of the abuse of animals. In the criminal courts and through the media we have seen cases that involve horrific cruelty toward all types of animals.

The sad reality is that psychologists and those who have studied human behaviour have come to the real conclusion that individuals, particularly young people who engage in the abuse of animals, very often go on to display a similar type of violence and aggression toward human beings. There is a real connection to that type of disturbed anti-social behaviour. There is a need to recognize the significance and the motivation of that and the importance of having stricter guidelines that curtail and hopefully dissuade individuals from engaging in activity and aggression toward animals.

A number of cases have been brought to people's attention concerning the consequences of abusive acts toward animals. Yet it is fair to say that we have seen a rather lacklustre response on the part of the courts for any number of reasons. The punishment does not seem to fit the crime, and that has been the trend. Many have pointed to the need to amend the criminal code and that is very much in part what we have before us today. The bill is a legislative attempt to address the inadequacies of the current law as it pertains to animals.

The Progressive Conservative Party wholeheartedly embraces the spirit and intent of the bill. Its intent is clear. It is meant to up the ante. It is meant to bring about the ability of judges and the judiciary to expand the range of sentences meted out by them as a result of an individual being convicted of cruelty toward animals. Along with that, coupled within sections in Bill C-15B, is the ability for a judge to prohibit an individual from owning animals for up to a lifetime when that individual has been convicted of serious violence toward animals.

By violence, we have to refer to the definition. It speaks of: wilfully or recklessly or without regard for the consequences of their act; committing an act of violence which causes unnecessary pain or suffering or injury; kills an animal brutally or viciously without unlawful excuse; poisons or allows an animal to be poisoned; engages in the fighting or harassing of animals for money or trains an animal to fight other animals; takes part in cock fights; takes part in any manner in an exhibition in which captive animals are liberated for the purpose of being shot at the moment they are liberated; and is the owner of any premise and permits the premises to be used in the course of one of the above activities.

It is necessary to spell out some of these activities because we know there have been numerous examples, as I mentioned earlier, of mistreatment of animals. Some of that mistreatment is merely in the neglect and the conditions under which those animals may be kept.

Government Orders

The duty of care that should be imposed and the expectation and the position of trust that animal owners find themselves is not unlike that of the expectation that people should have for the standard of care for children. Animals are unable in many instances to fend for themselves and are reliant upon their owners or keepers. For example, an animal in a game sanctuary needs care, attention and relies on individuals for food.

• (1025)

One case is near and dear to my heart and that involves Sable Island ponies that are fed hay by the government. Circus animals is another example where many individuals have expressed taking animals out of the wild and bringing them into captivity. That is not to say that many organizations and many circuses do not treat their animals very well.

However then there is also the argument about the psychological ills that may come to animals that are taken out of the wild and brought into captivity. For example, we have seen cases involving whales in Vancouver that have captured the attention of many.

There are numerous examples and numerous organizations, most obviously the SPCA, that go to great lengths to ensure that animals are treated with kindness, care, love and affection. We certainly count ourselves in the Progressive Conservative Party with those who want to protect animals and want to ensure that we have strict guidelines as to how animals are treated and how animals are cared for; on the flip side of that equation how those who transgress against the rules of fair treatment are responded to in a fair and firm way.

Yet we in the Progressive Conservative Party have real concerns about the wording. As is very often the case, the devil is in the detail. The legislation accomplishes those laudable goals of permitting the courts to respond in a more heavy-handed way in meting out punishment that embraces those long standing principles of general and specific deterrents. General deterrents for the public often involves making an example of an individual who chooses to display aggression and cruelty toward animals.

However this legislation takes the issue of animals, which have been defined as property in the criminal code, and creates an entirely new section which opens up a huge chasm for abuse of prosecution of individuals who engage in what I would consider very legitimate acts toward animals in the use of animals in a business sense, whether it be in farming, animal husbandry of any sort, fishing and furriers who very often keep animals for that purpose. Although many might find that offensive, what I fear is, as we have seen in many issues that come before the House, there is a real division in the way Canadians view this in rural and urban Canada.

We cannot deny the fact that we have a frontier pioneer background in this country. There are many individuals who grew up on farms in a rural setting and relied on animals for food, for transportation and for their very existence. To that end however, there is a sad reality that that use in the eyes of those who may be sheltered, who may live in a more urban setting and do not believe that animals should be consumed for any purpose or used in any way that might be deemed as different than the way we would treat another human being is not the case.

I fear that this proposed law brings into question some of those practices that have long been exercised in this country and from which some people shy away. They may not like to talk about it, but I am speaking about castration of animals, dehorning animals, butchering of animals and the way some animals are kept. There is a very subjective line that exists in the way in which those exercises are practised. Surely there is a standard of care that has to be applied but by removing animals from the property section there is a real potential for danger in opening up prosecutions which are unfair, unwieldy, will result in lengthy court cases and will result, in a business sense, in putting individuals who rely upon animals for their very existence at risk.

We can all agree that the litigation route when it is chosen, whether it be in a criminal sense or civil litigation or a family matter, results in lengthy and costly delay. It is the exception sadly, not the rule, where a case proceeds quickly through the courts and is settled in a fashion that is advantageous and acceptable to any party. When people come into conflict and it gets to the point where it goes to court, there is a cost to be paid regardless of the outcome.

• (1030)

Many who rely on animals in this day and age, particularly in the agriculture sector, do not have the time nor the money to engage in the protracted legal hearings that would be encouraged as a result of the changes envisioned in the act.

As we have seen time and again when legislation is presented before the House, the government chooses to bring forward cumbersome bills called omnibus bills which mix issues. Bill C-15B in its present form has been separated from a larger bill that contained no less than seven subject matters. However much to our dismay it still contains changes to the firearms regulation.

I will speak only momentarily to the Firearms Act because it is clear and on the record where the Progressive Conservative Party stands. The Firearms Act was sold to the Canadian people as a way to help enhance policing and public safety. That is nonsense. The act was supposed to cost \$85 million. It has ballooned to almost \$800 million. The money should be spent on frontline policing on a priority basis where it could be utilized in a significant way to protect the public.

The cumbersome, unenforceable, protracted legislation involving firearms will not work because it is based on the premise of voluntary participation. I will say it again: The Hells Angels are not lining up kiosks at the mall to register their illegal guns. It will not happen.

All the effort, public spin and costs associated with publicizing the government's effort have been a complete and utter sham. My hon. friend from Yorkton—Melville has put great efforts into educating the public about the other side of the coin, which I would call the truth, about the real effects of long gun registry.

No one is against gun control. There is not one member of parliament or law-abiding Canadian who is against gun control. Gun control means safe storage, locks, and knowing that individuals who handle guns are trained and competent to do so.

Government Orders

Those who use guns for criminal purposes will not voluntarily provide information about their weapons of choice. It is like suggesting criminals will voluntarily give fingerprints and DNA samples before they go out and commit crimes. They will not do it. It is a completely false premise upon which gun registry has been sold and presented by the Liberal government to the Canadian public.

These two incongruous pieces of legislation have been presented to the House of Commons with one purpose in mind: to force parties like the Progressive Conservative Party and others to vote against bills they support in part because they strongly oppose other elements of them. That is sad. It is playing politics at its worst. It divides intelligent and informed debate. It puts individuals in an uncomfortable position.

The previous bill had elements of protection for children that would help police track those who present pornography on the Internet. Luckily, and to everyone's benefit, the bill was divided. It will be back before the House potentially this week. We will be speaking in support of the bill which also includes stronger penalties for those who stalk and criminally harass individuals. Senator Oliver in the other place did tremendous work in bringing that issue to the floor of the House and to the other place.

● (1035)

We in our party support Bill C-15B in its spirit and intent. Yet while legislation is necessary to prevent needless cruelty toward animals the traditional practices of hunting, fishing and farming do not fit into the category of intentional and mean-spirited violence.

There is a blurring of lines when legislation takes animals out of the property section. This may seem somewhat harsh to some Canadians but I believe animals benefit by being seen as property. Regarding animals as the property of either individuals or the state benefits the animals by enabling and obliging someone or some entity, be it the government or an organization, to care for them when needed.

It is important that animal cruelty legislation clearly define and target those who engage in brutal actions against animals, just as it is important for gun control legislation to target individuals who cause harm by perpetrating crimes against animals or society involving firearms. Let us make that the focal point. Let us bring about legislation that will bring in harsher penalties, greater lengths of probation, and treatment to deter individuals. That is where our efforts should be expended.

When one considers the genuine need for clear and progressive legislation in the area it is the government that is being negligent by bringing forward Bill C-15B and stubbornly refusing to listen to stakeholders. It is one thing to have a committee that gives stakeholders such as farmers, fishermen and individuals who work daily with animals a hearing and an opportunity to come forward and speak. It is another thing altogether to listen to them and produce legislation that encapsulates and speaks to their concerns. It is obvious Bill C-15B has not given proper consideration to those who would be most affected by it: the law-abiding individuals who care for animals and do their utmost to ensure they are protected.

In the final analysis Bill C-15B would give judges the ability to mete out greater sentences and come down hard on those who are

convicted. Many will argue that taking animals out of the property section would allow for more private prosecutions and allow prosecutions to proceed without the animals' owners. However that can already happen.

The shortcomings of the current legislation are reflected in the fact that there are scarce resources for police today. This can be tied back into the priority spending of firearms registration. Some \$800 million is going into a registration scheme that is doomed to fail and will collapse under its own cumbersome and unenforceable weight.

Prosecutors and police officers must make priority decisions every day. They currently have the ability to proceed in cases where dogs are dragged behind cars. Puppy mills are still operating in Canada. I brought forward a private member's bill I hope will bring attention to the issue and result in legislation.

It is imperative that we bring in laws that focus the efforts of prosecutors, police and the courts on the perpetrators who cause the harm, not on innocent bystanders in whose interest it is to protect animals and see to their health, safety and well-being.

I am left with a great deal of frustration when I see the bill proceeding in its current form. It would be reckless to pass it in its current form. Sadly, even though we support the elements that would increase fines, periods of incarceration and bans on ownership of animals we cannot stand in support of Bill C-15. Although its intentions are noble and it contains elements we support, too much harm could result in the community, in rural Canada and in industries that rely on interaction with animals for their livelihoods.

● (1040)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have four issues I would like my hon. colleague to comment on in relation to the amendments to the firearms section.

Most people looking at Bill C-15B have been debating the cruelty to animals section. However the public and many people who have not read the bill do not realize that the great bulk of it consists of amendments to the Firearms Act. I will raise four concerns. First, Bill C-15B would give the minister the power to exempt non-residents from the Firearms Act. The regulations and 14 sections of the Criminal Code of Canada would be involved.

Why does the justice minister trust foreigners with firearms more than he does Canadian citizens? Does section 15 of the charter not guarantee everyone the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law? I have raised the issue before and not once has the government given me an answer.

Government Orders

Second, the bill would remove all the RCMP's authority for the firearms registration system it has been responsible for since 1934. While the bill would assure the current RCMP registrar continued in his current position he would do so only until a new registrar was appointed. All the authority previously granted under the law to the RCMP would be transferred to a new government agency under the control of a new bureaucrat called the Canadian firearms commissioner.

If the RCMP bureaucracy cannot make the gun registry work after 68 years of experience how would a new bureaucracy do it any better? Removing the RCMP from the administration would likely further erode public and police confidence in the gun registry. As I explained yesterday during the late show, the system is so riddled with errors it is of absolutely no value to police officers in their day to day law enforcement functions.

Third, for years judges have complained that the firearms legislation is so poorly drafted it is unenforceable. As a former crown prosecutor I am sure my hon. colleague has concerns in this area. Many of the amendments would make it more confusing. I will give the House an example that would challenge any police officer, chief firearms officer or provincial attorney general. The government should have used plain English rather than this legal gobbledegook. This section of the bill illustrates what I am talking about. It states:

Section 2 of the Act is amended by adding the following after subsection (2):

(2.1) Sections 5, 9, 54 to 58, 67, 68 and 70 to 72 apply in respect of a carrier as if each reference in those sections to a chief firearms officer were a reference to the Registrar and for the purposes of applying section 6 in respect of a carrier, paragraph 113(3)(b) of the Criminal Code applies as if the reference in that section to a chief firearms officer were a reference to the Registrar.

I am raising this quickly because I do not have much time. People who studied and pored over that paragraph for two hours have said they cannot figure it out. How is a police officer supposed to charge anyone under such legislation?

Fourth, the amendments would transfer to provincial ministers the power to exempt employees and businesses from the Firearms Act and Part III of the criminal code. This would have the effect of creating 10 different ways of implementing the legislation. We need one law to apply equally to everyone. This section would completely undermine that.

Could my hon. colleague to comment on this? Section 15 of the charter guarantees everyone will be treated equally. How would that be possible with legislation that is applied 10 different ways?

• (1045)

Mr. Peter MacKay: Madam Speaker, that was quite a speech. I thank my colleague for his questions and I would say that four relates to one and two relates to three in the way he has posed them.

The issue of the complexity of the bill is undeniable. It is reminiscent of the new Youth Criminal Justice Act. It is also reminiscent of the Income Tax Act. Judges and others working in the courts, including crown, defence and police, will have an incredible challenge before them in trying to sort it out.

I think that in drafting legislation one of the guiding principles of the Department of Justice, which was called the world's worst law firm by the previous minister, really should be try to strip away some

of the complexity and make law that is based more on common sense and is more understandable for the general public.

The bill, as the hon. member knows, was the brain eruption of the justice minister of two terms ago, who has the reverse Midas touch. Everything he seems to touch turns to something other than gold. I know that my friends from Manitoba, from Dauphin—Swan River, Brandon and rural parts of their province of Manitoba, understand that Canadians want enforceable legislation, bills that work to protect the public, not to target law-abiding citizens, which is what the Firearms Act does.

In the Progressive Conservative Party, we cannot support any legislation brought forward to rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic of a bill that will crash, that will ultimately falter and sink. We need a bill that targets criminal activity. This legislation is not a bill that I could describe in that fashion. Sadly, it is legislation that does not accomplish its goals. It is legislation that creates problems rather than addresses problems.

My friend spoke of the removal of the RCMP element, in essence, the privatization of the legislation, which endangers Canadians' private information. If the information fell into the wrong hands, it would tell persons who wished to access illegal guns where to find them or it would tell individuals who rely on a weapon for protection that the person may or may not have a gun.

The other part he touched on, which is very relevant, is that the frontline police officers will not trust the accuracy of the information. They cannot rely on it. If they receive a call to go to a domestic or other incident, they cannot trust that the information contained in the computer is accurate. Therefore they have to attend every call assuming that there might be a weapon in play, not assuming that there is not because the person has not registered.

To suggest that in regard to having a laser sticker or some instrument of a number recorded and placed into a computer data system, it will save lives, prevent crimes or even improve tracking if the information is not 100% accurate is a fallacy. It is a complete falling down, a complete abdication, on the part of the government in presenting a bill that is so costly. I am privileged to be surrounded by individuals from Manitoba and St. John's, Newfoundland who I think share that same sentiment. This is a bill that will not work. Any effort in Bill C-15B to improve the legislation is similarly doomed.

I hope I have addressed the questions that my friend raised. I agree with him. We in the Progressive Conservative Party do not support the registry system, which has been presented, I would suggest, in a very misleading way. The traducers who came up with the bill clearly did so for reasons that were best described as political rather than practical. The only way that this firearms legislation will ever disappear from the landscape in the country is when the government is voted out of office. That is the sad reality.

• (1050)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address some of the issues I raised in the question to my hon. colleague.

Government Orders

We have here in Bill C-15B more than 20 pages and more than 60 clauses of firearms amendments. That to me is a clear admission by the government that Bill C-68, the original bill, was a complete failure. In fact, most of the debate on this bill has been focused on the cruelty to animals section, yet the bulk of the bill is amendments to the Firearms Act.

On September 22, 1998, while tens of thousands of responsible firearms owners rallied peacefully on Parliament Hill to express their outrage over Bill C-68, the justice minister told a news conference that the debate was over. If the debate was over as she claimed in 1998, why did the minister bring in pages and pages of amendments to the legislation in 2001? If the debate was over back then, why is parliament now debating the son of Bill C-68? After six years, the waste of more than \$700 million, and massive non-compliance, the government has admitted that at least 320,000 gun owners failed to apply for a firearms licence. The government has finally admitted that it made at least 24 pages of mistakes by using closure on two occasions to ram Bill C-68 through the House in 1995.

The insurmountable problems with the gun registry will not be solved by the band-aid amendments proposed here. The only cost effective solution is to scrap the gun registry altogether and replace it with something that will work, and when we form the government that is what we will do. We need to replace this law with a law that has the full support of the ten provinces and the three territories, the full support of the firearms community and the full support of the aboriginal community.

Six provinces and two territories opposed Bill C-68 in a constitutional challenge that went all the way to the supreme court. Now eight provinces and territories have opted out of all or part of the administration of the Firearms Act. This is criminal code enforcement, which they do not want to have anything to do with. The territory of Nunavut launched its own constitutional challenge in the summer of 2000. Now we have the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations launching a constitutional challenge. The Assembly of First Nations is so frustrated with the broken promises of the justice minister it is now considering joining the FSIN court challenge.

Some of the amendments are an improvement, but are too little, too late, to win the support of our party or the firearms community. In the next election we will be calling for the repeal and replacement of Bill C-68.

Before getting into any comments on the proposed amendments to Bill C-15B, I need to correct the misleading statistics presented in the House yesterday by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice. He claimed that the gun registry is somehow going to improve the fact that women are being killed with rifles and shotguns. The parliamentary secretary failed to explain how registering rifles and shotguns is going to stop these firearms from being used for criminal purposes. We have never received an answer to that although we have been asking for six years.

An article in the *Toronto Sun* on Tuesday of this week proves just how useless the 68 year old handgun registry has been in preventing the criminal use of handguns. It states:

Police found an arsenal and a stash of drugs after raiding the home of a man captured breaking into his former common-law wife's house with a loaded gun. The

man faces more than three dozen charges after he was arrested with a .380 calibre handgun at his estranged spouse's Bathurst St. and Eglinton Ave. home late Saturday night. Police said he subjected the woman to 11 years of terror. She and the couple's two children are now in hiding. In a search of the man's Brampton home Sunday, police seized five loaded firearms, including a Tec-9 machine pistol. He was under a life-time ban preventing him from owning firearms.

Obviously the Minister of Justice and his parliamentary secretary should be more interested in directing the scarce police resources that are in place to make sure that firearms are removed from the hands of the 70,000 people who have been prohibited from owning guns.

What are we doing instead? We are shuffling paper in the back room somewhere. What a waste of resources.

• (1055)

The Minister of Justice claimed that the registry was working well because the department had refused and revoked more than 4,000 firearms licences, making a huge leap of logic that revoking a firearms licence somehow prevents people from acquiring guns. It does not. As the *Toronto Sun* article that I just quoted proves, this type of Liberal thinking is fatal, flawed, because when it comes to protecting lives gun registration is useless.

If the Liberals are really serious about protecting the lives of women living in violent domestic situations, we need more police to vigorously enforce restraining orders and prohibition orders. The fact is that while the justice minister and his minions are droning on about the 4,000 firearms licences they have refused and revoked, the truth is they did not even follow up on these licence revocations to ensure that the guns were removed from people they determined to be potentially dangerous. All of a sudden we do not have enough resources to enforce that part of the law. How did revoking these firearm licences help if they did not direct the police to these very people to take away their firearms? How did revoking these firearms licences help? If there are not enough police checking to see if these people have acquired firearms legally, it is a waste of our resources.

The fact is that the totally useless, fatally flawed gun registry is burning up more than \$100 million a year, which the police really need in their fight against violent crime, including removing firearms from really dangerous people, from criminals. Every year Statistics Canada publishes homicide and robbery statistics that prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that as a policy gun registration does not work.

Here are some of the more revealing facts from Statistics Canada in its report, *Homicide In Canada, 2000*. I will quote from page 7 of the report:

Of the 542 homicides in Canada in 2000, stabbing, beating and strangulation accounted for 58% and firearms for 34%.

Government Orders

Obviously violent individuals are the problem and registering a person's firearms does not prevent someone from killing another person.

Second, I would like to draw out of that report this statement, and I will remind members that the law has required all handguns to be registered since 1934:

Of the 183 firearms homicides in 2000, 58% were committed with handguns, 8% were committed with firearms that are completely prohibited, [such as sawed off rifles or shotguns and fully automatic weapons] and 31% were committed with a rifle or shotgun.

Obviously 67 years of registering handguns demonstrates that registration is fatally flawed as a way of preventing the criminal use of firearms.

The statistical evidence also indicates that the total banning of guns does not work any better if the government does not allocate police resources to enforce the firearms prohibitions.

The third thing I would like to draw out of the Statistics Canada report is this:

Despite 67 years of mandatory handgun registration, the use of handguns in firearms homicides has been steadily increasing since 1974, from 26.9% to 58.5% in 2000. Conversely, firearms homicides with rifles and shotguns that weren't registered dropped steadily over the same 27-year period, from 63.6% to 30.6%.

Without registration they dropped from 63.6% to 30.6%. It makes a sane person wonder why the Liberals would employ 1,800 staff and waste more than \$680 million trying to register millions of rifles and shotguns when it will do nothing to make our lives safer.

The fourth thing I would like to draw from the government's own statistics is this:

Of 110 handgun homicides committed between 1997 and 2000, 69% of the handguns were not registered.

We have had the law since 1934 and yet people have not complied with it. Does the failure of the gun registry as an effective government policy get any more obvious than that? That one statistic alone should make us scrap the entire registry.

The report also stated:

In 2000, 67% of persons accused of homicide had a Canadian criminal record, and 69% of these had previously been convicted of violent crimes. At the same time, 52% of homicide victims also had a criminal record.

● (1100)

Obviously the Liberals hit the wrong target by requiring completely innocent farmers, hunters and recreational shooters to register their firearms. Obviously criminals are the real targets not duck hunters. The government had a choice six years ago and it made the wrong one. On September 21, 1995, Ontario Solicitor General Bob Runciman told the Senate standing committee:

In national terms, \$85 million would put another 1,000 customs agents on the border; \$500 million would put an extra 5,900 police officers on the street. The federal alternative is to use the money to register every shotgun and bolt-action .22 in Canada. No great brilliance is required to figure out which would have a greater impact on crime.

The September 11 terrorist attacks have shown us what a real security threat is. With few exceptions everyone in Canada knows that the threat is not 3 million completely innocent firearms owners.

I have a lot more material I could present but I would also like to talk a little about the cruelty to animals amendments in the criminal code because there are a lot of people in my province who are very concerned about this.

I come from a riding that is heavily involved in agriculture. Bill C-15B is a threat to that very industry. The amendments made after report stage have not addressed the fears and worries of farmers and ranchers across Canada. Instead of working toward the original goal of increasing penalties to those who abuse animals the government has put the livelihood of thousands of agriculture producers in danger.

Currently animals are classified as property under the criminal code. This designation is the fundamental principle of Canada's agriculture industry. The ownership of animals and the farmer's legal right to use animals to produce food comes from his or her right to own animals. Moving animals from the property area of the criminal code and creating their own area would cause farmers and ranchers to be under an unfair risk of prosecution.

This would be to the great joy of animal rights activists who want to test this law in the courts, and we have quotations to that, because it would have to make the farmer reconcile his or her right to own animals under the new status of animals under the criminal code.

I have spoken about the right to own animals as property. There is a good reason for that. Under our current constitution Canadians do not have the entrenched right to own property. Our democracy and economic system are based on the fundamental right that each person has the right to own and enjoy his or her own property. It seems that the government has forgotten the connection between property rights and economic freedom, between property rights and prosperity.

In communist Russia property rights were under the control of the state which led to no economic freedom for the individual. We cannot function in a market economy without the right for each individual to own property.

Animal rights activists who have hijacked the agenda of the bill want to use the bill's provision to violate the rights of a farmer to earn a living and to own property.

Farmers and ranchers would not be afraid of the bill if they knew that they had some recourse to defend themselves against malicious prosecution. If our charter of rights were to say that every Canadian had the right to own and enjoy property most farmers, and that would include myself, would not be worried about the implication of the bill.

The government and the former justice minister were confused on the aspect of animal welfare and animal rights. Instead of working toward tougher penalties for those who abuse and neglect animals and working toward the better treatment of animals the minister has worded a bill that would give more rights to animals in Canadian law than it does an unborn child.

Government Orders

The government has created a definition of an animal that is so broad that any living creature that has a backbone would be subject to this law. Yet at the same time the Government of Canada does not recognize the rights of an unborn child. What a twisted and demented conscience we have on the other side of the House.

There are other concerns that I have with the bill. Since it was introduced the Canadian Alliance has asked that the government put in a clause that would protect the traditional farming practices that are done on farms and ranches. People who care and are genuinely concerned in the welfare of their animals do these practices. They have been passed down from generations of ranchers and farmers. Why should we let someone who does not understand this practice deem it to be illegal?

• (1105)

I am not against handing out stiffer penalties to those who abuse and neglect animals. I am against creating a piece of legislation to appease a small group of people. The legislation does that. It appeases the animal rights groups by giving them a law that they can test in the courts and push the boundaries of what can and cannot be done to animals. That should not be decided in the court of law. It should be decided here in the House of Commons.

Our job is to create clear, concise legislation that leaves no room for interpretation. Bill C-15B would do the exact opposite. It would allow animal rights groups to use it as part of a hidden agenda to eliminate the fur trade, ranching and hunting. That is a huge concern.

A letter from Liz White, director of the Animal Alliance of Canada, best illustrates this hidden agenda. She writes:

My worry is that people think this is the means to the end, but this is just the beginning. It doesn't matter what the legislation says if no one uses it, if no one takes it to court, if nobody tests it. The onus is on humane societies and other groups on the front lines to push this legislation to the limit, to test the parameters of this law and have the courage and the conviction to lay charges. That's what this is all about. Make no mistake about it.

Do we need any other evidence that they will use the vagueness of this law? They will use the provisions in this law to go after farmers, ranchers and those who use animals in a legitimate fashion.

We in the House have allowed a piece of legislation that has a blatant hidden agenda to make its way to third reading. I am sickened to see that the government did not consider our amendments in report stage. The bill would only punish those who need animals to earn a living. It would strip farmers and ranchers of a fundamental civil liberty, the right to own property. The government would do all this just to satisfy the animal rights groups while not addressing the issue of animal welfare.

We had an opportunity to create a piece of legislation that would punish those who abuse and neglect animals. We could have had the means to shut down the puppy mill owners and punish those who knowingly neglect their animals. Animal rights groups have used this legislation to turn the sights on the very people who care about their animals.

Farmers and ranchers do not trust the legislation. They do not trust the former justice minister and they do not trust the current justice minister. If the bill were to pass I fear that honest hard-working Canadians would be charged and put in jail for the simple act of

trying to make a living. The government has created a monster and in the future we would see that most clearly.

I would like to make a few comments about the firearms section of the act. I have already mentioned some of the problems in my previous question to my hon. Conservative colleague.

The bill would give any designated firearms officer any of the duties and functions of a chief firearms officer. In other words the Firearms Act would give the CFO a considerable amount of power, even some of the powers of the provincial minister. The CFO in New Brunswick has designated a private eye as a firearms officer. Do Canadians really want private eyes running around with all the power of a CFO to investigate and harass law-abiding citizens? How will we know if the private eyes are using their powers as firearms officers to investigate people for their other clients and their own personal gain?

The bill would amend the definition of a firearm in an attempt to ensure that millions of air guns or pellet rifles would no longer be considered firearms under the law. The wording is confusing and the new definition may not have achieved that objective. Some legal interpretations say paintball markers would now become firearms if the amendment is passed into law. Is that not unbelievable? A number of lawyers, including some who work for parliament, have already offered different legal opinions on changes needed to make this section consistent with the government's stated intentions.

The standing committee needs to receive the testimony from firearms experts, forensic scientists and legislative drafting experts to determine what this new definition really means before it becomes the law of the land.

• (1110)

In 1995 the justice minister ignored the 250 amendments proposed by the Reform Party and it ignored many of the substantive amendments proposed by the Liberal dominated committee. Why after five years and \$700 million does the government not admit its mistakes?

Mr. Paul Harold Macklin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, does the hon. member support the amendments addressing subsection 12(6) dealing with handguns?

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Madam Speaker, I have not argued that some of these amendments are an improvement to the original bill. I have argued that because of the complexity of the legislation and the way it is so poorly drafted it would do nothing to remove firearms from those who really should be targeted. We are diverting resources, through the subsection that was just referred to, from police into a bureaucracy that would do nothing to control the illegal use of firearms.

Government Orders

The onus is on the government to demonstrate that this subsection, and any of the other 20 pages of amendments, in some way would improve public safety and the quality of life in Canada. I maintain that it would do the opposite. It has created a huge bureaucracy which now employs 1,800 people. That bureaucracy is taking resources away from where it would do the most good, that is, to put police on the street.

We could put 7,000 or 8,000 more police on the street to go after the real criminal element in this country. We could have our spy agencies trying to find the real terrorists in this world rather than sitting behind desks shuffling pieces of paper and laying a piece of paper beside every gun in this country.

There has never been one demonstration of how laying a piece of paper beside a gun in any way affects how that gun is being used. We have had safe storage laws for years. We have had the requirement to take safety courses and all kinds of courses on the proper use of a firearm for 20 some years.

It is obvious to Canadians that if we were to enforce the law that we already have, do the proper background checks and make sure that only those people who should have firearms have them in this country, we would be much better off than trying to create a huge registry which has no measurable benefit. In fact, it has the opposite effect because it diverts resources from the police to other areas.

In answer to my colleague's question the amendments given here may in some small way improve the original errors in Bill C-68. We proposed many amendments previously, but it in no way addresses the fundamental flaw with Bill C-68. That fundamental flaw is that it does not improve public safety. It does not put resources where they are best spent in this country; that is, to put more police on the street, to secure our borders and ensure that firearms are used in the proper way.

• (1115)

Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, it is not my nature to be a madman. I do not think I have ever demonstrated in the House that I was mad, but I want to say that I am thoroughly disappointed and disillusioned. The piece of legislation before us is totally disgusting, particularly for the people it will affect the most. Is it not strange that in drafting the legislation, the people all across Canada who should have been contacted were not contacted.

We have heard ministers of the crown and other members say that nothing will change, that the legislation will not change anything being practised now. I wish they had said "Read my lips". There was another statement that everything that is legal now will be legal after the bill passes. Again, they should have said "Read my lips".

Canadians affected do not believe the government for one minute. I am challenging the government to put those two statements in proper words in the bill. Do government members have the courage to put in the bill what they said on the floor of the House? That is the question. When they do, they should write letters explaining what they have done to Canadians for Medical Progress, Inc. Write a letter to the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, because it does not believe them. Write a letter to Keystone Agricultural Producers of Manitoba, because it does not believe the government. Write a letter to the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association. They do not believe

the government. Write a letter to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture because those statements are not sufficient for it either. The Canadian Cattlemen's Association does not trust the government. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Inc. also does not believe the words that were spoken.

The Liberals should have the courage to put into the bill the very same sentiments that were stated earlier in the House. "Read my lips" is not good enough on the bill. People do not trust the government's word on the bill at this time. I challenge the government, before it calls a vote on the bill, to contact the people that it affects the most and get a ruling.

Another thing related to the bill has come up. The biggest pest I can remember when I was growing up was the gopher. We did all kinds of strange things. We poured water down the gopher hole and as the gophers came up we whopped them. Then we cut off their tails and took the tails to the municipal office where we were paid one cent apiece.

This varmint has been a problem from the Red River to the Rockies ever since there was a Red River and Rockies. However, people from the Red River to the Rockies have never been contacted in relation to the bill with regard to how they treat that varmint.

• (1120)

My youngest daughter was driving a truck long before she was supposed to. I would fill the tank and take her to the spot where the farmer wanted her to go. She had a bat and a dog and away we would go. She went around and she would put the water down the hole and if the dog missed it, she got it. The farmers did not want poison used where the calves were being born. According to the bill and how it would be interpreted, she was a mean, cruel, young girl.

I submitted to the House a petition with I am sure 60,000 names on it to put the poison up to a rate where it would kill the gophers. I received a phone call one night. The person asked why the people from the west, and I am assuming he meant between the Red River and the Rockies, wanted to get rid of the gophers. He asked, "Do they not know they are good?" I thought it was a joke. I asked how they were good for us and he said that they aerate the soil. I could not believe it.

We should capture some gophers and put them on the lawn of the Hill and soon there would be piles of earth all over. The grass would not be able to be cut. Kids could not play out there because they would break their legs.

Why is it that the people most interested in what we try to do in controlling the number of gophers are all from areas where there are no gophers?

Government Orders

A chap phoned me the other day and said he had a measure by which we could get this matter settled. This all started with one of the finest organizations in the west, the wildlife federation. The wildlife federation teaches young people the proper use of guns, the proper use of the environment and so on. This group should probably have never mentioned it because it obviously caught the news of the government. They said they would organize a shoot where young people could practise knocking down these varmints.

Another gentleman in the west invented a gophinator. It is a small, high pressure gun that uses ammonium hydroxide, the same thing farmers put into the ground when they fertilize. One shot down the hole and the gopher is dead, that is it. However, because of forces unknown to us that instrument could not be patented.

I picked up the farm paper and on the front page it says that is now a toxic substance. For years we would put it in huge tanks on rubber wheels and pull it while seeding. Now it is a toxic substance. I cannot believe that would happen.

My friend who called me should not be surprised if we put 1,000 gophers here. We would also like to put 1,000 gophers at Queen's Park. Let them deal with them.

Where I live, when people who run the golf courses, provincial parks and roadways are driving down a country road and we see the car swerve, does anyone want to guess what they are trying to do? They are trying to get a gopher. They are trying to get rid of them. Hon. members who have wives should let them twist their ears when they see their gardens after the gophers have moved in.

Gophers have been elevated to the same position as humans. We must handle them properly.

An hon. member: We should elect some.

Mr. Roy Bailey: Yes, we should elect some gophers.

The only gopher in Saskatchewan is Gainer the Gopher at the Roughriders games and we will protect him. That is the only gopher that needs protection.

•(1125)

I challenge the government to find anyone who lives on a farm or lives in an area where the majority of land is cultivated. Find one farmer, one rancher, one golf course operator, one gardener, find anybody who controls gophers to say the bill is a good thing. They will guffaw at this stupid piece of legislation. We have to watch out. I am sure there will be civil disobedience.

What is it with the bill if it does not mean what it says? We have heard from members and ministers that the bill will have nothing to do with currently existing practices, but nobody believes them. The government only has one option. It must put it in writing in the bill. That is the only way it can be done.

I have had a few experiences with gophers. Rather than let an animal suffer because its leg was fractured beyond anything possible and I could not get it to the vet, I had to kill that animal with a .303. Under the bill that would be illegal.

I would venture to say that in my province alone, up to \$1 million worth of cattle have to be destroyed every year because of fractures.

Some horseback riders have broken their legs, arms, shoulders and have had serious health problems because they were thrown when the horse's legs went down a gopher hole.

We should applaud the man who invented the gophinator. The people who run the golf courses like him.

Why did the government do this? It seems the Liberals listen to lobby groups from the city, but they will not listen to people directly impacted by the passage of the bill. I cannot get mad about this. I am more distraught about it. We cannot trust the word of the government.

I urge the government to put into the bill what its members said in the House in order to protect our agriculture industry and to take away the fear that there will be interference. We in the opposition would look at the bill very differently if the government were to do that.

I am going home this weekend. I know I will receive numerous phone calls and letters on the bill. I live right on the edge of ranching country. My whole area is farming country. My constituents are deeply afraid with some of the laws that now apply with regard to putting animals down in the pet centres. If the law says no animal can be put down except for medical reasons, boy will the taxpayers pay when big buildings are built. Let us come back to some common sense.

Lobby groups are saying that the people who have been working the soil and raising herds of cattle, who have been contending with these varmints all these years are mean and cruel and will have to change their way of doing business. I do not think so. I beg the government members to think seriously before they stand to support the bill.

•(1130)

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the speech just given by my colleague reminds me of a previous minister of the Liberal government, Francis Fox, who many years ago banned satellite dishes. We know how effective that was during a time of civil disobedience. People as a whole knew it was a ridiculous thing to do. When Mr. Fox saw satellite dishes in the cities he tried to prosecute a few people but our rural colleagues prevented that law from ever being successful.

That case reminds me of what we are dealing with today. We have all these do-gooders and one of the things they have achieved in some places is to get rid of cosmetic pesticides and herbicides. Our playing fields are now full of dandelions and weeds and mosquitoes are everywhere. Through their naiveté, they have managed to get these left wing councils to ban the cosmetic products that used to keep these places nice to visit.

However, by banning these cosmetic products, they have created a sudden growth in the number of pests, weeds and herbs which are now spreading to people's gardens and probably out into the countryside. These do-gooders are actually indirectly threatening our food supply through their ridiculous approach in the cities.

Government Orders

As someone who represents a city riding, the letters I receive on this bill urge me to pass it quickly because they are oriented toward cruelty to pets. We do not want little Moggie to be attacked by somebody, hung up by his hind quarters or whatever.

Would my colleague perhaps explain to city dwellers why it is important that this bill not go through in relation to the disadvantages or benefits for city dwellers?

Mr. Roy Bailey: Madam Speaker, this party has long been saying that we want increased penalties for those people who abuse or do not properly feed their pets.

I will tell my colleague that people sometimes only get a general picture and think it is a wonderful thing. However if they really looked at it and were given an explanation of what it means to people living in the country, then I am quite sure they would not support it.

I will provide a case in point. On the 20th anniversary of the charter of rights, a questionnaire went out asking people whether they agreed with the charter of rights. A high percentage said they did. However, if those same people were asked whether they knew anything about the charter of rights, the response would have been a low number.

I remember as a boy that people who were cruel to animals were reported. We want it to be quicker than that. We want it to be well known that people who are cruel to animals, be it a cat, a cow a horse, will face severe penalties.

What we are saying is that we do not want the term cruelty to be left with the definition that the minister chooses to put to it. Cruelty can mean anything. Listening to me right now may be cruelty for the hon. member in the back. All I am saying is that the bill must be applicable to those people who have to live with it.

• (1135)

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, when my colleague from North Vancouver talked about Francis Fox banning satellite dishes a chill ran down my spine because I spent time talking with Francis Fox in Montreal. I believe he is now a vice-president with Cantel. It is shocking to think that he works for a telecommunications company. I hope his view on satellite dishes has changed. However, it sends a deep chill down my spine to think that he stood in this place years ago to ask for a ban on satellite dishes and now he is the vice-president of a telecommunications company. It is scary how this place works.

The question I have for my colleague pertains to his province of Saskatchewan. I recently read about an event known as the gopher derby. This is an event where people try to liquidate as many gophers as they possibly can and collect the tails as proof of their deed. I think the person who gets the most wins some sort of prize. The event is put on by the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation.

I live in a place where gophers are prevalent. Admittedly, I live in the city but when one drives past Nose Hill one will see little gophers eating their little buddies because they are cannibalistic. If a gopher dies or is run over, some of its little buddies will run out onto the road and eat it. We see that all the time when we travel along 14th Street in Nose Hill.

We have some bleeding heart Liberal do-gooders in the cities, like my hon. colleague says, who usually do not have gophers, I will call them the bleeding hearts brigade, who are opposed to people taking out their .22s or their small rifles to hunt gophers and instead prefer the use of strychnine. I do not know why it is but they somehow think using strychnine is a morally superior solution to people hunting gophers with .22s.

In our neck of the woods we think of these things as little varmints. They cause injury to livestock. My colleague mentioned how when animals step into gopher holes they sometimes fracture or break their legs. I have seen that type of thing before and have heard many a tale about it.

What does my hon. colleague think the Prime Minister would do if those prized golf courses of his, which he likes to spend so much time on, were infested with gophers? Let us use the example of the one in Shawinigan which I think he had part ownership in but which he kind of sold, as the story goes on in terms of what his involvement was with that whole Shawinigan affair. Anyway, I wonder how the Prime Minister would react if some of those golf courses he loves so much were infested with gophers.

What does my hon. colleague think about us bringing some gophers from his neck of the woods in Saskatchewan and transplanting them on the Prime Minister's golf course and letting them run wild in a breeding program to aerate the soil? What would the Prime Minister do? Does he think the Prime Minister would then be in favour of a gopher derby?

I will make a comparison. When I was a small child growing up in Winnipeg we had so many mosquitos we could literally wipe down the side of our arms and off would come mosquito debris and our own blood because there were so many of those things. In Newfoundland there is a situation where there are five million, six million, seven million seals off its coast, and the number keeps growing. They are working their way up the rivers to try to find more food. In British Columbia, where I also lived growing up, we had spiders everywhere. Why is it we do not hear about people trying to ban a hunt on spiders? Certainly they did try to do that with the seals but of course it was Europeans who did not have millions of seals on their coasts. We would not have heard Lloyd Axworthy stand up in this place and talk about how we must preserve the mosquito.

What does my colleague think the Prime Minister would do if he had gophers on his golf course?

• (1140)

Mr. Roy Bailey: Madam Speaker, I have a little story to tell my colleague. I am not much of a golfer but I did go to the golf club once. At the first tee I took my first swing and I made a hole in one. It went off course, hit a gopher hill and then ran down. No golfer has ever made a hole in one like that.

To answer the question, the owners of the golf club would get rid of the gophers. If this bill passes, those golf courses in gopher country will get rid of the gophers and the government will not go after them. All we need to do to live in comfort with everyone is to take the words that have been said and put them into the legislation. Does the government have the courage to do that?

Government Orders

In closing, how does everyone think we control rats? We feed them a poison which causes them to bleed internally. Nobody has ever mentioned cruelty to rats.

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I have a few preliminary comments about the firearms registry.

I wish the government would recognize that the firearms registry a totally failed experiment. It was ill-conceived. Let us be honest, it was more about politics than good legislation at the time. It is going nowhere and is costing the country a huge amount of money. It has created another unnecessary bureaucracy in this town and there are enough of those already without more of them.

I would like to relate my experience as a practising lawyer. One of the most troubling problems I encountered was the inadequate protection for people, and women generally, who were stalked or harassed by really dangerous people and quite often because of a marital breakdown. The resources were not in place.

I recall a number of years ago when a new mayor was elected in New York City, one of the most crime infested places in the world. The mayor was elected on a law and order platform. He was going to reduce crime and improve public safety in that city. What did he do? He hired more police officers. What did he do with those police officers? He put them on the streets where the crimes were happening.

Lo and behold, guess what eventually happened? The crime rate in New York City dramatically decreased. He was not filling up prisons with prisoners. He was deterring crime in the first place. Today, if I am correct in my figures, New York City has a lower violent crime rate than any city in Great Britain with 500,000 people or more. That is public safety and is an effective use of public resources.

Why is the government not looking at cancelling a useless program that is costing us a lot of money and instead putting money into useful programs that actually do increase public safety and provide protection to our citizens?

The problem for a lot of our law-abiding citizens is that the government does not protect them. The resources are not in place. It does politically correct things like passing more laws. I think the government believes that if it wanted to make cats bark all it would have to do is pass a law. I am convinced of that. Some of those people over there are unreal.

I practised law for 25 years. I wish I had the time to go through all the useless legislation that has been passed that interferes with our ability to make common sense decisions in our day to day lives.

I want to address the rest of my comments to the cruelty to animals amendments in the legislation. I want to make it perfectly clear that the amendments in the bill are all about harassment and mischief. Who will be the object of the legislation? Who are the criminals we are targeting under this one? Under the firearms legislation it was duck hunters, but who will be the object of this legislation? Will it be the livestock producers, the hog producers, the poultry producers, the turkey producers and anyone else who is involved in the caring for animal? Will it be the fishermen, the sports fishermen, the medical researchers, the agricultural researchers, the

furriers, the trappers and many others? Most of these folks are just trying to make a living, support their families, get their kids through school, support their communities, pay their banks to get by and also support us by paying our salaries in Ottawa.

The legislation before us is about harassment and targeting those individuals. This is not a time for any of them to be targeted by more government interference.

● (1145)

In the U.S. one of the national parties has compromised itself by getting into bed with an organization called the American trial lawyers association.

We have seen the absurdity in the United States of those sort of policies. People with cancer sue tobacco companies because they did not understand that tobacco was not good for their health. Individuals sue a franchise coffee maker because they did not understand that coffee was hot. A person tried to commit suicide by jumping in front of a subway train and lost his legs because he jumped too far and successfully sued the New York transit authority on the basis that it should have anticipated someone would try to commit suicide and should have put up guards.

Most of this sort of stuff is pure absolute nonsense. We do not need that in this country. Anyone in the United States who has any common sense would agree that sort of intrusion by the litigative nature of the American society causes people a lot of additional costs and impairs the economy.

We heard from the friends of the government in committee, the animal rights groups. They came in droves. I recall a number of those spokespeople identifying lawyers who were supportive of the legislation. Quite honestly I would identify the lawyers that were mentioned as being akin to the American trial lawyers group. They were enthusiastic supporters of the bill. I am sure many of them are even members of the American trial lawyers association.

I am disturbed because the Liberals are bringing American style litigation into Canada. This is something we do not need. Much anti-Americanism sentiment comes from members of the government from time to time. However in this area they seem to be enthusiastic endorsers of something that is unnecessary and negative.

When we stand back and look at it the Liberals generally would like to see a society dominated by courts, judges and lawyers. Why do they want to do that? It is good for the lawyers and it seems to be good for the Liberal Party. However I am not exactly sure it is good for the Canadian public.

With a certain provision in the bill the Liberals have done something that even the Americans have not done. They have introduced the concept of tort and negligence right into the criminal code. I had never heard of that concept ever existing in any other common law or democratic society that I know of where we start introducing concepts of tort and negligence and litigation directly into the criminal code.

Let me draw the House's attention to the actual section. The section has absolutely nothing to do with tinkering with existing legislation. This is an entirely new addition to the act. Subsection 182.3(1) states:

Government Orders

Every one commits an offence who

(a) negligently causes unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal;

Let us use an actual example. I am a sport fisherman and I do catch fish. When I catch a fish I have to do something with it. I could put it in a tank and when I get back to shore I could kill it. I could put it on a rope and hang it beside the boat in the water and when I get back to shore I could kill it. I could have a club in the boat and hit it over the head until I kill it. Or I could throw it in the boat and let it jump around until it dies itself. Another possibility is a method I use, I learned it from an aboriginal person. I take the fish by the head hold it firmly and break its neck. In my view that is a good way to kill a fish because it puts it out of its existence quickly. For ice fishing most people just throw the fish out onto the lake and it slowly freezes to death.

• (1150)

In this subsection everyone commits an offence who negligently causes unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal. According to this definition the fish has a vertebrae so it is an animal. Under the legislation any sport fisherman could be looking at a charge under the section. Animal rights groups would be hiring their own lawyer to prosecute the case.

The Liberals say they have put something in place that would protect people against private prosecution. There would be a preliminary hearing first to decide whether the charges should proceed or not. That is just absolute nonsense. I know what a preliminary hearing is; I practised law for 25 years. It is a trial within a trial. There is a magistrate, a lawyer on the other side and witnesses.

I envision the fisherman walking into a courtroom full of animal rights activists, their witnesses and their lawyers. That will be a very costly venture. People who go in there had better have a lawyer and some witnesses or they will lose and face charges. That is just that one subsection.

However it does not stop there. In subsection 182.3(b) it reads:

...negligently fails to provide suitable and adequate food, water, air, shelter and care for it;

When a farmer hauls livestock to market it is an hour and a half drive and it is 85° outside does that mean the facility that he is hauling in should have temperature adjustments so the livestock is being hauled in at 72° or room temperature? If it is 5° above freezing should there be a heater in there so that it is 20° above zero? What about the food, water and other matters that are raised in there? Should the truck be stopped to feed the animals and give them water? Subsection 182.3(c) states:

negligently injures an animal while it is being conveyed.

When we look at all of these provisions I suggest there is not an existing agricultural practice that would not be open to attack under the legislation.

People say I am just pandering and raising fears that are not real. They should look at the experience in Europe, England and the U.S. where this type of legislation has been introduced and listen to what the radical animal rights groups are saying.

I find it particularly disturbing. We had one justice minister who got on his high horse to introduce this useless firearms registration. It is all about politics and nothing about good public policy.

The thing I find disturbing, when I go through the animal rights website and look at the material, is who the animal rights groups backed, strongly supported and put all their resources into in the last federal election to make sure they won and defeated all those "crazy firearms people" and "wing nuts" as they call them.

In the Edmonton riding, where the past justice minister came from, they backed her to the teeth and now she is delivering the bacon. She is delivering a piece of legislation that they wanted.

There is another provision in the bill that really bothers me. It is how what is negligent is determined. I doubt anyone on that side of the House has the slightest clue what process would be used to determine what negligent is. Sometimes I wonder whether any of the folks on the other side of the House ever spent two minutes in a court of law in the country, let alone knowing what that would mean. Subsection 182.3(2) states:

For the purposes of subsection (1), "negligently" means departing markedly from the standard of care that a reasonable person would use.

• (1155)

I know what that will entail; I have seen it. When one is involved with negligence cases in the court one hauls in a whole pile of expert witnesses and they tell the court what they think reasonable care is. Usually the people who have the most and best experts win the case. They are very expensive. Expert witnesses can easily cost \$5,000 a day and the more the better. The rich and wealthy have a major advantage in this sort of thing.

It would have been so simple. The Canadian Alliance and other parties wanted a simple amendment whereby we would determine the standard based on the practices of the industry. In agriculture the practices that have been longstanding would become the test under this arrangement, but no, the government would not accept that proposal. We would not stand in the way but it did.

This is another area that seemed so simple to me. When talking about fishermen and the way they kill fish, the accepted practice would be an absolute defence. For a livestock producer, the acceptable standard would be an absolute defence to the charges. It would alleviate the concerns that all these groups and producers in our economy are concerned about, but the government would not do it. It is so simple.

I guess the reason it will not accept that sort of standard as a defence is because it is promoting the radical animal rights groups objectives. They want to challenge every existing standard we have in place. They want to challenge every one of them and make it perfectly clear that is their objective.

Bill C-15B underscores the whole approach of the Liberal government. There was a government recently elected in British Columbia whose name matches up a lot better with liberty than that party's does. It actually believe in that word. The government in British Columbia committed itself to reducing one-third of the regulatory burden in that province.

Government Orders

It defined regulatory burden as a regulation that restricts the freedom of an individual or imposes obligations on the individual. It found 400,000 specific regulations that fit that definition. I would be curious to know if the government across the floor would submit itself to that sort of review, how many regulations we would find in Ottawa. It would absolutely be frightening.

Another thing the government of British Columbia discovered when it looked at the regulations and analyzed them was that for every dollar it costs the government to create laws and regulations, and enforce them, it costs the people affected on average something like \$17 to \$20. Here is a government that is passing a cruelty to animals law but it does not care about the consequences to the industries affected. It passed it because the minister made a deal with animal rights groups to get this thing shoved through. This will cost the affected industries a lot of money.

The government is good at that. It likes to pass laws and interfere with our day to day lives and our abilities to make decision without worrying about the costs. It just does it. The government is always pushing for environmental impact studies before something is done. I wish sometimes that before we pass laws in the House that we have an economic impact study of the laws before they are ever passed.

• (1200)

In conclusion, the Liberal way is more about more regulation. The Liberal way is more about more government. The Liberal way is more intrusion in our day to day lives as citizens. Liberals, contrary to their name, place very little value on personal freedom and liberty. They believe the government is better equipped on this matter to take over that role, to start making the decisions for individual citizens and to transfer more and more power to the bureaucracy in Ottawa. This is despite the fact that the Canada pension plan is in huge difficulty. We have probably more people working in fisheries in this town than we have actual fishers. We have an agriculture industry—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I apologize to the hon. member but his time is up.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I fondly appreciate my colleague's reference to property rights and personal freedoms and liberties. I prize those things.

Just recently there was a show on PBS called *The Commanding Heights*. It was one of the best examples I have ever seen. It was a thumbnail sketch of economics and the theories involved since the 1920s until today. It talked about Austria, the rise of its school of economics and Ludwig von Mises. There were interviews with people like Milton Friedman. It also had some wonderful anecdotes of Margaret Thatcher as well as some of the speeches taken from Ronald Regan. The show addressed the transformation.

The Liberal government has missed some of the lessons that were learned in this video. One lesson that strikes me the most is that Pierre Elliott Trudeau, when he was prime minister, used the very language in *The Commanding Heights* when he nationalized Petrofina and turned it into Petro-Canada. He tried to meddle with the markets as much as he possibly could. He thought the government deserved a position of commanding heights within given industries. Liberals and Tories over the years have recognized that just does not work. However it came out of a sense of failure. They were led to understand it because of the mounting budget

deficits and the fact that the programs they were instituting to meddle with industry were not working.

The Commanding Heights show laid out beautifully that evolution had been happening. The Liberals across the way only caught up to it after the rest of the world had pretty much passed them by. We had a growth of government coming out of the second world war because people turned to the war for its solutions and to its surmise. Afterward government continued to grow because of the Keynes model of economics stemming from its problem with the great depression. People thought that was a way of solving it.

However, the Austrian school of economics always knew. People like the Friedrich Hayek, who wrote the book *Road to Serfdom*, knew that the strategy would not work. They knew that governments always would produce failures when they intervened and intruded too deeply because they did not know its place. They had no business trying to govern industries they knew nothing or little about.

With property rights, liberty and personal freedoms, the government across the way still continues to want to meddle in private property rights and personal freedoms and liberties when it really does not have a place in it or understand a lot of it. It tries to implement solutions from 3,000 kilometres away and this does not solve the problems. In many circumstances it actually makes the problems worse.

An illustration of this point is when Margaret Thatcher was facing Scargill and his labour unions with regard to the coal strike in the U. K. which came out of the winter of discontent in 1979. There were massive strikes and garbage piled up on the streets.

• (1205)

She had the fortitude to build up the coal supplies in England. She had been asked if she would rather have 180,000 people in the coal industry on strike and out of work or would she capitulate and let the largest public sector union in the country rule the land. When the whole thing was said and done, she faced down Scargill and some of the union goon tactics.

This might sound shocking, but by the time it was all settled, out of 180,000 coal workers, in a poorly run industry that used massive government subsidies to keep itself alive, only 3,000 people still work in that industry, which is pretty profitable. It is incredible to consider that that industry was over employed to the tune of 177,000 workers. Over 90% of the people were employed in an industry maintained by governments subsidies which was not viable.

What does my hon. colleague think of the government trying to assume the commanding heights, whether it be morally, financially or industrially, in areas where it has little or no business, intruding on private property rights, liberties and personal freedoms?

Government Orders

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. I have been sitting here trying to figure out which government department in Ottawa is the department that I can really rate out as a quality department which does a first rate job. It certainly is not health care. It obviously is not defence and national security. Fisheries I have already mentioned. Agriculture is in a real mess. For aboriginal affairs, the government had to pass a law allowing special treatment on sentencing native youth because its programs for 125 years had been a total and absolute failure and disaster. It flies in the face of a liberal, Martin Luther King, who said "I want to live in a society where we will be judged on the basis of character and merit and not on the colour of our skin". Here is a Liberal government, in name only, coming up with laws that separate and divide people on those arbitrary criteria. That is shameful.

I left the state of Minnesota and came back to Canada in the late 1960s, just a year or two after Pierre Trudeau came into power. Our dollar was 92¢ against the U.S. dollar. Our standard of living was almost identical. I came back because this was the land of opportunity.

Today we have a 62 cent dollar. Our standard of living is 70% of the U.S. In fact, if we take the black community in the United States, its per capita income is about equal to our per capita income in Canada. The experiment of Pierre Trudeau of a bigger state, more government and the state making decisions for people was a failed experiment. I wish people on that side of the House would recognize it.

The strength of this country is the people of this country and their freedom and liberty, not the power in this town, Ottawa. The faster we can get a government in power that understand that and gives power back to the people, this country will turn around and not head in the way of Argentina.

• (1210)

Mr. Rob Anders: Mr. Speaker, I have a quick question for my hon. colleague on the gopher derby. I happen to be in favour of the gopher derby in Saskatchewan. Those little varmint gophers are causing us lots of problems. Using a .22 on them is as good as using strychnine.

What does my hon. colleague think about some of those bleeding heart brigade Liberals who want to save the gopher, even though they would not want the gopher crawling around on the Prime Minister's golf course? They are perfectly happy to have them scrambling around the Saskatchewan prairie, helping to mess up the fields of farmers or break the legs of cattle. What does he think about the gopher derby?

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick: Mr. Speaker, that is another part of our heritage in Saskatchewan that the government and its do-gooder friends do not recognize. They want to revise Canadian history their way and get rid of the traditions in our country.

Maybe we should take a lot of our Liberal colleagues out there and get them to participate in our gopher derby, then they might understand that it is not such a bad deal before the radical animal rights—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Speaker is going to go for it. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kelowna.

Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend, my colleague from North Battleford, made a very strong case, as did my colleague from Calgary, in terms of the liberties that are involved. Bill C-15B is a very significant piece of legislation that does seem to be somewhat intrusive.

I want to make it abundantly clear that one of the things we in the Canadian Alliance want to underline time and again is that we are absolutely not in favour of cruelty to animals. We do support the intent of the legislation, which would make cruelty to animals a more serious offence. There is no question about that and I want to make that abundantly clear so that no one misinterprets or misunderstands why we are opposed to the bill. We have no criticisms of those aspects of the bill, but we do criticize its intrusiveness, which creates problems for other people.

I would like to suggest that there is a fundamental principle of legislation we need to observe in all legislation and that principle is this: the legislation must make sense. Legislation that makes sense actually achieves what it intends to achieve and it protects the legitimate interests of citizens and the pursuits of those citizens in various legitimate enterprises, and in particular, farmers, ranchers, fishermen and medical researchers.

Now I will try to look at this piece of legislation from that perspective. First, then, I would like to recognize that the legislation before us now in Bill C-15B could open up the possibility that farmers, sporting groups and scientific researchers will be unjustly prosecuted. They may even be persecuted. Animal rights groups in Canada will certainly use this new legislation as the basis for such prosecutions, and in fact have already stated their intentions to do so, notwithstanding that some people argue they will not.

I will refer specifically to a quote from Liz White, the director of legislative revision, Animal Alliance of Canada. She stated:

My worry is that people think this is the means to the end, but this is just the beginning. It doesn't matter what the legislation says if no one uses it, if no one takes it to court, if nobody tests it. The onus is on humane societies and other groups on the front lines to push this legislation to the limit, to test the parameters of this law and have the courage and the conviction to lay charges. That's what this is all about. Make no mistakes about it.

My learned friend is a legal person and understands what the legal processes are. He understands exactly what that kind of statement means. The federal minister has assured us that what is lawful today in the way of legitimate activities in the courts would be lawful when the bill receives royal assent. The problem is that these new provisions arguably narrow the scope of what constitutes legitimate activities.

Am I the only one who has concerns about this? I am not trained in the law, but I do know something about logic and I do know something about how things work. I would like to refer the House to the Canadians for Medical Progress, Inc. This is a group of very sophisticated researchers who know what they are talking about. They have examined this omnibus bill. Pierre Berton, the senior patron, says this:

I am writing on behalf of Canadians for Medical Progress to request that, if you haven't already done so, you take a close...look...The intent of the legislation is to deal more stringently and effectively with incidents of extreme and unacceptable abuse to animals.

Government Orders

Who would disagree? I do not. The vast majority of Canadians would heartily endorse this, that is agreed, but he continued and stated:

However, some amended components of this section of the bill as drafted could have serious and paralyzing consequences for medical science. Essentially, they will remove animals as property, and will be interpreted as conferring person-like status on animals. In my opinion, this is an asinine, ludicrous approach toward solving the problem of animal abuse.

● (1215)

These are not my words. These are the words of significant, respected, well qualified and successful researchers in the field of medicine.

I will go on and look at the other parts of the bill. Canadians for Medical Progress has as one of its objectives:

Making representations to the government for the enactment or protection of legislation permitting and supporting biomedical research.

We ought to do that. We should have that. The group has other goals. It wants to promote "health research awareness, the science of biomedical research and the knowledge and practice thereof". It wants to co-ordinate its "activities with those of similar organizations and societies and individuals" and it wants to hold "conferences, meetings and exhibitions for the discussion of biomedical research". That is what these organizations do. The quotes I have just read are the words of people who do these kinds of things.

Canadians for Medical Progress also stated that it:

applauds the efforts of the drafters of this new legislation on their goal... We wish to affirm our belief that the wanton cruelty to animals is plainly not acceptable, and should be subject to the full force of the law.

However...the present wording, although totally unintentional, could open the door to costly and paralyzing private prosecutions, based on unfounded and frivolous allegations, against responsible, legitimate and ethically sound research. The key here, though, is the cost and time expenditure that could be inflicted on researchers and their research activity, regardless of potential litigation outcomes.

I know, and so do the members of the House, that in Canada the litigation process is not so much dependent on what is right or what is just, but rather on how much money and time the people who are litigating have to spend on the issue. Do we really want to get into the position where our researchers have to spend millions of dollars defending themselves instead of devoting that money to the legitimate pursuit of research to solve some of our medical problems we need to address? That is the issue here. Why would we create a law that would make it difficult for these people to conduct legitimate research using animals such that they would have to go to court to defend themselves about whether the use of those animals is cruel or not? That is at the heart of this concern.

People will say "but that is the medical group". No, it is not just the medical group. I have some documentation here and if I have time I will read it into the record as well. It is from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, from the fishermen's association and from the veterinary association. A lot of people are deeply concerned. Their concerns are not frivolous concerns. These are not people who have looked at this legislation and just have said it came from the Liberal government and therefore they would throw it away. Their concerns are not political concerns. They are legitimately concerned that this legislation will threaten, will paralyze, a legitimate activity that they want to do on behalf of improving the health and welfare of Canadians.

I want to review this briefly. What did the former minister of justice state at the time the bill was introduced? She stated:

...what is lawful today in the course of legitimate activities would be lawful when the bill receives royal assent.

If that is really what she meant, why would she then create legislation that really puts into question whether that in fact would be the case? Her statement in effect is self-evident. However, it is misleading. Of course the new provisions will not prevent legitimate activities from being carried out, but the law only prescribes illegal activities. The problem is, therefore, the concern that these new provisions arguably narrow the scope of what constitutes a legitimate activity. That is where the difficulty comes in. It is the scope of that activity. If it was not the minister's intent to prohibit the presently acceptable and legitimate activities in Canadian agriculture or fur industries, she should have amended the legislation to clarify the intent in those provisions.

Therefore, at best, in my opinion, the bill begs the question of whether it makes sense and whether it protects people. In practical terms I think it fails to do what the minister originally intended to achieve. I think that is a very major concern.

● (1220)

Let me be a little more specific with regard to farming. Farmers are constantly faced with challenges. They are influenced daily by weather, commodity prices, transportation costs and federal government intervention.

Most farmers would add certain animal rights groups to this list. Some groups target livestock producers, labelling them as cruel, inhumane and barbaric. I will provide an example that shocked me. I did not know that this had happened but apparently it has. The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, PETA, has launched an anti-dairy campaign targeting schoolchildren. It is essentially telling them that if children drink milk they are responsible for the torture of cows. Just imagine. Why would anyone do that? My colleagues and I in the Canadian Alliance, including my party's agriculture critic, are concerned that groups such as PETA are about to be armed with a powerful new weapon against farmers. I hope this never happens but apparently this is already taking place.

I certainly agree with the vast majority of Canadians that we need harsher penalties for those who deliberately abuse animals. Unfortunately, because of the way Bill C-15B is currently worded, many ranchers, hunters and medical researchers may be subjected to harassment and prosecutions and could be convicted of abuse even though they properly care for their animals.

We have two suggestions. The Canadian Alliance is demanding two major changes to Bill C-15B. The first is that the bill's definition of an animal must be amended. The current definition reads:

—a vertebrate, other than a human being, and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain.

Because this definition is too broad it could interfere with the abilities of farmers to eliminate pests and of researchers to find cures for diseases. We must change the definition.

Government Orders

Second, we are calling for the legislation to protect from costly, frivolous prosecutions those who legitimately use animals. Currently the criminal code provides protection from harassment and prosecution, but because the bill will move animal cruelty out of the property offences of the criminal code this protection effectively would be removed. The justice minister has the ability to introduce legislation that would strengthen and modernize the current cruelty to animals provisions of the criminal code without threatening those who legitimately use animals, but so far the minister has refused to be explicit in the legislation and ensure that the courts have no ability to interpret Bill C-15B in a way that parliament did not intend.

That is at the heart of this: that the courts not interpret the legislation in a way that was not intended by parliament. I do not think there is any quarrel from our side of the House about the intent of the legislation being noble. It is. Therefore let us word it in such a way that it indeed can achieve what it was set out to achieve.

Now I will speak to the other part of the bill, which for some crazy reason is in this bill but in my opinion should not be, and that is the amendment to the firearms act. What that has to do with cruelty to animals I do not know, but it was put together so I need to separate it out and refer to it in particular.

Mr. Speaker, I think you are very well aware, as are all members of the House, that as far as the Canadian Alliance is concerned the whole firearms registry and Firearms Act should be scrapped, repealed, done away with, but let me refer to a particular aspect of this amendment. It deals with criminal law. Criminal law is our most serious form of law. A violation of criminal law, including a violation of any prescription or regulation that exists by way of an order in council, and by the way this act does exactly that, can result in a criminal record and imprisonment.

It is therefore inappropriate to create criminal law that is not to be found in the act but must be sought in a maze of current, revised, overlapping and obsolete order in council regulations. Why is it so significant that this has gone through the regulations part? All of this stuff is dealt with in the regulations rather than in the law itself. While regulations made under the authority of orders in council may have a place in regulatory law, we submit that they should not be included in criminal law. The regulations are simply not sufficiently available to rely on them as a valid way of setting forth criminal law.

•(1225)

Those affected by them are not usually subscribers to the *Canada Gazette*. It would be inappropriate to believe that everyone knows them or can know them and they are not easily available to either crown prosecutors or defence lawyers. It is possible to know the criminal code and other criminal law and in fact it is the duty of us to know that. However, it is not possible to know the regulations unless one has a subscription to the *Canada Gazette* or makes it one's business to read it.

Mr. Speaker, I think you have read many of them and I am sure you recognize how difficult that exercise can be. The regulations change frequently and with insufficient publicity.

It is my understanding that in a recent court case the crown and defence lawyers argued the exact meaning of certain terms in a particular regulation. The entire case turned on the exact wording of

the regulation and was eventually decided by analysis of that wording. It was not the legislation, the act of parliament, but it was the regulation which is an act of the privy council.

The severity of that problem is well illustrated by a blunder enacted into law by parliament in the current Firearms Act and in particular, order in council, described as the Prohibited Weapons Order No.12 made by order in council 1992-1690 of July 23, 1992 and registered as SOR/92-471. I have to beg the indulgence of those who are watching because there is a lot of technical stuff. It was not registered as SOR/92-471. It was registered as SOR/92-599-01. SOR/92-471 was an earlier order in council that was replaced by SOR/92-599-01.

Similarly in subsection 12(5) a particular order is described as the Prohibited Weapons Order No. 13 made by order in council P. C.1994-1974 of November 29, 1994 and registered as SOR/94-741. It was not registered as SOR/94-741. It was registered as SOR/94-829-01. SOR/94-741 was an earlier order in council and was replaced by SOR/94-829-01

If you can make sense of all that, Mr. Speaker, you are very good. I had to read it several times to figure out exactly what was going on. It was a real mess. The crystal clarity of it is that it is a mess. That is the part that is clear.

The bill fails. It does not make sense because in my opinion it does not protect the legitimate activities of farmers, hunters and so on in their use of animals. Also, it delegates to regulation what should be in the legislation. If it cannot be enforced in legislation, why would the government relegate it to regulation? The government thinks it can be enforced in regulation what it has given up in legislation.

There are very serious problems with the bill. On the intent we agree and I want to repeat that. We totally agree with the intent of making it a more serious offence to abuse animals and to treat them cruelly. There is no problem with that. However some of the clumsy ways in which this is being introduced is so ridiculous that the bill should be withdrawn and redone. There are some things in the bill that are really worthwhile and there are other parts of it that should be thrown out.

•(1230)

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his eloquent speech. He lost me for a while with all those numbers, but nonetheless I found his speech was very useful in painting a picture of what is wrong with the bill.

Time and time again, instead of trying to bring all stakeholders together the government likes to pit one group against another. It is a divide and conquer mentality that does not bring people together. A perfect example of that is in this bill. I would imagine the majority of Canadians want to see significant legislation against cruelty to animals. The opposition obviously believes in that principle, as my hon. colleague said. The government should try to put together a bill that would bring people on both sides together.

Government Orders

People in the rural communities are obviously very concerned about the ramifications of the bill. Others from urban communities do not quite understand some of the contradictions that exist in the bill. Could my hon. colleague focus on that particular dichotomy? I think a lot of people unfortunately are confused by the government's way of approaching the bill and it does not understand why people right across the country would not want to support something like this.

Perhaps my hon. colleague could focus specifically on the fact that we in the opposition are in favour of protecting animals against cruelty. However a dichotomy exists and it is pitting landowners, agricultural producers, ranchers and all the people involved with livestock against people in urban areas who do not quite understand some of those delicate arguments and why we have concerns with the bill. If the member could focus on that for a moment it would help Canadians see why there is a problem.

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Edmonton has a way of putting one on the spot. That is one of the most difficult social, political and economic questions that exists in Canada today. There is a conflict between urban and rural people on certain issues and my hon. colleague has clearly articulated that difficulty.

There are some people, like those in the group PETA, who are actually under the illusion that people who drink milk are being cruel to cows. I grew up on a farm. I know what happens when a cow is lactating and producing milk. It would be cruel to the cow not to milk it. It needs to have the pressure released from the udder where the milk is collected.

It is a very serious issue that needs to be carefully understood. The hon. member asked me to be specific so I will be and it is the exact opposite of what the PETA group is trying to indicate.

An hon. member: Relieve the pressure.

• (1235)

Mr. Werner Schmidt: An hon. member said that we have to relieve the pressure. We have to relieve a lot of pressure in the House. There is extreme difficulty with certain urban members in the House who do not understand there are some legitimate farming concerns that are none of their business. They do not understand those issues and they should keep their cotton-pickin' hands off them because these matters will stand in their own way. For anyone in the House to believe that farmers, hunters and fishermen are deliberately cruel to the animals they depend upon for their income, health and welfare is a lot of nonsense.

I suspect that some members in the House really enjoy going to Hy's Steak House for a steak. How in the world can they justify eating that piece of steak, claiming it is okay but it is cruel to drink a glass of milk?

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my question follows up almost precisely on the comment my hon. colleague just completed with.

When I was at the University of Calgary taking my degree in political science, there were people from all the different political parties in our clubs office. They shoved Liberals, New Democrats, Tories, and Reformers at that time, all in the same office. It was a

hairy situation but at least we had some good arguments and got to know each other's points of view.

I remember one young Liberal, whom I will not name, who had gone through a metamorphosis, I guess we could call it. She had subscribed to the theory of anthropomorphism.

She started off as a meat eater. She ate meat, dairy, fruit, vegetables, grain products and all sorts of things that one would normally consider part of a healthy balanced diet. Then she went to university and started hanging out with a lot of Liberals, ivory tower thinkers and elitists. She eventually started to feel guilty about eating meat. She did not think it was healthy for her. It was not even a question of health. She felt that eating meat was morally wrong. It was a very bizarre scenario. She gave up meat. However, once one starts down the slippery slope, one can go pretty far, and she did.

She started off for the first few months thinking that she would not eat meat because somehow it was wrong to take an animal's life, despite the fact that is what they were raised for. In any event, she thought "I am not going to take an animal's life".

There are lacto-ovo vegetarians who consume dairy products, milk, cheese and other things derived from those sources. She eventually got to the point where her Liberal friends had convinced her that if it was not good for her to eat meat because it took an animal's life, then how could she in good conscience drink milk or eat cheese because in a sense the animal was being kept for the purposes of extracting the milk. It was an animal captivity issue then. She eventually quit drinking milk and eating cheese.

One would think that is where the absurdity would end but it did not. The slippery slope keeps on going. It gets slicker as one goes further down and the tangent goes further.

Based on talking with her Liberal elitist friends again, she decided she would not eat something that was a grain because the cutting machine had chopped the plant while it was still vibrant and living and able to stand on its own. I am trying to remember the argument but basically if the thing was still supporting itself, she determined that if one hacked it down and took the grain from the top of its stalk that was also harming a form of life. With anthropomorphism, why not have the strand of grain be just as valuable?

She eventually came down to the idea that the only thing she could eat was fruit that had freshly fallen from the tree because it was actually in the process of dying or decaying.

The question for my colleague is, has not anthropomorphism gone too far?

• (1240)

Mr. Werner Schmidt: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has included the answer in his question. He is absolutely right. Any particular position taken to an extreme becomes ridiculous.

The word we need to look at in all these things is balance. We need to look at what we are really trying to do and revert to the original principle. Does it make sense? Does it protect the legitimate interests and activities of law-abiding Canadian citizens or does it make it criminals out of people who are pursuing a legitimate exercise?

Government Orders

The hon. member has put it in perspective very effectively and accurately.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand and partake in the debate on cruelty to animals. This is the third time I have spoken against certain provisions of Bill C-15B. It is important to remind the House that the Liberal government initially brought the bill forward as an omnibus bill that brought together good pieces of legislation with the bad and the ugly. Today we are left to deal with the bad and the ugly.

The Canadian Alliance would not support a bill brought forward in that manner. We in the Alliance strongly opposed Bill C-15 and worked to have it split. We gave quick passage to the first part of the bill, Bill C-15A. Today we are debating Bill C-15B. My colleagues and I oppose Bill C-15B because it would have detrimental and far reaching effects on the farming communities and rural areas that constitute the majority of the riding I represent in Crowfoot in Alberta.

As I stated during debate on Bill C-5, the endangered species act, farmers do not need any more Ottawa made laws to drive them further into the ground. Many of my constituents, like those of all rural MPs including members on the other side of the House who appear poised to sell out their rural constituents, are struggling to survive. Our rural constituents are struggling to keep their farms viable. They are struggling to protect and preserve a way of life. They are struggling to provide for their families in the fashion to which they have become accustomed.

I will exemplify my point. For those here who do not subscribe to the *Western Producer* I will read the headline from March 21. It reads "Rural Exodus Hits Saskatchewan the Hardest". The article goes on to say Saskatchewan has lost 13,162 rural folk since 1996.

The province I represent, my home province of Alberta, experienced a population growth of 10.3% between 1996 and 2001, a rate that far exceeds the national average. The national average over the same period was about 4%. This shows Alberta has a growing economy and the population is portraying that. However Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan have all experienced what we call a population shift. This is prevalent and evident in my riding. Individuals are leaving the farms. They are leaving rural Alberta and moving into urban centres.

Alberta's saving grace has been its natural resources. It has been its oil, gas and tourism industries. The part of Alberta that has benefited most from the movement of population is the corridor between Edmonton and Calgary. It has seen the most substantive growth.

In September last year the Canadian Federation of Agriculture produced some facts about farm incomes. CFA president Bob Friesen said:

On the surface, the numbers might project farmers will be fine, but scratch the surface and you find a completely different picture.

From 1996 to 2000 total farm cash receipts rose by 12%. However when inflation is taken into account the increase drops to 5% in real terms. The numbers are also influenced by the livestock sector which has remained fairly stable and in some cases seen an increase. Crop receipts by comparison have declined by 14%. As the CFA president

pointed out, it is important to note that cash receipts do not indicate final farm income. They reflect gross revenue, not the input costs associated with farming.

• (1245)

Expenses for farmers rose by 13% during the same period. Fuel costs alone went up 27% and were expected to rise another 10% in the next year. Fertilizer prices were expected to rise 33% during that period. We stood in the House last year debating farm input costs. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture said that all in all the year 2001 would be remembered as an historic low point in Canadian agriculture due in part to increasing input costs but more specifically to the environmental conditions facing farmers.

Environmental and drought conditions are factors over which farmers have no control. Parts of British Columbia were hit by drought while wet conditions on Vancouver Island affected the apple crop. Alberta and most of Saskatchewan were so dried up that most fields looked like parched pavement. Walking through a pasture in Hanna I could feel the grass crunch and break underneath my feet. I saw dugouts that were with caked mud on the bottom. I watched grasshoppers part in clouds for a person walking through a pasture.

In parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba crops were lying in water, flooded out and destroyed. The drought experienced in the maritimes was made worse by an invasion of army worms that hit the potato and forage crops hard. While in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland blueberries were less than plentiful, Prince Edward Island horticulture crops were down 50%.

My colleagues and I are not prepared to stand idly by. Canadian Alliance members of parliament will not stand by and watch the demise of the family farm in our respective provinces. That is why we have fought so hard for agriculture over the past years and for a system that adequately meets the needs of farmers. That is why we are opposed to this piece of bad legislation before the House today.

As we get into the cruelty to animals section I will make it abundantly clear that the Canadian Alliance Party does not condone intentional acts of cruelty toward animals. We therefore fully support increasing the penalties for offences relating to such acts.

I do not think any Canadian believes behaviour such as mutilating animals or tying dogs to trees and beating them to death should be condoned. We need to throw the book at these individuals. However we are adamantly opposed to the broader definition of animal that appears in Bill C-15B. By including non-human vertebrates and "all animals having the capacity to feel pain" the new definition would extend legal protection to a number of living organisms that have never been provided that kind of protection in the past.

We are also opposed to the provisions of the bill that would leave farmers and ranchers open to frivolous or costly lawsuits for performing routine farm practices which have been commonplace for centuries.

Government Orders

At the outset when the bill came before committee a number of rural Liberal members of parliament gathered at the committee to share our reservations. However promises from the Department of Justice have obviously appeased their concerns. Despite the negative impact the bill would have on their rural constituents they now appear ready to toe the old Liberal Party line to the detriment of rural Canada.

The chairman of the Prime Minister's task force on agriculture, the hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant, has said that with the bill's assurances that any attempt to charge a farmer with cruelty would have to be vetted and approved by a crown prosecutor, an overwhelming majority of rural members are now able to support it.

The hon. member for Malpeque, Prince Edward Island, echoing the words of his Liberal colleague, has argued that the pre-study of cases before a judge and crown attorney would take frivolous actions out of the system so farmers would not have to pay for them or spend time in court. He claims this would allay a lot of our concerns. I will make it abundantly clear to the House that this would not alleviate the concerns of the official opposition Canadian Alliance. The proposition might even be cause for concern in that it would potentially cause an undue burden on judges, crown prosecutors and our already overtaxed judicial system.

● (1250)

I do not know the exact figures. However from the complaints I have had in my office it would appear to be taking an inordinate amount of time to move cases through the courts. We hear of instances where it is two months, six months or years before court cases get a date for hearing. It is unacceptable, and Bill C-15B would make a bad situation even worse.

Bill C-5, the Endangered Species Act, coupled with the legislation we are debating today and the potential prosecutions that would occur as a result of Bill 68, would put a tremendous strain on our courts which would hear cases against law abiding citizens based on unfounded allegations with no requirement of criminal negligence or mens rea.

For the past 50 years animals have been successfully protected under the special property section of our criminal code. We see no reason for the changes being contemplated by Bill C-15B. Historically animals have been classified as property under common law. During the feudal period when the law was first developed, cattle included oxen, cows, donkeys, mules, sheep, goats, horses and chickens and was considered a person's most valuable means of survival and wealth. As such cattle was a seminal form of chattel or personal property. It was viewed for centuries as chattel or property. The law regarding personal property was based on cases regarding rights of possession with respect to cattle. Because of its economic use and benefit cattle was recognized by law to consist of domestic animals, distinguished from pets, that in some cases were tamed, bred, and used for farming, food and draught.

As a farmer with a herd of cattle, although now that I have become a member of parliament it is a smaller herd, I can attest to the fact that we still consider cattle as property and one of the most valuable means of wealth and survival. This is especially true in the riding of Crowfoot.

Let us consider what it would mean for the people of Crowfoot, in Hanna, Oyen and throughout the riding, to take away cattle from the property section. As an owner of cattle it is my property. This puts me in the position of being its owner. Being an owner gives me the responsibility to look after that which is my property.

I can hardly wait. I can imagine what groups like the SPCA and others would do as they came out and saw cattle being neglected. The farmer would say they were not his property. He would say he had turned them out into stubble fields where there were bush patches. He would say he had turned them out in winter to go and secure their own food because they were not his property. However because I am the owner of cattle and they are my property it is incumbent on me to look after that which is mine.

To reiterate an earlier statement, we in my party see no reason for the definition of animal to be expanded. For these reasons alone we in my party are adamantly opposed to Bill C-15B.

With respect to the part of Bill C-15B that would amend the Firearms Act, I stand by our party's longstanding position that we would repeal Bill C-68. I stand by our reasoning for not introducing amendments within this section of the legislation. With 22 pages and some 63 clauses of firearms amendments, Bill C-15B is a clear admission by the Liberal government that Bill C-68 was a complete and total failure.

Bill C-68, the hallmark of the Liberal government, consisted of 137 pages of new laws with respect to firearms and weapons. It has failed. The first enabling regulations introduced in November 1996 added an additional 85 pages while those introduced on October 30, 1997 added approximately 65 pages to our changing firearms laws.

It is important to note, especially for those who were not here in 1995, that there was a provision in Bill C-68 that stipulated that when amendments were made to the bill the amended regulations would not have to be reviewed by parliament. The justice minister could enforce or enact firearms regulations without parliamentary review if the regulations in his or her opinion were "immaterial or insubstantial" under subsection 119(2) or urgent under subsection 119(3).

● (1255)

To date the government has enacted legislation using these subsections 16 times. Furthermore it has failed to report these changes to the House as required by the Firearms Act. The government failed to report them to the House until the Canadian Alliance, the official opposition, exposed this and it was forced to. Effectively, these regulating powers negate our parliamentary system of checks and balances which are supposed to ensure that the government of day does not use extra, autocratic or dictatorial type of powers.

Government Orders

It may be immaterial and insubstantial. It may be urgent in the opinion of the Minister of Justice, or it may be material or very substantial and it may not be urgent at all in the opinion of parliament. To my colleagues who represent large rural constituencies their firearms are viewed perhaps more as a tool than as a weapon. Regardless of our opposition and animosity to the Firearms Act we must be apprised of any and all changes to the legislation in a clear and concise fashion. All Canadians must be aware to avoid unintentionally breaking any of these encumbering laws.

Despite what the Minister of Justice said in defence of Bill C-68 there still remains serious criminal repercussions for Canadians who fail or inadvertently fail to properly register their firearms.

Bill C-68 created three different penalties for failing to register a firearm: a maximum penalty of a summary conviction procedure of six months or a \$2,000 fine under firearms section 112; second, a maximum term of imprisonment of five years on summary conviction under the criminal code subsection 91(1); and finally, a different penalty for knowingly neglecting to register a firearm with a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years under the criminal code subsection 92(1).

Bill C-68 also provided the Minister of Justice with almost autocratic powers that Canada has not seen since the War Measures Act. Subsection 117(15) of the legislation empowered the justice minister to declare any firearm that in his opinion is not reasonable for sporting or for hunting purposes to be declared a prohibited weapon by a simple order in council which is immune to judicial or parliamentary review. Talk about losing rights. Talk about the rights of the property owner and the gun owner being set aside, actually pulled away.

Subsection 104(1)(b) of Bill C-68 states:

An inspector may not enter a dwelling-house under section 102 except with the consent of the occupant or under a warrant

However, if consent is not given the Firearms Act empowers police and inspectors to obtain a warrant to enter a home even where no evidence exists to believe that a crime has been committed or is about to be committed. Prior to Bill C-68 section 101 of the criminal code prohibited entrance into a dwelling house without a warrant except in cases of fresh pursuit. A warrant could only be issued or obtained when a police officer had reasonable proof that a crime had been committed or was about to be committed.

The intrusive nature of Bill C-68 and the huge powers that are being bestowed on the Minister of Justice alone demonstrates why the legislation was and still is viewed as an attack against decent law-abiding firearm owners. It is an unjustified attack.

• (1300)

Firearm owners support measures aimed at reducing the criminal use of firearms. The Liberal government has never shown how this ill conceived piece of legislation, with its mountains of regulations, complicated regime of licensing and registration, would accomplish this one simple objective. It has never shown and never been able to prove that Bill C-68 would reduce the criminal use of firearms.

Bill C-15 and Bill C-5, the endangered species legislation, as well as Bill C-68, pit rural against urban, are confrontational wedge issues against rural Canadians and their way of life. That is why Canadian

Alliance members will continue to fight for the constituents that they represent and that is why we remain opposed to these Liberal made laws that insult and disrespect our rural lifestyle.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague talked about some of the firearms aspects in the bill. I would like him to give us his words of wisdom and thoughts on this.

The Liberal government across the way wants to restrict firearms, encourages the grabbing of guns, wastes nearly \$1 billion, lusts over the concentration of power, brings forward an unjustified act and burdens us with complicated regulations. With all those nasty things that the government has done I want the folks at home who may be watching to think about this as well.

Why has the government not done some really concrete things that would reduce crime and go after criminals and the criminal misuse of firearms? Why has the government not increased the budget for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police? Why has the government not increased the budget for the armed forces or for the coast guard to ensure that no terrorists enter this country? Why has the government not looked at those who have a history of violence and focus on them? Why is the government not focusing on keeping prisoners off our streets and keeping our streets safe? Why is the government continuing to encourage early parole so that some serious repeat offenders get turned back out on the street? Why is it that the government treats people who are charged under the Young Offenders Act with kid gloves thus allowing them to go out and re-offend until they finally commit a heinous crime as an adult and get stuck in the prison system? Why is it that the government has sex offenders in our jails who do not have mandatory rehabilitation and counselling?

These are all tangible things. The government operates under the perverse logic that it would register all firearms belonging to law-abiding people and spend \$1 billion doing it, but by golly it would not spend money to make sure that persons who are a good risk of re-offending stay behind bars longer or serve their full term in a jail cell or that the resources are put out on the street to try to find some of these creeps.

It boggles my mind how the government would fritter away and waste our taxpayers' dollars on something that would aggravate a lot of law-abiding people across the country and make criminals out of honest folk, when there are such obvious things it could have done such as going after people who misuse firearms who are the real problem.

Government Orders

I know where the problems are. The Kingston jail about one hour south of here is full of problems. There are a whole bunch of rapists, murderers and the whole nine yards in that jail. However the government sees fit to spend money going after law-abiding gun owners rather than going after criminals and ensuring that they serve their full sentence or are unable to make million dollar appeals with regard to conditional release. That ought to send a shiver down the spine of every single taxpayer in this country. The government has misplaced priorities and does not go after the real problems, but it would frustrate innocent civilians.

An hon. member: No registration of pedophiles.

Mr. Rob Anders: That is another good example. My colleague beside me said that the government does not go after some of the creeps who are pedophiles and create a registry of them. Why does it not do tangible things? Why does it not do the stuff that would produce real results so that people walking the streets would feel safe? Instead, it would blow \$1 billion on a registry that does not have any tangible proof of a benefit, but it would not put money into the RCMP or the coast guard or any of those types of things that would result in real effects on the bottom line of crime. I would like my colleague to comment on that.

• (1305)

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, the very simple answer is because we have a Liberal government in power. I believe it thinks in the far recesses of its mind that people are basically all good, that there is never anything negative, evil or wicked and it is environment that changes everything.

Everyone is good but if there happens to be a firearm available people will use it. It is not the individual who is wronged. It is the fact that a person has access to a firearm that brings about a huge scope of wickedness and evil.

Let me make it abundantly clear that the Canadian Alliance believes that individuals who use a weapon in the perpetration of a crime should be given the maximum sentence possible. We should throw the book at them and we should make it so that they are unable to ever secure the property of a firearm again because they have shown that they are irresponsible and unable to make the choices that would make the society in which we live safe. Consequently, we then take away the right of people to hold, have and secure a firearm or whatever weapon.

When I listened to the excellent question that was asked by my friend from Calgary I was reminded of the election campaign in 2000. I entered the nomination late. I was not sure exactly what the main pressing issues in Crowfoot would be. I thought it would be agriculture and the tax burden that was facing Canadians.

I am reminded of when I went to Oyen, a community which neighbours my colleague from Medicine Hat in the south end of my riding. I sat down and spoke with I believe someone by the name of Perry who owned a farm implement dealership. He asked about the firearm legislation. He said he had never broken the law in his life and now all of a sudden he was being put into a position where he could be a criminal and may face a prison term if he refused to register his firearms. I remember leaving that meeting having told him that we would immediately repeal Bill C-68 and have no

intention of turning any legitimate firearm owner into a criminal in this country.

I remember going to one of the grocery stores in Oyen. I was handing out brochures and came across a rancher who I am sure was six foot ten. He wore a big, black cowboy hat. I told him I wanted to give him a brochure. He asked what it was? I told him it was a political brochure and that I was running for election in that constituency. He said he did not take political brochures. Now I am six foot one and a half and I stood looking at this guy. He asked what I would do with the firearms legislation? He said that he used firearms regularly, sometimes daily on the ranch. He asked what I would do about it? I told him we would throw it out. Then he asked me for a brochure. It is a way of life.

I want to get to some of the other questions. There must be changes to our prison system. This is my passion. We must give more respect to our police force by first of all showing that we are committed to increasing the numbers of police officers across this country. We want to see prisons bring back—

• (1310)

The Deputy Speaker: I know there is a lot of wanting around today. The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake.

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-15B, which deals with cruelty to animals changes to the criminal code and various changes and amendments to the Firearms Act.

As a cattle rancher from Manitoba, I and the Canadian Alliance support very strongly that cruelty to animals be prohibited. We strongly support that persons being cruel to animals should be heavily fined. There should be heavier penalties than what is in the current legislation. Courts and crown prosecutors should be fully funded so they can take action against those who are cruel to animals.

There are other aspects around the cruelty to animals amendments which have nothing to do with cruelty to animals. It has to do with the philosophy being put forward by animal rights groups, humane societies and others in society. They would like us ultimately to get to the same point as some sects in India that sweep away a bug in front of them in order not to step on it and harm an animal.

The legislation is very bad. Why did we end up with these aspects in the cruelty to animals part of the bill? The reason is that animal rights groups have circulated letters stating that in fact they take full credit for getting the current Minister of Health elected in Edmonton. They can take credit for it and I am sure they had a big impact, but that is not the way government works. A minister is to govern for all Canadians, not just a little pressure group, a group of animal rights promoters.

Who has the minister turned against in Canada? Let me quote a pretty significant individual in our country. This has to do with medical research. For crying out loud, that is the first group the health minister has turned against, people in medicine and specifically medical research. I will quote Pierre Berton, the senior patron of Canadians for Medical Progress Inc. Remember, we are talking about the health minister. He said:

Government Orders

In my opinion this [C-15B] is an asinine, ludicrous approach toward solving the problem of animal abuse...if passed in its present form, creates a disturbing potential for the animal rights movement to begin a step by step process involving litigation and the incremental influencing of legislation, congruent with putting their spin on "public education".

How precise this gentleman of letters is. This gentleman writes books that convey to Canadians the very essence of being Canadian. He describes so clearly what is wrong with the animal cruelty legislation.

What do we do about it? As I go through my speech, I want the backbench Liberals who have an opportunity to vote according to their constituents and according to what learned people like Mr. Burton have said, to stop the legislation. I want them to kill it and come back with legislation that increases the penalties for cruelty to animals to make sure we can prosecute those who are cruel to animals.

Who else besides the medical people are against the bill? The health minister comes from a big agriculture province, as do many of the other Liberal members. In fact, every province has agriculture.

● (1315)

Every livestock group in this country is against this cruelty to animal legislation. It puts farmers, ranchers and fur producers under the gun with the threat of being taken to court by a group of people that is pushing the issue. That group of people is the justice minister and the Liberal government.

The former justice minister, who is now the health minister, started all this business. I do not understand why the Liberals are so against agriculture, farmers and ranchers and the use of livestock for human food. I do not understand why they are against furs for warmth and the whole economic activity that those industries create.

The essence of the cruelty to animals bill has been stated. The status of animals is properly in the criminal code and should be maintained. The defences of legal justification, excuse and colour of right should be explicitly maintained for the legitimate use of animals. Of course, the definition of animal as is currently in the bill should be amended. Defining an animal as a vertebrate other than a human and having the capacity to feel pain is what will be used.

As Pierre Berton would say it is furthering the animal rights agenda. It is reaching to the point where under the law, animals are equated to human beings with the same rights and I was going to say obligations, but I do not think that could be there because animals are not human beings.

The other aspect of this bill is the firearms provisions. On the firearms provisions, the House passed special funding legislation this past winter in order to put another \$114 million into the firearms registry budget. That brought the budget up to around \$150 million for the past year. This coming year it could get even higher. Certainly it is not likely to be less. It is approaching \$700 million or maybe more. We will have to see what the actual figures are. We have to question whether or not that is wise spending on the firearms registry.

On the animal cruelty changes, there are some good changes and some bad changes. In the firearms legislation that is presently being amended, there are no good changes.

The Canadian Alliance stands for firearms control in Canada. Canadians never were allowed to carry around registered handguns as a matter of course. There was legislation. I was a police officer for 30 years. If there was an indication that a person was going to harm somebody else with a firearm or by any other means, a police officer could get a court to take those firearms away. The police officer could get the court to prohibit the person from having firearms if the person was considered to be dangerous.

Let us look at how registration worked with handguns. I cannot remember any criminal case that was ever solved in my 30 years of police experience and I worked in drug dealing in Winnipeg which is a major centre. I worked in rural policing for 15 years. The registration system never worked for solving any crimes whatsoever. It simply ensured that the legislation did not allow handguns to be carried around.

● (1320)

I support that. I do not want handguns carried around in the streets. However, we do not want to make it so that firearms owners cannot shoot them at the local shooting range. Who was carrying around unregistered handgun? The drug dealers, those in organized crime, those who were running the prostitutes on our streets. They did it in spite of firearms registration. That is who we are talking about here, criminals who need to be taken care of in our legislation and judicial systems.

Honest law-abiding citizens are on the other side. It is absolutely ludicrous to pass laws and spend \$700 million in order for these people to perform the purely administrative function of buying a licence. Why could that \$700 million not go to Gimli, my hometown in Selkirk—Interlake, to the centre for abused women. Unpaid volunteers help out at that centre. They struggle and try to do the very job the government is not doing because it is blowing money away on a foolish registration system for rifles and shotguns that will do no good.

With my broad range of experience as a police officer for 30 years, I say that is not the case. Right away the minister will say that the police chiefs love this legislation and think it is the greatest thing in the world. I reckon if I were a police chief getting \$100,000 a year from the federal government to run my association, I would probably be in favour of the legislation too.

That is a sad commentary. According to an animal rights group, the Minister of Health, who is the former Minister of Justice, owes her election to its activities. The payback is that she has said "Do you want this legislation? The farmers and ranchers are all against it but we are going to give it to you."

Government Orders

That is what she is saying to those groups that say the only thing they will ever accept is if there is not one firearm in this country except those carried by the police and the military. They are trampling on the rights of every Canadian who legitimately owns that property. They are saying that the firearm registry will make it so miserable and tough for Canadians that they will eventually give up and say "I cannot have firearms because the government is going to charge me. It has made so many laws that it will lay charges for travelling around with a rifle or a shotgun, for not registering it, or for not filling out the right form to transfer it".

I can guarantee that if the government stays in power, we will end up with the justice minister picking on every little iota of a description of an offence in that act in order to take away the guns of every Canadian.

The ministers cannot cater to one group. They are supposed to be governing for all Canadians. They are catering to these little groups.

I am 100% in favour of prevention of crime. I am 100% in favour of what we had prior to this legislation in regard to keeping handguns off the streets. Prohibited weapons such as sawed off shotguns and fully automatic firearms were prohibited before this legislation. It was good legislation. We had a safe country.

The other day the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice was speaking about statistics. The first statistic I would like to talk about is the court challenge that the provinces, seven of them in any event, including the Northwest Territories, had with the firearm registration. It went to court in Edmonton, Alberta.

●(1325)

I know some of the justice lawyers too. I was in charge of a proceeds of crime unit in Winnipeg and did some of the initial work on the legislation that the government brought forth in order to seize assets from organized crime and from drug dealers in particular.

At that court challenge the justice lawyers brought in statistics to show how great the legislation was and how bad things were, that there was not legislation in place. They quoted the RCMP. They said the RCMP had put out statistics substantiating the position of the government and its legislation.

It was challenged in court by the lawyers of the province. Lo and behold the statistics were drastically misused. In fact the RCMP subsequently publicly said that the justice department had misused its statistics and what the government lawyers had said in court was not true. It should have been a contempt of court.

Let us look now at the justification of the parliamentary secretary. He was trying to substantiate how great the legislation is. He said that in 1998, 63% of all female domestic homicide victims, as if there were no male victims of any kind of crime, were shot with ordinary rifles and shotguns. Holy samoly, that has to be a large number.

Let us look at the facts which are quite clear. It is 63% of what the total deaths, or homicides, of victims were and that number could very well be 10 or 15 of the total. Then the rifle, whether it was registered or not, would have been just as lethal. The problem was not with the rifle or the shotgun. The problem was the individuals who were under tremendous stress for whatever reason did not have

social services or did not have the abuse centres or did not have a government funded organization that could help them with their mental problems. That \$700 million would go a long way in Selkirk—Interlake to help people with those kinds of problems.

Registering these guns will not help stop this kind of abuse. That is the injustice of this firearm legislation, and a terrible waste of the moneys that we see being put into it.

I would like to see a comparison. If I spent \$700 million across the country to prevent spousal abuse, instead of spending it on registering rifles and shotguns, I swear to God I would save a lot more lives. The money would be spent on social services and helping people with problems rather than on making criminals out of honest, decent citizens.

I think I have made my point that the government has misjudged this legislation. I ask that every Liberal backbencher look at the cruelty to animals legislation and the firearm legislation. I ask them to stand up and represent their constituents the way they know they should, send the bill back, kill it now, and come back with good legislation, the kind they know should be in there. That is what I would like to see.

I would like to move a subamendment to the amendment of the member for Provencher. I move:

That the amendment be amended by adding:

"and that the committee report back to the House no later than June 21, 2002."

●(1330)

The Deputy Speaker: I will consult with the table. In the meantime, I will follow up with questions and comments.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member for Selkirk—Interlake very intensely. He came up with a couple of questions in regard to the legislation and maybe I can help him.

He said that he could not understand why the government would do this to the farmers and ranchers. If we go back and look at what has happened, most farmers and ranchers are independent people. The government just hates independent people. If they are not dependent upon the government, they probably will probably vote for it. Therefore, it will do everything possible to hinder the independent people of the country in order to include them in the system it wants to create, and that is a system of dependency upon the government. That way it will get more votes in the next election. That is my read on that. I hope that will help the member to some extent. I would also like him to comment on that.

The member is an ex-police officer who dealt quite extensively with the criminal element, particularly in the areas of drug dealing and prostitution, with many chances of running into people with firearms. How many people who go out with the intention to shoot someone or to hold up a bank actually register their firearms? Has he ever run into a case such as that?

Government Orders

He used the figure of \$700 million as the cost of the registration of firearms up to this point. The word that I have had is that only one-third of the program has been implemented, which means there is still two-thirds to be implemented. Therefore, if it has cost us \$700 million for one-third, what will the other two-thirds cost us or will we ever get there? That is another question that goes through my mind.

However, this is one thing that Canadians should know about the firearms legislation. The legislation has to do with more than just firearms. For those people who do not own a firearm or have grave concerns with this act, particularly Bill C-68 and firearms registration, it goes outside the bounds.

What we have done is set a precedent with this legislation which gives the minister the right to deem whatever he or she thinks is a danger without it coming before the House of Commons to be debated. If we allow one minister to do that, we set a precedent for other ministers to do that. This is happening in a country which we have all been led to believe is a democracy, where all things should come before the people. Through orders in council and through this side door type of thing that has been put into this policy, most people out there do not understand that. It becomes much larger than just a firearms piece of legislation.

This could pertain to everything that we have in the country. It could pertain to the Health Act. What is to stop the government of the day, sitting over there in its arrogance, from giving this right to every other minister in the House? I would like the member to comment on that.

An hon. member: They do it all the time.

Mr. Darrel Stinson: Yes, it does it all the time. That is right.

• (1335)

Mr. Howard Hilstrom: Mr. Speaker, those were pretty precise comments in regard to the whole issue of ministers, but I would like to speak briefly on the concept and the question of the independence of the individual.

Canadians are individuals. We have individual rights under the charter of rights. What we do not have are property rights to own property. That is something that was missed in the days of Mr. Trudeau and it should have been done. It does not mean that just because people are independent thinkers that they do not have concern for their neighbours, or that they do not want them to be safe and secure or that they do not want their neighbours to practise whatever religion they may want. That concern for neighbours is carried by people who think independently as well as those who want to think in a more collective way.

It is wrong to label firearm owners as those who do not have any concern for their neighbours. I pointed out that the Canadian Alliance will have firearm legislation. It will have control of criminals. It will punish criminals and do it in a way that is cost-efficient. That \$700 million at the present time, and as my learned friend said that is only two-thirds of the way which could be another \$400 million or \$500 million yet to be spent, could go to health care and social services to help prevent many of the crimes that the Liberals will just watch happen. In five years they will wring their hands and say that they do not understand why the gun legislation

did not prevent spousal abuse. It is because they did not use the \$700 million to help those people. This is a compassionate, Liberal government? I see no compassion.

My learned friend talked about firearms and the tracking of them by the RCMP. If my firearms were stolen from my house, I would have given the serial numbers to the RCMP. It has computer systems. The serial numbers and firearm descriptions are entered in the computer system. Every policeman has access to that. If policemen seize or find firearms in vehicles, for example, they can check the serial numbers in the computer system. This is all in place. It could use some refinement and some enhancement from the days I was there, but we did not have to go to where we are now.

The member also asked about seizing firearms which I personally had an opportunity to do, especially while I was doing drug work. Every firearm that either I or my partner seized were handguns or sawed off shotguns. The sawed off shotguns were prohibited weapons anyway so they were pretty easy to seize and get a conviction on. The registration system for the handguns that was in place and which Canadians had to obey. The drug dealers did not obey it. In my whole life I never saw a registered handgun seized from a drug. I swear to God that right in downtown Ottawa today, if we could mysteriously see which drug dealers were carrying firearms, we would not find any of them registered. They are bloody criminals. I cannot believe the government does not understand crime when we look at what it does with our tax dollars.

• (1340)

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I wonder what would happen in his neck of the woods, in Selkirk—Interlake, if he was to ask his constituents how they would spend that \$700 million. Would they rather see a twinning of highways or irrigation projects or would they rather see that money put toward the confiscation of firearms?

I was also going to touch on section 745 and the million dollar appeals it cost for Clifford Olson to appeal under a sure bet clause with regard to the criminal code and court challenges programs that allow prisoners to contest how many choices of toothpaste they have. However I will leave my question with the member.

Mr. Howard Hilstrom: Mr. Speaker, there are limited amounts of money and resources in any given country. The government has clearly said that it does not have any more money to help agriculture and farmers with drought conditions. It has denied Saskatchewan \$5 million and has told the other provinces that there is no money available for them.

This shows me that the resources are limited and that they should be used in the highest priority areas. Using them for registering the rifles and shotguns of law-abiding citizens should not be a priority area. The priority areas should be against criminals and for health care.

The Deputy Speaker: Before I resume debate, I want to report to the House that the subamendment proposed by the member for Selkirk—Interlake is in order. Debate will continue on the subamendment.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak today to Bill C-15B.

Government Orders

Before I begin my speech, I would like to say how deeply saddened we in the opposition were that the government chose to originally bring in Bill C-15 with completely disparate issues attached to it.

The new bill, Bill C-15B, also has two disparate issues, one dealing with the Firearms Act and the other dealing with cruelty to animals. These issues should be two separate bills so members could vote for or against them.

Those of us who have strong feelings for or against one issue and a different view on the other issue should not have to vote a certain way. When the government connects two disparate issues it compromises our ability as members of parliament to do what our constituents want us to do.

It reminds me of the situation in the U.S. congress where a particularly good bill will move forward but suddenly have an attachment to it with a completely different issue that has nothing to do with the intent of the original bill and as a result the whole bill is bombarded, destroyed and cannot move forward.

It is actually a way of kiboshing a particular issue and compromising our ability to work and the ability and concerns of Canadians to move forward. The government should never do this again. If it were truly interested in dealing with issues, such as animal cruelty and firearms registration, which are both important issues, it should do so in two separate bills and not one.

Having said that, I will deal with the two issues separately, the first one being cruelty to animals. There is not a person in the House who does not want to see legislation toughened up to deal with those miserable, disgusting, bottom feeding creatures who would take out their frustrations in life upon defenceless, innocent animals. Worse than that, we see a disturbing pattern of behaviour in people who do this, particularly when they are young.

Psychologists and psychiatrists will tell us that there is a strong link between the abusive and violent actions of an adult against persons or animals and the actions of the same adult as a child. In fact, a child who displays the systematic desire to harm animals is showing a big warning flag that he or she may grow up to commit violent abuses as an adult. We are very cognizant of that.

As a party we have certainly fought for and would support good legislation that would strengthen the penalties to ensure that individuals who commit those atrocious acts will be brought before the full force of the law.

Sadly, however, that does not happen today. We have heard of cases where dogs have been roasted, boiled and tortured, as have other domestic animals, and the individuals who committed those acts receive slaps on the wrist. The Canadian public and indeed everyone in the House wants to see things toughened up. The question is whether Bill C-15B is the way to go.

We have heard in the House from members on all sides that there is a vast number of individuals who work with animals who are deeply concerned and do want to ensure that animals are not abused but who will not support Bill C-15B and the elements within the bill that deal with animal cruelty.

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association is one of the groups. Surely if there is one group above all others that has the best interest of animals at heart, it is the men and women in the veterinary sciences who work day in and day out to relieve the suffering endured by animals. Obviously these individuals would in no way, shape or form want to see these animals suffer and yet they are opposed to Bill C-15B because it leaves such loopholes that it opens up individuals in their profession to litigation.

How could the government not have seen that the bill would leave veterinary doctors open to criminal prosecution for cruelty to animals?

• (1345)

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association wants those people who work in the veterinary field to be exempted from the code regarding cruelty to animals. It does not want veterinarians being penalized so it has asked that they be excluded from the bill. In the interests of veterinarians, the association is absolutely right.

If we use the same logic, it can be applied to other groups, such as farmers and other people who work in the agricultural field. These individuals work with animals. They work with animals to feed us every single day. We cannot have a bill that enables individuals to prosecute people who are doing their job and treating animals humanely within the context of Canadian law.

Unfortunately, people with extreme views on the issue would like to see animals treated in exactly the same way as human beings. While on a certain level there is some sympathy for that, the fact is that we own animals, we kill animals and we eat animals in order to survive. Those are the facts of life.

As Bill C-15B is written it would enable extremist groups to prosecute individuals who are doing their job to feed us.

If the government wants to do anything on this issue it ought to look at whether or not animals are treated humanely in agricultural practices. It should applaud and support those individuals who are treating animals fairly, those who work in animal husbandry, while prosecuting those individuals who treat animals with disrespect and with cruelty in the field of animal husbandry. That is what the government should be pursuing if it truly wants to have animals treated in a fair fashion.

Canadians for Medical Progress is another group I want to talk about. This group advocates for individuals involved in the biomedical field. Bill C-15B would allow individuals who work with animals in the field of biomedical research to be prosecuted by again those extremist groups who are opposed to animal testing. They dispute the necessity of animal testing.

I must say that those of us who have family members who suffer from cardiovascular, pulmonary, neurological disorders and a vast array of other medical problems, it is absolutely essential that we test our new medical treatments not only on people but also on animals. It is a fact of life and we cannot get away from it.

Government Orders

When I was doing some biomedical research as a student we worked on larger mammals. We were always cognizant and fearful of groups that would go into the University of Toronto to try to free the animals. Bill C-15B would enable those types of groups to not only shut down research that is essential for our health but it would also enable them to prosecute researchers who are engaging in lifesaving research for all of us.

We had a code of conduct when we worked in those labs. We had a stern set of regulations that told us what we could and could not do for the humane and ethical treatment of those animals. I can tell members that while those animals were euthanized at the end because they were from the pound and were going to die any way, they were treated with the most utmost respect. They were treated so that they would not have any pain in the course of the research and experiments that we did.

The fear these scientists have is that they believe, and I think with a great deal of legitimacy, that they could be prosecuted if the bill is passed. I will give the House some examples of why they feel this is so. They feel that the definition of animal is too vague and that it should be applied to warm blooded vertebrates only.

• (1350)

Also, as my party has said, the bill at a minimum should reinstate animals as property. That is essential. This does not preclude our ability to implement and institute good, strong, tougher laws that will protect animals against cruelty. Researchers make this point. Many of us own animals and some of us breed them. Some animals are used to feed us. They are property. Increased penalties can easily be incorporated under the property section to protect animals from cruelty. That is what should be done. That is what biomedical researchers would like to have done. As they have said before, if the bill passes and if it gives individuals the power to prosecute them, which it does, then we are killing biomedical science research in Canada.

The second half of the bill deals with the firearms legislation or Bill C-68, which was passed in the House some time ago. Bill C-68, the firearms registration act, was labelled as a bill for the protection of the Canadian public. When it came out, my colleagues and I were appalled. We were appalled but not because we were against public safety: Bill C-68 did the exact opposite.

It seems almost counterintuitive. Who would not be in favour of legislation that would prohibit criminals from acquiring guns and ensure public safety? Everybody in the House is in favour of this. We were labelled as a party that was against gun control, but I will dispel all of that today as I did in front of the justice committee when Bill C-68 was put together. At that time I took apart the then justice minister's comments piece by piece based on the facts.

Fact number one is that this party is in favour of protecting civilians and in favour of gun control, but we are not in favour of stupid gun control that will make Canadians less safe. I will explain why. Bill C-68 is chewing up \$600 million. The question is, can that money be better used somewhere else? That is the question at hand.

One of my Liberal colleagues said that he could not believe I was against this bill because he claimed it would save lives. I asked him how much he thought a life was worth. In reply he said that no

amount of money could be placed on the value of a life. He said the government would spend any amount of money to save one life. I told him that in economics there is something called an opportunity cost. If people put money into *A* versus *B* they had better get more bang for their buck in *A* than in *B*. That is the problem. The sum of \$600 million will not give someone more benefit in *A* than in *B*. That amount will not save more lives as it is currently used. It will actually decrease the number of lives saved. That money ought to be used to put police on the ground. We should have money for our customs officers. We should have money in our courts to prosecute those individuals who are using guns as weapons for illegal purposes.

One of the arguments used by the government was that the bill would make our streets safer. Based on police facts, a criminal does not purchase a gun, take a course, wait a period of time, apply to the government and then commit an act. The criminal gets the gun illegally from the United States, often a smuggled gun, and then commits an act of violence. That is where criminals' guns come from. Criminals do not get a firearms acquisition licence from the government. They do not take courses. They acquire their guns illegally.

If the government were truly interested in public safety, it would do the following. First, it would toughen up our borders and provide more customs officers there. Second, it would ensure heavier penalties for the use of a gun in the commission of an offence. Third, the government should ensure that the law is enforced. The public would be shocked to know that in regard to violent offences a weapons offence is often plea bargained away to get an expeditious conviction on another offence. Or if the person is convicted on the weapons offence, the weapons offence penalty runs concurrently, not consecutively. What kind of a penalty is that?

• (1355)

There is something I used to be disgusted about when I worked as a jail guard. I used to see people committing multiple acts of violence. The penalties for their criminal acts and weapons offences were added to their sentences concurrently. The criminals would laugh about it. They would laugh and say there was no penalty for using weapons.

S. O. 31

The government's second argument is that there would be fewer suicides if we had gun control. My party supports gun control. We support firearms acquisition certificates and courses. We support waiting periods so that people who are violent, have psychiatric problems or are a threat to society would be able to take the courses.

My time has partially run out. I assume I will be able to continue—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca will have the opportunity to continue his intervention after question period. He has approximately four minutes remaining.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House of the considerable contribution being made by the federal government in the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, through the Canada—Quebec Infrastructure Works Program.

More than \$740,000 will be invested in infrastructure in this riding by the Government of Canada. Among the projects that have been approved is the replacement of the water treatment facilities and improvements to security in different areas.

This program was set up under an agreement between the federal government and the Quebec government. Approximately one third of the costs are covered by the federal government, the rest being provided by the provincial and municipal levels. Some projects also require investment by the private sector.

This is good news. The quality of life of the people of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles will be improved through these projects.

I am proud of this government. It is sensitive to the needs of all of the regions of Quebec.

* * *

• (1400)

[*English*]

WHISTLEBLOWING

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Corporal Robert Read, a 26 year RCMP veteran, is being fired from his job tomorrow for blowing the whistle after he found evidence of suspected wrongdoing related to serious security breaches, infiltration of the immigration computer system, corruption, fraud, bribes, abuse and cover-up in Canada's foreign office in Hong Kong.

He reported it to his superiors who shut down the investigation and attempted to cover it up. Then he reported it to the RCMP ethics commissioner, the public complaints commission and the auditor general. After five years the issue was still not addressed so he reported it to the media.

The auditor general's 2000 report confirmed that proper security controls do not exist at Canada's foreign posts.

The Liberals have not only failed to keep their election promises of legislating a mechanism for whistleblowers and offering impartial hearings but they have punished whistleblowers one after the other.

We know the solicitor general will not award a medal to Corporal Robert Read but will he at least ensure that this whistleblower will not be fired so that the wrong message will not be sent to potential whistleblowers?

* * *

[*Translation*]

TOURIST INDUSTRY

Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 9 I had the pleasure of announcing on behalf of my colleague, the Secretary of State responsible for Canada Economic Development, the renewal of a three year agreement which will enable Montreal to enhance its international profile even more.

The funding agreement between Economic Development Canada and Tourisme Montréal totals over \$5.2 million. It will be used to raise the profile of Montreal on the international market, via publicity and promotional activities, greater use of the new information technologies, to attract more business tourism and to continue the development of pleasure tourism.

Tourism is an industry with indisputable effects on the economy of Quebec and of Canada.

This is just one more example of our government's actions to make Canada and Montreal top tourist attractions.

* * *

[*English*]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I draw the attention of members of the House to a special event taking place in which young people all across Canada can participate. I am speaking of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Name The Foal contest which is currently underway this year for a batch of new RCMP foals.

The RCMP and the musical ride horses are a source of immense pride for Canadians, and Canada's national police force is asking for help from children across Canada to name six foals that will be born this spring at the RCMP breeding farm in Pakenham, Ontario. Some of these young horses may one day be part of the world famous RCMP musical ride, and this is a special opportunity for young Canadians to play a part in naming them. Entries must be received before May 31, and online entry forms and other information can be found at the RCMP's website.

I ask that all members join with me in encouraging young people across our country to enter the contest and take great pride in one of our important national symbols, the RCMP, and its famous musical ride.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the atrocities and human rights abuses I witnessed in Sierra Leone have led me to the firm conclusion that there can be no peace without justice.

Consequently, I am very pleased and honoured to inform the House that earlier today the cause of justice and human rights took a major step forward with the 60th ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. This means the ICC will enter into force on July 1 of this year, Canada Day. The date is perhaps very fitting since Canada was the first country to pass comprehensive legislation to implement our obligations under the Rome Statute and we have long been a world leader on the ICC.

Most importantly, the ICC will end impunity for unspeakable evils such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Therein lies the profound significance of today's ratification.

I invite the House to join me in congratulating all those who have worked so hard toward making the ICC a reality.

* * *

DENTISTRY

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the generosity and compassion of the University of Alberta Faculty of Dentistry and students from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

On April 6 I had the privilege to attend "Open Wide", a one day dental clinic supplying free basic dental care to those unable to afford it. The treatment took place in the dental clinic in the department of dentistry at the University of Alberta. In order to target those most in need of care, patients were booked by public health clinics and aid giving agencies especially those working with new immigrants.

Between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. dental services were provided to nearly 500 people by approximately 300 volunteers. That is over \$65,000 worth of dental care provided free through the hard work of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

I ask all members of the House to join me and the people of Edmonton in thanking Dr. Raborn, the Dean of Dentistry, along with the faculty, staff, students and professionals who donated their time and resources for their neighbours in need.

* * *

• (1405)

[Translation]

HONNEUR AU MÉRITE COMPETITION

Mr. Claude Duplain (Portneuf, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in March the Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré Chamber of Commerce gave out awards to the winners of their "Honneur au mérite" competition.

The main purpose of this competition is to honour the spirit of entrepreneurship among the business people of Beauport and Côte-de-Beaupré.

There were awards in six categories: retail, industrial, startup business, service, tourism and job creation.

S. O. 31

I felt it was important to mention this excellent demonstration of the dynamism of the business people of Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré.

* * *

CATHERINE BERGERON

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on April 1, a 28 year old woman from Jonquière, Catherine Bergeron, did the best deed that can be done: she saved a life.

Brothers Frédérick and Karl Jobin were driving on Université boulevard in Chicoutimi, when their car dove 150 feet into the Langevin River. Catherine Bergeron happened to be walking along the banks of the river and helped Frédérick Jobin, who was trapped in his car, which was quickly sinking into the river. In the end, she was able to free him.

Catherine Bergeron demonstrated great courage that cold spring afternoon, and did not hesitate to put her life in danger to save another.

Catherine Bergeron deserves official recognition from the different levels of government, who must commend her act of bravery and her selflessness.

* * *

[English]

CURLING

Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada, Prince Edward Island and the House of Commons are extremely proud of our Canadian Junior Ladies Curling champions, the Suzanne Gaudet rink of Summerside, P.E.I.

Twice Canadian champions, once gold medallists and now bronze medallists at the worlds, the Gaudet rink is one of the most successful junior curling rinks in the history of Canadian curling.

I want to congratulate once again the rink members, skip Suzanne Gaudet, third Robyn MacPhee, second Carol Webb, lead Kelly Higgins, alternate Shelley Nichols and coach Paul Power. I and all Islanders are very proud of their accomplishments.

The rink members will be honoured this Sunday afternoon, April 21, by the city of Summerside where they will accept their much deserved tributes for their athletic prowess, their exemplary conduct whether they won or lost, and for being superb ambassadors for Canada and for P.E.I.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the government's Kyoto campaign continues today in Calgary where the environment minister is delivering his well rehearsed chicken little, sky is falling speech.

S. O. 31

It appears however that he does not want to risk any true dialogue with Albertans on the issue. He is speaking in a room so small that it will only hold 40 people and only invited guests may attend. One has to wonder how the government will arrange the upcoming public consultations and whether it will be the same sort of sham.

Also, the government has not made clear to the public that clean air is not the purpose of Kyoto. There are many much less expensive ways to clean our air, reduce smog and cut back on acid rain than a flawed greenhouse gas treaty.

As has happened with the minister's ridiculous cross Canada tour, the government continues to suppress information and dialogue which could easily yield far better solutions to our environmental problems than the Kyoto accord.

* * *

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on April 17 we will celebrate the 20th birthday of the charter of rights and freedoms. The *Globe and Mail* reports that since coming into force the charter has had a profound effect on Canadian lives and ranks as former Prime Minister Trudeau's greatest legacy.

A public opinion survey shows the charter is popular in all parts of Canada including Quebec, and with all age groups. The charter protects individuals as well as groups of citizens. Former Chief Justice Antonio Lamer said it is there to protect the innocent. Groups such as aboriginals have benefited in many ways. In addition, governments now have to respect charter rights when they write legislation as in the case of the Anti-terrorism Act.

The charter is an evolving document described by Justice Iacobucci as a work in progress. As such, the charter will be useful as we write new laws regulating new technologies and the human condition.

* * *

● (1410)

HEALTH

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Canadian HIV-AIDS Legal Network released a significant report on establishing safe injection facilities in Canada.

I applaud the report because it powerfully outlines the ongoing public health crisis in injection drug use and the need to follow the successful models developed in Europe and Australia to make safe injection sites part of a comprehensive approach to improving the health of drug users and the community as a whole.

In the downtown east side the death toll continues to rise because simple, effective life saving measures like safe injection sites have not been allowed. This landmark report calls on the federal government to create a regulatory framework to govern safe injection facilities. It also calls on the Minister of Health to grant ministerial exemptions to allow facilities on a trial basis.

This Sunday at First United Church, right at the epicentre of this health epidemic, a demonstration site will be set up for a week. I implore the Minister of Health to show leadership and support the

report and the community advocates who are displaying such courage in working for these critically needed health measures.

* * *

[Translation]

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during the last federal election campaign, Liberal candidates made promise after promise to assist development in the region of the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands.

A year and half later, people in the region are still waiting. The Liberal member from Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok has a bad record and, like his government's record, it borders on the ridiculous.

The socioeconomic situation in the region is worsening. People are leaving in droves and time is ticking away without any action on the part of the Liberal government. To put it simply, because of the federal government, Forillon is expanding, as the Gaspé saying goes.

According to the group l'Action des patriotes gaspésiens on its website, the Liberal member from the Gaspé peninsula has done nothing for the region, that is right, zero. He ran as a hero; 18 months later, he has gone to zero.

This Gaspé organization's website also makes reference to the former minister responsible for Quebec. The fast-track promised at election time quickly became a slow-track. That is what Liberal promises add up to.

* * *

CANADIAN FORCES

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to the excellent work done in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the members of the battle group from the 3rd Battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment during rotation 9 of Operation Palladium.

Supported by a reconnaissance squadron from the 12th Armoured Regiment of Canada, a battery from the 5th Regiment Light Artillery of Canada, the 52nd squadron of the 5 Combat Engineer Regiment, a helicopter detachment and an electronic warfare troop, the battle group's mission was to maintain a climate of security and stability for the local population by ensuring that the belligerent armies respected the military provisions of the Dayton accords.

Our troops helped to create a safe environment for the development of peace and stability in an area of operation 30% larger than Prince Edward Island. Other members of the 22nd Regiment, the battle group of the 2nd battalion, are already at work in Bosnia as part of rotation 10.

The professionalism, courage and dedication of our troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a credit to their units, the Canadian Forces—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Cumberland—Colchester.

[English]

MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC): Mr. Speaker, there is action that Canada can take to help stop the violence in the Middle East. One of the things we can do is press to have the United Nations Refugee Working Group reinstated to deal with the hopelessness of the Palestinian refugees. If we are to stop the suicide bombers and the terrorist acts we must address the frustration and hopelessness in the camps.

As chair of the United Nations Refugee Working Group, Canada is in a unique position to lead an international group of representatives which could provide some relief. We must do everything we can to convince the countries involved to reinstate the United Nations Refugee Working Group as one tool to stop the violence in the Middle East.

* * *

[Translation]

WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ATHLETICS

Mr. David Price (Compton—Stanstead, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the eve of the World Championships in Athletics held in Edmonton in the summer of 2001, Sherbrooke, Quebec, was chosen as the site for the international federation's 3rd World Youth Championships in Athletics. They will take place from July 2 to 6, 2003.

The Secretary of State for Amateur Sport recently announced funding of \$7 million from the government for these championships to be held. During this international event, over 2,000 athletes aged 15 to 17 from 165 countries will participate in 39 athletics events. The event will also have a beneficial impact on tourism and the economy in the region.

On behalf of the Parliament of Canada, I strongly encourage people in the Sherbrooke area to take part in this international event.

* * *

• (1415)

[English]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Reed Elley (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, with the lack of a softwood lumber agreement many of my Nanaimo—Cowichan constituents have been economically devastated. Mills have closed, shifts have been reduced, personal bills are not being paid, and families are hurting.

I call upon the government and the minister of HRDC to truly understand the dire consequences that are affecting these people right now. My constituents have told me what they need in this difficult time and I ask the minister to consider their request carefully. They have asked that there be an extension of Employment Insurance benefits for softwood lumber employees.

They are asking for a hand up, not a handout during this difficult time. They simply want to live through this nightmare and get back to work. They ask that there be more money available for retraining in order to achieve new economic security as well as funds to relocate to other jurisdictions where greater employment opportunities exist.

Oral Questions

Finally, my constituents ask the federal government to work with the B.C. government and industry to create economic stability and diversification particularly in the value added sector due to the lack of free trade in softwood lumber.

I ask the government to hear the needs of my constituents, yes as taxpayers, but most importantly as fellow human beings.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

G-8 SUMMIT

Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we always knew that the government was taking security in the country lightly but we never knew how shockingly indifferent the government was until today.

The government has carelessly and foolishly put extremely sensitive documents related to the upcoming G-8 summit on the Internet. Does the government believe that terrorists and others who would disrupt this summit cannot surf the web?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that allegation is in fact inaccurate. The information that was made available through the MERX process for bidders is widely known already. As a matter of fact, the Kananaskis convention centre has most if not all of that now on its website.

Finally, the RCMP have said that this does not pose a security problem for them.

Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am sure our G-8 partners are very happy now that the minister has made that statement, but security experts, experts in the field, have said that the government's move was rather stupid and naive, while others have warned that Canada's international reputation will suffer.

How can the government assure our partners that their heads of states and governments will be safe at Kananaskis, not to mention the safety those who live in that area?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member claims he is quoting a security expert. I have quoted to him the Royal Canadian Mounted Police of Canada. As far as I am concerned, they are security experts. They say there is no breach.

Finally, as I said before, most if not all of that is on the Kananaskis convention centre website right now.

Mr. John Reynolds (Leader of the Opposition, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, since the government has made the head of the RCMP a deputy minister we have had a lot of assurances from the RCMP about the government. It is not acceptable to the Canadian people.

Oral Questions

The preparation for the G-8 meeting has been bungled from the beginning by the government. As we heard yesterday, Hezbollah terrorists have boasted to CSIS, which is government too, that they have the ability to launch terror attacks in this country at will. The Ressam case made it clear that we have a problem with terrorists in this country. How much will this appalling lack of judgment add to the overall cost of security at the Kananaskis summit?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps that question was preprinted and there is nothing wrong with that. Somebody has to write these things ahead of time, but the facts do change things.

The RCMP have said that there is no breach in this particular case. I have already indicated that to the hon. member. He might want to go to the lobby and consult the Kananaskis website. It is a public facility. The layout of the building is known by everyone else. Perhaps he can ask his colleague, the member from that area. He would brief him on this.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I feel sorry for our RCMP, for once again the Liberal government is calling on them to run interference on this G-8 breach of security.

This is nothing more than a national embarrassment that it has to clean up.

I understand that this unprecedented security effort will cost more than \$100 million. Will it cost another \$100 million to revise the plans? Did it ever dawn on public works to have the RCMP review the information before it was posted on the Internet?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the information that was utilized is similar to that used at the Quebec City summit. In both cases it was approved, and it has been reviewed now by the RCMP, afterward, and the conclusion is still the same. The hon. member probably regrets to know that the RCMP have said that this does not pose a security problem.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, only under this government would we give dangerous protestors, thugs and terrorists detailed information on how to breach security successfully.

It is one thing for the government to swallow this embarrassing situation, but how would it explain the injury or death of a world leader due to its reckless handling of security at this summit?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that kind of fearmongering is totally unnecessary, accomplishes nothing and certainly does not enhance security.

The hon. member should join the rest of Canadians as we welcome world leaders to a very beautiful facility in his own riding.

* * *

• (1420)

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Minister for International Trade is telling us that the situation

must be examined in connection with providing any additional assistance to workers and companies affected by the softwood lumber crisis. Yet the situation is clear and the programs in place are insufficient. In Quebec for instance, plants have been closed and hundreds of workers lost their jobs. Many have exhausted their benefits.

Since the worst is yet to come when the American sanctions kick in, does the minister realize that special measures must be adopted now in order to help the workers and the companies to get through this crisis?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are continuing to monitor the situation very closely. We are continuing to consult the provincial governments, including the government of Quebec. We are continuing to work with the industry.

We are very much aware of the situation of the workers in Quebec and everywhere in Canada. I can assure you that my colleague, the Minister of Human Resources Development, is keeping extremely close tabs on this as well. This situation holds the attention of our government, and we are going to do what is required to work for our citizens.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is all very well to work for them, but how about actually helping them? The minister cannot take no action, except to want to work for them.

The United States is going to lose its case with the WTO. They realize this, but their strategy is to drag out the crisis, to bleed the Canadian and Quebec industry dry, and to get a bigger share of the market. We know that is what their strategy is.

Will the minister acknowledge that, barring special measures, the small sawmills in Quebec and their workers will no longer be around to take advantage of full free trade once the WTO has decided in Canada's favour?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that, when a minister says his government intends to work for the workers, he obviously means that it intends to help them with the programs available to it.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the softwood lumber trade war is hitting business and workers in Quebec's regions hard. We know that the American strategy is to kill time until the final decision, which will inevitably eliminate Canadian players from the market if nothing is done.

Given that we are well aware of the Americans' strategy, would it not be responsible for the minister to act immediately to support the industry, thereby avoiding bankruptcies that will inevitably occur unless appropriate measures are introduced?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I see that the opposition is repeating its question. I am therefore quite happy to repeat my answer.

I can tell the member opposite that we have established a very productive dialogue with the industry. The industry is proceeding with its own consultations at the moment in order to determine the best way for us all to react, to protect our rights and our citizens' and our communities' quality of life.

• (1425)

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the reason we are repeating our questions is that we have yet to get an answer from the minister.

The minister constantly refers to relying on existing programs to deal with the softwood lumber crisis.

Is he able to comprehend that this is a temporary crisis, one that is being produced artificially by the Americans, and that it requires appropriate and carefully targeted measures, particularly in Quebec, to prevent permanent plant closures? Does he understand this?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Joliette will have to exchange his hard line tone for a different one soon, if he hopes to be elected to the National Assembly. The tone he is using is not the constructive one that is helpful when working in government.

We intend to work in a constructive and positive manner, as we have been doing, incidentally, with the government of Quebec.

I would therefore recommend that the member change his tone to the more appropriate one that will be required, given the ambition that he may have.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Winnipeg—Transcona.

* * *

[English]

FISHERIES

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of fisheries and it has to do with the continuing problem of overfishing on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

I say to the minister, it is called the Grand Banks of Newfoundland for a reason. It is not the Grand Banks of Estonia or Spain or anywhere else. They are our fish. If other countries were allowing their nationals to steal our resources on land we would do something about it. We would arrest them.

I ask the minister of fisheries, what is he doing to stop overfishing on the Grand Banks now, not in September, not after all the fish are gone, but now so that the fishery might be saved?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his interest. I advise him that it is not the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, but rather the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The problem we have had with overfishing, of course, as the member knows, is on the nose and the tail of the banks which are in international waters regulated by NAFO, of which Canada is a member. It is incumbent on every member country to assist with the

imposing of the regulations on their fishermen from their member countries, so we will continue to work with them.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it would not be international waters in the first place if the Liberals had not given it up in a mistake they made a long time ago.

My question is for the Deputy Prime Minister in his capacity of jurisdiction over borders. It has to do with the need for a third crossing of the Detroit River in Windsor. I wonder if he could tell us whether the government is prepared to fund that third crossing, and a third crossing that does not go through Windsor and increase traffic problems, but one that bypasses the city and helps cross-border trade at the same time.

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have created not only a strategic infrastructure program but also a border infrastructure program in the last budget.

Obviously the border crossing at Windsor-Detroit, which is, as the hon. member knows, I am sure, the most active border crossing in the world between any two countries, takes a huge percentage, about 25%, of the total truck traffic between Canada and the U.S. across that border crossing.

We are very well aware of the need for infrastructure investment at Windsor-Detroit. I will be looking carefully at how to best allocate the funds in order to get the optimal result.

* * *

G-8 SUMMIT

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, publishing the seating plan for the G-8 leaders meeting in Kananaskis raises again the question of the security of the split site summit, where, in the Prime Minister's words, overflow delegates—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order, please. It is impossible for the Chair to hear the question of the right hon. gentleman. Even he might say something out of order. It happens from time to time in the House. The Chair has to be able to hear the question. The right hon. gentleman has the floor.

Right Hon. Joe Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Publishing the seating plan for the G-8 leaders meeting in Kananaskis raises again the question of the security of this split site summit where, in the Prime Minister's words, overflow delegates will be housed in Calgary.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister guarantee that all of the G-8 leaders will be staying at the Kananaskis site or whether there will be additional security risks of ferrying one or more leaders to and from Calgary? If they are ferried, will that be on their own aircraft under non-Canadian control or will it be by Sea King?

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the entire House has already recognized the contradiction from the right hon. member.

On the one hand he is saying that the seating plan has been made public, then he wants to know the details of where everybody will be staying and to make that public in the name of national security which has just been broken.

I now know why the right hon. member, particularly today, has such interest in seating plans.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Obviously this interest is widely shared, but I have to be able to hear the question from the right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, since the government is publishing on the Internet the details of the G-8 summit, would the Deputy Prime Minister agree to spell out to parliament exactly how much money this split site summit will cost?

Will that statement of cost include the extra costs of securing the vast countryside around Kananaskis, the preventing of squatter sites, the cost of special overflights, the cost of security of delegates travelling between the two sites, the cost of burying fibre optic cable between Calgary and Kananaskis, and, what would the summit have cost if it had been held only in Calgary?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will try to answer some of the 13 questions that were just asked by the right hon. member.

He has asked about what he refers to as information being made public. I have here the site of Kananaskis Mountain Lodge, a facility known to just about everyone else. I would think someone from Calgary would know where it is. On its site it has the actual plan of the facility. I have it here and I am willing to table it. That is a public site made by that corporation.

* * *

• (1430)

FUNDRAISING

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, as far back as four years ago, CSIS warned the government that Hezbollah constituted a threat operating in Canada. The RCMP has said that people who donate to Hezbollah have no guarantee that the money does not go toward terrorist activity. John Thompson, director of the MacKenzie Institute and an expert on international terrorism, has said “The political arm and the military arm of Hezbollah are...the same”.

This week Hezbollah continues to rocket-bomb innocent civilians in the Middle East. Who specifically in the government actually is rejecting the advice of the RCMP, CSIS and experts on terrorism and recommending that Hezbollah should be allowed to continue to raise funds in Canada?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I answered the question yesterday in the House, the government is completely against fundraising for terrorist activities in this country. We have listed institution after institution. We are in

the forefront of those countries that are following the United Nations regulations in denying fundraising to terrorist institutions.

We have made a distinction, as has the British government, between one aspect of Hezbollah's activities, and we have clearly indicated that any fundraising for terrorism for terrorist activities by Hezbollah in this country is not allowed under Canadian law. If the hon. member has any indication, any proof otherwise, we would be quite happy to examine it with him to see whether—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla.

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question yesterday. He did not answer it today.

I have said very clearly that the RCMP, CSIS and international experts say that fundraising for Hezbollah in Canada could well be going to terrorist activities.

I will ask it just a little differently, but I will ask it again. Who specifically in the government and on what basis does the government overrule warnings from the RCMP and CSIS that possibly put Canadians at threat? Who is doing it and on what basis?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I totally reject the allegation that the government has overruled recommendations from CSIS and the RCMP. The government has made an analysis of the situation, which I have explained in the House on several occasions. We are seeking to allow legitimate fundraising activities for humanitarian purposes in this country, which in every other country are also allowed.

We also have a strong policy against allowing any fundraising for terrorism of any kind. I once more ask the hon. member, if he has proof of criminal activity of the type that he is alleging here in the House, to bring it to us and of course we will examine that. We are interested in the security of Canadians and in achieving peace in the world.

* * *

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the existing EI program does not provide adequate support for softwood lumber workers, who are bearing the brunt of the trade war between Canada and the United States.

Does the Minister of Human Resources Development not understand that the labour market training funds to which she constantly refers are not the best solution in the circumstances, since everyone's goal is to support the workers temporarily unemployed in the softwood lumber industry, and not to send them back to school?

[English]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. member that the employment insurance regime is a comprehensive regime with a number of different tools that can be used and brought to bear in times like this.

I would remind him that we were able to use these tools successfully in supporting the airline industry through a very difficult patch and it is my expectation that we will be able to use them flexibly and efficiently in this case as well.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Minister of Human Resources Development and her colleagues in the departments of Justice and Immigration, who made promises about employment insurance in the regions during the election campaign, to go on a little tour with me.

I invite all three of them to pick an area, be it Lac-Saint-Jean, the North Shore, eastern Quebec or Abitibi, and come and repeat to softwood lumber workers who have been laid off the pat answers the minister is giving us in the House.

Will she take up this challenges and accompany me on a visit to our workers?

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we have worked very effectively in the communities the hon. member mentioned. We have particular programs and strategies that are there to help those who work in the natural resource sector, whether it be tourism or the forestry industry.

We will continue to do that and I would ask him to suggest to his counterparts in the government of Quebec that they work effectively with us, using the close to \$600 million that it receives every single year for purposes like this.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is shameful. The Prime Minister's taste for the good life comes at the expense of our troops. After a trip on a rented luxury jet, it took just 10 days and \$100 million for him to buy two for himself.

I would like to ask the minister of defence, when did he first learn of this purchase? I encourage him to take his time and to try to remember his briefings.

Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the problem really is that the hon. member has asked the same question several times and he still does not get the answer himself.

These are not luxury aircraft. They are more efficient replacements for a couple of existing aircraft, but we continue with all of our military programs. It does not impact upon any of our procurement. The government has spent billions of dollars in the last few years in procuring new equipment or upgrading existing equipment. We have increased the budget of the Canadian forces by some 20% and another \$5 billion to come over the next five years.

Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is about priorities: 10 days for the twin flying Taj Mahals, and 21 years and we still do not have our Sea King helicopters.

Oral Questions

Why can the government not give the same level of priority to the safety of our troops that it gives to the comfort of the Prime Minister?

Hon. Art Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these are not luxury aircraft. I have said it at least a dozen times and he does not seem to get it.

We are continuing to provide for the needs of the Canadian forces. We are supporting them with the kind of equipment, the training and the improvements to their quality of life that are necessary for a proper, functioning Canadian forces.

* * *

● (1435)

[*Translation*]

THE MIDDLE EAST

Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in response to my question concerning the urgency of action to put an end to what Shimon Peres himself described as a massacre, the Minister of Foreign Affairs astounded me by replying that I was proposing that Canadians invade the Middle East.

Are we to understand that from now on the Canadian Forces acting under article 7 of the UN Charter who are called upon to intervene to save the lives of those threatened by conflict would be labelled invading forces?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's question did not address that article. The hon. member is well aware of the difference between articles 6 and 7 of the UN Charter.

In order for a military intervention under article 7 to be accepted, it must obtain the approval of the Security Council.

Should such approval be obtained, Canada would do its part. This, however, is not the case at the present time.

Ms. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): I am smiling at that, Mr. Speaker.

The information available—incomplete as it is because the press is barred from the reoccupied territories—indicates that not only have there been hundreds of fatalities, but as well health, education, transportation and communications infrastructures, in large part financed by the international community after the Oslo accords, have been destroyed.

If the minister refuses to invoke article 7, despite the fact that it calls for UN emissaries and observers to be dispatched if the peace is broken, even if the parties do not agree to this, what is he proposing then?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we are proposing is what we have been proposing in the House for some time: to help Mr. Powell with his mission. The violence absolutely must cease. Mr. Power is now in that region.

Let us all help him in his undertakings so that resolution 1402 can be applied and we can now have the opportunity to intervene in the region because of the very serious humanitarian issues.

Oral Questions

We are calling upon Israel and the Palestinians to put an end to the violence and we are calling upon Israel to allow humanitarian intervention in the region, this being more important than any other type of intervention at this time.

* * *

● (1440)

[English]

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on March 26 the British Columbia supreme court destroyed the effectiveness of our child pornography laws by protecting the rights of child sexual predators to glorify violent sexual acts involving children.

The Minister of Justice has been silent on the issue. Why will the Minister of Justice not stand and tell Canadians that the British Columbia court made a mistake in throwing our children to the wolves?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member of parliament has raised a very serious question.

We all know that the government is firmly committed to protecting children in Canada. We have within the criminal code sections that have been declared valid by the Supreme Court of Canada. We are acting in a very dynamic way. For example, Bill C-15A is creating a new offence.

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today Focus on the Family launched a nationwide anti-child pornography campaign. Its leadership came to Ottawa today to speak on behalf of thousands of Canadian children put at risk by the court decision.

Will the Minister of Justice support this effort by condemning this dangerous decision and by taking steps to end the legal licence the courts have handed child molesters?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, based on his own experience the hon. member knows full well that I cannot comment on the case because it is still before the court.

As I said, the government has been very active. It is looking very actively into the matter. For example Bill C-15A creates a new offence. Of course we are open for discussion. We are looking very actively into the matter. We have provisions within the criminal code that strike the very delicate balance we need in order to have an effective tool in fighting child pornography.

* * *

PARLIAMENTARY PRECINCTS

Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Middlesex, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today the Minister of Public Works and Government Services made an announcement concerning the new parliamentary precinct building project. Can the minister tell the House what the project is about?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, following the support demon-

strated by all parties not only in the House of Commons but in the other place, I have announced today the construction of the first new parliament building to be constructed in 70 years.

This will be a brand new facility for members of parliament. It will create thousands of jobs for the people building it. It will be a magnificent structure supported by all parties in the House of Commons.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the country has had to endure the shame of the tainted human blood tragedy. Now we have to deal with the tainted human tissue scandal.

The health minister will know from recent reports that her department knew about brain tissue patches taken from human corpses and possibly contaminated with the Creutzfeldt-Jacob virus as early as 1987. Appropriate measures were not taken by Health Canada and many Canadians continued to be implanted with this brain tissue as late as the mid-1990s.

Will the government now launch an inquiry into this terrible sequel to hepatitis C?

● (1445)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find the approach of the hon. member, in creating fear and scaremongering, really very distressing in these important matters of concern to Canadians.

In relation to the specific example she referred to, which is the use of human dura matter in certain surgical procedures, let me inform the House that as of today the Department of Health has suspended the medical device licence of Tutoplast Dura which is the only remaining human dura matter device on the market in this country.

* * *

LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS

Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. It relates to the controversy surrounding Jim Palmer and the \$25,000 contribution to the Minister of Finance's leadership campaign from an oil company in Alberta. The same Jim Palmer had a contract with the Department of Finance.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister support a recommendation from the Chief Electoral Officer that the rules that now apply to general election campaigns for disclosure of financial contributions be expanded to leadership campaigns in order to achieve full transparency and restore the public trust in this country's political system?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, some of the alleged facts referred to in the preamble of the question are in fact incorrect.

Oral Questions

While not at all accepting those allegations, I would point out to the House that the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer have been presented to parliament. The Chief Electoral Officer has appeared before a committee of parliament. Those recommendations are under consideration. In due course the government will offer its response in consultation with all members of the House.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Last week another Russian trawler landed in Newfoundland with a manifest showing over 1.5 million pounds of fish and 35,000 pounds of fishmeal. Seventy percent of this catch was undersize and four more Russian trawlers unloaded similar catches.

The minister of "I will look into the matter" still plans to wait until late September to address overfishing.

Since the government will not raise the issue at the G-8 environmental meeting this week, will the minister agree to immediately call an emergency NAFO meeting to be held in Newfoundland to address the issue of foreign overfishing?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the incident to which the member refers has been investigated and it turned out to be false. It was not a problem at all. There was no illegal fishing involved with that boat.

We reviewed the allegations for the other ships. Those ships have been investigated also and it turns out that those allegations were improper or were false.

I can assure the House that we will continue to monitor the situation. We will verify every boat that we have to and do all the enforcement we have to do. We will work with our colleagues, visit our colleagues and if we need an emergency meeting, we will ask for one.

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, the minister's officials state that all vessels were in compliance with the rules of NAFO. The only reason they are in compliance with the rules is because there are none.

How can the minister justify this blatant abuse when 70% of the catch is undersize, which means it has not even reproduced yet, and the catch included significant amounts of cod and American plaice, both species which are under moratorium?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that the allegations he is presenting are not true.

There are regulations to NAFO. There are regulations and we are going to work with the countries to make sure that they help us in enforcing the regulations. We enforce them in Canada. We do it properly. We expect the same of all our partners.

● (1450)

JUSTICE

Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is time the justice minister did the right thing and raised the age of consent. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a person under 18. The current age of sexual consent is 14.

In this country we tell 14 year olds that they are too young to drive, too young to drink, too young to vote, too young to smoke. Does the Minister of Justice really believe that a 14 year old grade nine student is old enough and fair game for sexual activity with, say, a 40 year old adult?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that issue was raised during our last federal, provincial and territorial meeting. It was part of a discussion. As well, as we all know, consultations are taking place at this point in time, so let the consultations proceed.

Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, last year the Canadian Police Association and the provincial justice ministers passed resolutions calling for the age of consent to be raised.

Children across the country are being sexually exploited every day. A 1999 Department of Justice paper said "the present age of consent is too low to provide effective protection from sexual exploitation by adults."

When will the Minister of Justice do the right thing and raise the age of sexual consent?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has been very active with regard to the issue of sexual exploitation, as we all know.

We know the section within the criminal code with regard to the age of consent. As I said, it was the subject of an extensive discussion at our last federal, provincial and territorial meeting and there are consultations under way.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the harp seal consumes almost 40,000 tonnes of cod annually off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. The same department says that up to 500,000 seals a year could be hunted. But the limit in the seal management plan for 2002 is 275,000.

In light of this, will the minister agree to an increase in the seal quota for the next five years?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his excellent question. This is now being discussed with my provincial colleagues in the Atlantic region and Quebec, including Nunavut.

Oral Questions

I have had provisional discussions with the FRCC and with members of the panel on the situation of the seal in North America, in the North Atlantic, and I will take these considerations very seriously.

Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we know that there is pressure from certain groups to lower the seal quota. Experts, however, maintain that it should be increased, and soon, in order to protect the resources.

Will the minister tell us whether he intends to follow the advice of the experts and raise the seal quota immediately?

Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to do so, but a few discussions must still be held. First, we must make sure that there is a need, that there is a market for these seals, that it is used properly and that the resources can sustain a higher take. It seems that this is the case. Discussions are under way, and I would like to be able to announce this soon.

* * *

[English]

LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGNS

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister says that no ethical guidelines were broken with Mr. Palmer and his fundraising activities but now Mr. Palmer has quit his advisory role and the \$25,000 cheque has been returned.

My question is for the industry minister who is responsible for the ethics counsellor. Will he table the guidelines for ministerial fundraising in leadership campaigns?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Wilson has said to the press that he is considering whether guidelines should be recommended to the Prime Minister. I am sure in due course he will decide whether or not to make that a recommendation and the Prime Minister will take it under consideration when he receives it.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this issue raises the point that the ethics counsellor is not sufficient. The Liberals promised, as they well know, an ethics commissioner reporting to parliament, not to the Prime Minister.

This question is for the industry minister whose responsibility this is. Will we have an ethics commissioner reporting to parliament so that these guidelines will be public, not a secret to the Prime Minister?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, cabinet conduct is the responsibility of the Prime Minister. That is where it rests in the British parliamentary system and that is where it should be.

As for reporting to parliament, I am sure the hon. member knows that Mr. Wilson has frequently appeared before parliamentary committees. If the hon. member wishes to see him before a committee, I am sure he will be happy to attend and answer all his questions.

[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the exodus of young people to large urban centres is a significant damper on the economic development of regions.

Can the Secretary of State responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec tell us what he plans on doing to help the regions of Quebec?

Hon. Claude Drouin (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle for his question.

In 1997, Economic Development Canada was already addressing the issue, setting up the EDC strategy in co-operation with the CFDC.

Since then, the agency has invested almost \$26 million, benefiting more than 1,500 young entrepreneurs. Some 4,580 jobs have been created or maintained in various communities throughout Quebec.

All told, there has been \$102 million in investments created thanks to co-operation by the Government of Canada.

* * *

●(1455)

[English]

AIRPORT SECURITY

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Ontario's tourism minister, Tim Hudak, announced that Ontario will study the impact of the Liberal air tax because the tax could cost the province 200,000 tourists this year. WestJet's vice-president, Mark Hill, mentioned nine Ontario cities that are going to be hit hard by this tax.

The transport minister is from Toronto and he has failed Ontario. Why does the Government of Ontario have to step up to the plate and do the transport minister's job?

Hon. David Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member has been otherwise engaged in the past few weeks, but he has to pay attention to the answers given by the Minister of Finance and the secretary of state for finance on the air security charge.

The hon. member has not, as usual, read the release that was put out on April 1. He does not recognize the fact that the government has tightened up regulations and has spent \$100 million since September 11. The new authority has assumed liabilities of another \$128 million. We will be putting \$220 million into new equipment. This has to be paid for. It cannot be paid for out of thin air. Even the Alliance should understand that.

Business of the House

[Translation]

RADIO-CANADA

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Canadian Heritage spoke out against the wage discrimination between men and women at Radio-Canada.

Will the minister send the corporation an equally clear political message that she finds the salary discrimination which exists between Quebec and Moncton employees and those in the rest of Canada just as unacceptable?

Hon. Sheila Copps (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will follow the advice I received yesterday from the member or from one of her colleagues not to meddle in the negotiations.

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the present time, the entire francophone and francophile population of Quebec, New Brunswick and the rest of Canada is being deprived of essential information, both on culture and on sports, because of the lockout imposed in March by the management of Radio-Canada.

Yesterday, francophone news employees met with us and the corporation management broke off negotiations.

Since when are citizens punished for going to speak with their elected representatives?

Does the minister find this behaviour by Radio-Canada's management acceptable?

Hon. Claudette Bradshaw (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time for all those concerned, and any speculation as to the solution to this dispute could be harmful to future negotiations.

It must be understood that our mediators are in the process of talking with both parties, and I am asking both parties to return to the table and reach a good collective agreement.

* * *

AIRPORT SECURITY

Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of the Minister of Transport to restore confidence in the airline industry. But, with the new tax, he is destroying it in many communities of this country.

Why must the provinces do the work of the government, by deciding to do a study of the impact of this new tax? Why are they doing the work of the Minister of Transport?

Hon. John McCallum (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have explained on several occasions, we decided to implement a \$2.2 billion tax. However, in the budget, the total cost of security was \$7.7 billion.

As the minister has said repeatedly in the House, if we find in the fall that revenues are higher than required, we will reduce the tax.

● (1500)

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last January 14, the privacy commissioner notified Canada Post that it was in contravention of the Privacy Act by selling to direct mailing companies the new addresses of Canadians who pay for a mail redirection.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether he intends to intervene with Canada Post Corporation in order to get it to cease this illegal practice?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, privacy issues are of great importance to us. I am certain that Canada Post and the privacy commissioner will soon reach agreement on an appropriate solution.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL REVENUE

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Revenue.

One of the most despicable acts this government has ever portrayed is upon our senior citizens with the changes to the disability tax credit.

This morning at the veterans affairs committee we heard that thousands upon thousands of veterans who fought for this country will now lose their ability to collect on their disability tax credit because of the changes made by this government.

My question is quite clear: Why does the minister not get rid of that most offensive form which will steal money from the most vulnerable in our society, cancel the Challenger jets and give the money back to those people who fought for this damn country?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government and I are determined to see that the people who are entitled to this tax credit receive it. We have a responsibility to make sure that those anyone who are eligible receive it and those who are not do not. That is why we do periodic audits of all these programs.

I can tell the member that we are reviewing the form and consulting to see if there are ways we can improve the administration of the program.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today being Thursday it is my duty at this time to ask the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons what business he has for the remainder of today, tomorrow and the following week.

Government Orders

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I first want to congratulate the member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, a fellow Saskatchewanian, upon her appointment as deputy House leader for the official opposition.

This afternoon we will be continuing with the debate on Bill C-15B, the legislation relating to cruelty to animals. When that is completed, I expect to move on to Bill C-15A, the legislation relating to pornography. If there is time after that, we will go on to Bill C-53, the pest control bill, followed by Bill S-40 respecting financial clearinghouses.

Tomorrow the business will be Bill C-43, the miscellaneous technical amendments legislation, followed by the consideration of the Senate amendments to Bill C-33, the Nunavut legislation.

On Monday I would expect to begin the day with Bill C-53 but after 3 p.m. we will turn to Bill C-54 which relates to sports in Canada.

Commencing on Tuesday we will return to the report stage debate of Bill C-5 respecting species at risk.

* * *

• (1505)

POINTS OF ORDER

QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, if you would check today's *Hansard* during question period I believe you would find that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, in response to a question I asked, stated that I knew the statement I was making was untrue.

I feel that response was unparliamentary. I also know it certainly was not untrue and the minister knows it was not untrue. When I raised a similar point last week the minister also thought it was untrue until he found out differently, as he will find tomorrow that this statement is very true.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to look at *Hansard* and I am sure you will agree that the minister should repeal the statement he made.

The Speaker: It is clear the minister is not here. He will no doubt have the hon. member's statement drawn to his attention and perhaps we will hear from him later today or tomorrow. When we do we can perhaps deal with the matter.

It strikes me that the hon. member is raising a grievance rather than a point of order at the present time and, accordingly, we will leave it until we hear back.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL CODE (CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AND FIREARMS) AND THE FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-15B, an act to amend the criminal code (cruelty to animals and firearms) and the Firearms Act be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I think it is telling that the House leader from the government referred to Bill C-15B as an act to deal with animal cruelty. It speaks to the subterfuge taking place on the part of the government.

Yes, the bill does have something to do with animal cruelty but it also has a lot to do with the firearms legislation. Some 22 pages and hundreds of clauses are going to be changed.

In the first part of my speech I dealt with animal cruelty. In this part of my speech I will deal with firearms.

I can say without a shadow of a doubt that the Canadian Alliance is firmly in favour of public safety and good, sensible gun control. However we oppose Bill C-15B because of the amendments to the current Firearms Act, Bill C-68, which is a sham. The bill is unworkable. Rather than increasing public security it actually decreases it. I will tell the House why.

As I mentioned before, the bill is costing some \$600 million, and the money would have been better spent on increasing public safety. It could have been better spent on putting more police officers on the street and on our judicial system. We need to ensure that individuals who commit crimes will receive the penalties they deserve. We also need to ensure that individuals who commit firearms offences or violent acts against others will be put in jail for a long time.

When people commit an act with a firearm a number of things happen. First, if they are convicted their penalty runs concurrently not consecutively to their other offence. Therefore there is no real penalty for committing an offence with a firearm.

Second, in order to get an expeditious conviction on the original offence, the firearms weapons offence is often plea bargained away to get a quick conviction on the other offence. The person who has actually put a gun to someone's head is assured of no penalty for using the weapon in that manner.

Third, the bill does nothing to address the influx of weapons into this country by criminals. Criminals do not take a course to get a firearms acquisition certificate. They engage in the waiting time to get a firearm. The firearms they get are smuggled in and then used to commit a crime.

Government Orders

We support a firearms acquisition certificate. We support courses and lead time. Thankfully we are not like the United States which has liberal gun controls that enable individuals to use guns and enable weapons to get into the hands of those who should not have them. We are thankful that in this country we have historically had good gun control laws that prevent that from happening.

However, the problem we have is that Bill C-68 and the son of Bill C-68, Bill C-15B, do not do that. We importune the government to change the bill and do what we ask in the name of public security.

One of the arguments the Minister of Justice had used was that the bill would decrease the number of suicides. People who want to commit suicide will not get a firearms acquisition certificate just to blow their head off. The gun is often acquired illegally through other means or stolen. All too often a person commits suicide through another means.

Similarly, if we look at the murders in the country, some 700 to 800 murders are committed every year. One-third of those murders are committed through the use of a firearm.

I encourage questions on the issue since there is a lot of debate from both side. We do not support the bill because we in the Alliance are in favour of tough laws against animal cruelty. We are in favour of good sensible gun control laws but we will not support a bill that will do the opposite for the Canadian public.

• (1510)

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the last participant in this discussion is a medical doctor. He is certainly well respected in his field. He would have some expertise to offer the House on the whole issue of what the animal rights organizations are saying in terms of their refusal to in any way give medical researchers, scientists and doctors protection in respect of the important work that they do in the area of health research.

My concern with the bill is that in moving these subsections out of the property rights sections we have moved them into a separate section where only the general defences under subsection 8(3) apply, sections that have always applied to all of the various offences in the criminal code. We have removed those specific defences that were particularly focused on these kinds of offences. Where we do not have in many provinces specific authorization to conduct work on animals in furtherance of health care and medical research we are leaving these researchers vulnerable. Indeed, we are then leaving health care vulnerable.

Would the hon. member agree with a letter written by Pierre Berton, who is the senior patron of Canadians for Medical Progress? He gave that letter to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. He took the position that the radical animal rights activists were misguided in their support of Bill C-15B. He stated:

One glaring example of a Canadian private prosecution undertaken by the Life-Force component of the animal-rights movement against Dr. William Rapley and Dr. Bernard Wolfe of the University of Western Ontario, ground through the courts in London, Ontario in 1985, and was finally thrown out of the courts because of its frivolous and malicious nature. The private prosecution was undertaken because the public prosecutor had refused to lay charges. There have also been many such cases in different U.S. jurisdictions over the year.

He goes on to say that the decision to move animals from the property section in Bill C-15B would most surely open the door to

an abundance of similar, frivolous private prosecution from the animal rights movement against the research enterprise in the future.

Does the hon. member have any comments to add to what I consider remarks made by a distinguished Canadian?

Mr. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, the question that the public may want to ask is why does Pierre Berton, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, and the Coalition for Biomedical and Health Research stand shoulder to shoulder with the Canadian Alliance in opposition to Bill C-15B? Is it because we are in favour of animal cruelty? Absolutely not. The reason why we stand shoulder to shoulder with Pierre Berton, the veterinarians and those engaged in biomedical research is because we are opposed to animal cruelty, but we are also opposed to a bill that would curtail, hamstring and prevent biomedical research, adequate animal husbandry and the actions that vets have to take in the treatment and care of animals in distress.

We are in favour of good laws that will prevent cruelty to animals or laws that will prosecute aggressively with heavy penalties those individuals who commit cruelty to animals. We are in favour of good laws that will ensure that animals are treated humanely in animal husbandry, in the veterinary sciences and in biomedical research. In fact those laws exist already. We are not in favour of a situation that leaves the law wide open to the prosecution of researchers, vets and people engaged in animal husbandry who are treating animals humanely. We want to ensure that the bill will not become a political tool for radical organizations like LifeForce that would adhere to a warped sense and misguided sense of humanity toward animals and human beings.

• (1515)

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of political activity in regard to the cruelty to animals legislation.

In the winter 2002 newsletter from the Animal Alliance of Canada Liz White talks about how she and her organization are big supporters of the Liberal government. In the letter they are trying to raise funds. Liz White is doing this specifically to work on political campaigns on behalf of the Liberal government. This is a serious issue where ministers of the crown are so directly influenced by political activity and fundraising, not for the good of animals, not for humane societies or the issue of preventing cruelty to animals, but for the political purpose of electing people like the Minister of Health which was done in the last election.

Should we condone and allow these fundraising efforts to go unchallenged where people like Liz White, who says zero use of animals for anything, go unchallenged to raise money for the political use of the Liberal Party of Canada?

Government Orders

Mr. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, everybody has a right to raise money and anybody has the right to raise money for any organization. However, what we must ensure for any of us is that there is no connection between the raising of funds and political favouritism. That is what we must ensure. We must ensure that no fundraiser will have an influence on the voting abilities of any of us, particularly ministers of the crown. We must ensure that does not happen.

Mr. Grant Hill (MacLeod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I heard my fellow physician colleague talking about the firearms provision in the bill and as a practitioner who has spent a significant amount of time in the emergency department as he has I am quite interested in his comments as to whether or not the Firearms Act will have any impact whatsoever on the emergency department in terms of the number of injuries from firearms?

Mr. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. friend and fellow physician for this question because one of the statements that the former minister of justice put out was that Bill C-68 would make Canada safer by reducing suicides.

As my hon. friend knows full well individuals who are about to commit suicide will not be getting a firearms acquisition certificate. They will not take a course. They will not have the waiting time and they will not going acquire that weapon and then shoot themselves in the head. I have seen many people kill themselves, some with firearms but most people actually kill themselves through other means.

Bill C-68 will not decrease suicide. We get accused of being against gun control and against public safety because we are against Bill C-68 but the fact is that we are in favour of public health. We are in favour of keeping Canada safe. That is why the majority of police officers, 70% to 95% of frontline police officers, are opposed to Bill C-68, son of Bill C-68, and Bill C-15B that we are debating today. Why would police officers be opposed to that? Surely they would be in favour of public safety. So are we. That is why we are opposed to this.

The bill would draw valuable resources away from where it ought to be, away from police officers who can apprehend the criminals who are using this; away from the justice time that we can use to prosecute individuals who are serious, violent offenders; away from the money and resources needed to put those same violent offenders behind bars so they will not prey upon innocent Canadian civilians. That is why we are in favour of laws that will ensure that there will be people at the border to apprehend the illegal weapons coming into this country.

The Alliance is in favour of public security, we are against cruelty to animals and we are opposed to Bill C-15B because it is a very bad bill.

• (1520)

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as others have, to speak to Bill C-15B. The bill deals with two main items: animal rights and the issue of animal cruelty. It also deals with firearms. I would like to speak first to the section dealing with animals and animal cruelty.

My first question is, what does the bill change? If we were to take a look at the old Part XI which deals with wilful and forbidden acts to certain property, where it talks about cruelty to animals, it states:

Every one commits an offence who wilfully causes or, being the owner, wilfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal or a bird.

It is straightforward and easy to understand. It is clear and concise. The government could have fixed this legislation by increasing the penalties for abuse to animals. It would have taken very little to fix this legislation. Rather than do that it has chosen to introduce a whole new section to the criminal code called cruelty to animals. This has a number of defects to it.

We have tried to improve this legislation with amendments as recent as today. My colleague from Selkirk—Interlake made a good amendment the other night. It was to protect primary producers, farmers and ranchers by amending clause 8 to read: “who wilfully or recklessly”. He added the words: “and in contravention of generally accepted industry standards”. He threw that in to protect farmers and ranchers. The government turned the amendment down. My question is, why?

As my colleague previously pointed out we see the government in the hands of so many special interest groups that it does not seem to be able to govern for the benefit of the general Canadian public. There is a total disconnect with rural Canada. It is obvious in so much of its legislation, which I will address in a few minutes.

The legislation is flawed right from the beginning. The first part states:

In this Part, “animal” means a vertebrate, other than a human being, and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain.”

I have asked this question before. It seems such a strange matter that I ask why we would define anything by its capacity to feel pain. In the old legislation it said that we commit an offence if we have injured or caused suffering to an animal or a bird. That is pretty straightforward. The definition has now been broadened to the point that we are not even sure what it means. It seems to me that the government should be aware of what an animal is. We do not need this definition. It does not contribute to clarity of the legislation.

The parliamentary secretary spoke yesterday and what I heard was not of comfort to me. I am not sure if he understands the implication of the legislation. He should. He is supposed to have been working on it. However, there are a number of things he said that concerned me.

First, he said that the clarity and certainty of the legislation is achieved. I would suggest that is hardly true. I have talked a bit about the definition being vague and hard to understand. Second, the old bill was far cleaner and clearer. There was no complicated understanding of it. It could have been left. It would have been clearer.

Government Orders

I find it interesting that once again the government has used that old liberal method of legislating which is that we use the extreme to justify the average. We have seen that in so much of its legislation over the years. I noticed the parliamentary secretary used a couple of examples of why the legislation was justified. One of them was that he wanted to defend against people tying animals to railway tracks. Then he used the famous urban myth of people putting poodles in the microwave oven and that we needed to stop people from doing that.

I have an objection that I have had for years. We take extreme examples and then make legislation that will deal with them and apply it to our entire culture. We have seen this so many times.

The parliamentary secretary also said that the government has stated repeatedly that what is lawful today would stay lawful. We have heard the former justice minister saying that as well. I find it interesting that once the legislation is passed it is not the government's decision whether what is lawful today would stay lawful. Judges would indeed decide this.

I have a quote from one of the animal rights activists and I will not even give her the publicity of using her name. She said:

My worry is that people think this is the means to the end, but this is just the beginning. It doesn't matter what the legislation says if no one uses it, if no one takes it to court, if nobody tests it. The onus is on humane societies and other groups on the front lines to push this legislation to the limit, to test the parameters of this law and have the courage and the conviction to lay charges.

● (1525)

The intent to use this legislation as a tool to restrict the use of animals in things like research and agriculture seems clear. I find it frustrating as a former producer involved in agriculture that farmers have more reason to be responsible toward their animals than anyone else does. In 40 years of living in a small community, I can think of only one occasion on which it was necessary for officials to deal with animal abuse. It involved an elderly person who was not taking care of her cattle herd and the RM took care of the problem. It took the cattle away and fed them as they should have been.

This bill has a number of main legislative weaknesses which I would like to speak about for a few minutes. First, the definition of animal, as I have mentioned, is far too broad.

The second legislative weakness, as my colleague from Provencher mentioned, is it fails to maintain traditional defences, particularly the one of "legal justification, excuse and colour of right", that currently exists under subsection 429(2). These must be retained to protect producers and people who are involved with normal animal husbandry as part of their lives.

Third, the bill fails to maintain animals as property. It moves them to the criminal code, which clearly does not need to happen. Canadian agriculture has always been based on the idea of ownership of animals. The government is changing the legal status of animals and it is directly affecting the farmer's position. The legal right to use animals for food production comes from the proprietary rights of farmers and producers to those animals.

This change will lead to a risk of prosecution for farmers. We already have a history of frivolous prosecutions as I think the

member for Provencher just mentioned. Drs. Rapley and Wolf of the University of Western Ontario found out about this problem several years ago.

Again one of the animal fanatic groups writes in its literature "This elevation of animals in our moral and legal view is precedent setting and will have far reaching effects". I find it interesting, as the member for Selkirk—Interlake said, that this lobby group is actively raising money for the government and for the Liberal Party in election campaigns. It makes one wonder for whom this legislation is written. It is certainly not for the Canadian public.

I would like to move on to the second half of the bill which deals with firearms legislation. We are all fairly familiar with Bill C-68 which has been an ongoing joke in parts of the country. It was passed with great fanfare and greater opposition several years ago. It was interesting that a bill that was to have cost \$80 million has blossomed into something over \$700 million officially. It has apparently has cost around \$1 billion so far. It takes \$100 million each year to keep this bureaucracy going.

I would to remind some of my colleagues that indeed that could pay for another two new Challenger jets for the cabinet if this was set aside. We have pleaded with the Liberals on the grounds that it could put more police officers on the frontlines. They do not seem interested in hearing that but they may certainly be interested in hearing that it could have two additional Challenger jets.

The government continues to tout its polling. We heard yesterday that the majority of people apparently support Bill C-68 but that in fact is not true. If people are told that something was free and then asked if they want it, they will usually say yes. On the issue of gun control, if we asked people if they knew that this was going to cost \$1 billion, that it would continue to climb and would they support it, we would get a completely different answer, which is that most Canadians do not support it and have no interest in supporting it.

The bill and the amendments to it have been a complete failure. I find it interesting that the government now admits that it has 320,000 plus gun owners who have not yet registered. We do not know what the real number is. The government has always lowered those figures, so it is probably far more than that.

Even more interesting than that, since January of this year the government has lost 38,000 gun owners. It decided it was going to run this free registration of guns for people and sent notices to the people who had already registered. As it turned out, the 38,000 certificates that went out to gun owners were returned by the post office. Somehow those people are lost. That is just one example of how the legislation has been a complete failure.

As well, six provinces and two territories continue to oppose Bill C-68. I find it interesting that non-residents can be exempted from the Firearms Act but not Canadian citizens under the amendments. I guess the question is: what is equal protection and equal benefit under the law?

Fourth, aboriginal groups have just said that they will continue to ignore Bill C-68. The government obviously has no intention of holding them accountable.

Government Orders

● (1530)

I have a few statistics I found interesting because Statistics Canada keeps a very close watch on Canadians. I will read a couple of those dealing with the gun registration.

Of the 542 homicides in Canada in 2000, stabbing, beating and strangulation accounted for 58% of them and firearms for less than one third of them. It is fairly obvious that violent individuals are the problem more than are the guns.

Of the 183 firearms homicides in 2000: 58% were committed with handguns which is interesting because handguns have been registered since 1934 so obviously the registration is working very well; 8% were committed with firearms that are completely prohibited; and 31% were committed with a rifle or shotgun.

The 67 years of registering handguns demonstrates that registration is a complete flop. Despite 67 years of mandatory handgun registration, the use of handguns in firearms homicides has been increasing since 1974. Conversely, firearms homicides with rifles and shotguns that were not registered dropped steadily over the same 27 year period. It makes a sane person wonder why the government would commit 1,800 staff and waste more than \$700 million trying to register these rifles and shotguns.

Of the 110 handgun homicides committed between 1997 and 2000, 69% of the guns were not even registered. This is despite the fact that the law has been in effect since 1934. Does the failure of gun registration as an effective government policy get any more obvious than this?

However there may be another suggestion. In 2000, 67% of persons accused of homicide had a criminal record and 69% of them had previously been convicted of violent crimes. At the same time, 52% of homicide victims also had criminal records. Obviously the government is hitting the wrong target by requiring innocent farmers, hunters and recreational shooters to register their firearms. Criminals are the real target, not duck hunters. The government made the wrong choice six years ago and it is making the wrong one again.

I will quote Ontario Solicitor General Bob Runciman who told the Senate standing committee in 1995 that in national terms \$85 million, which was the initial estimate, would put 1,000 customs agents on the border, \$500 million would put an extra 5,900 police officers on the street. The federal alternative is to use the money to register every shotgun and bolt action .22 in Canada. It takes no great brilliance to figure out which would have a greater impact on crime.

There are a dozen other problems with the legislation. I guess for years judges have complained that the firearms legislation is so poorly drafted that they cannot even understand it or make it enforceable.

I want to read one of the amendments in the bill and see if anyone here can figure out what it is talking about. Plain English might be a little better.

Subclause 10(3) says the following:

Section 2 of the Act is amended by adding the following after subsection (2):

(2.1) Sections 5, 9, 54 to 58, 67, 68 and 70 to 72 apply in respect of a carrier as if each reference in those sections to a chief firearms officer were a reference to the Registrar and for the purposes of applying section 6 in respect of a carrier, paragraph 113(3)(b) of the Criminal Code applies as if the reference in that section to a chief firearms officer were a reference to the Registrar.

An hon. member: Try to obey that law.

Mr. David Anderson: Try to obey that law, exactly. It was taken to a lawyer and it took one lawyer more than two hours to try to figure out exactly what that section was trying to say and what it was trying to fix.

Changes to the process, the authority and the documentation of the transfer of firearms between dealers and individuals and between individuals are extremely unclear. Even with these amendments it does not help. If these amendments are passed without change it will result in ever escalating error rates, and I talked about those a little in the gun registry, making it even more useless to the police than it is already.

The amendments in the firearms legislation use the words prescribed and regulation somewhat near 30 times. All these words mean is that the government does not know exactly what the amendments mean or how they are to be enacted or enforced. It will just leave these important questions until later, until it gets outside parliament where we do not have the opportunity to debate them.

It used the same technique 75 times in Bill C-68 and we have seen how good the results were in that bill.

Bill C-15B does other things like transfer the powers to a provincial minister to exempt employees and businesses from applications of the Firearms Act. It gives any designated firearms officer any of the duties and functions of the chief firearms officer. The act gives the CFO a considerable amount of power, even some of the powers of a provincial minister.

The bill amends the definition of a firearm. The government is trying to ensure that millions of air guns and pellet rifles will no longer be considered firearms under this law, which they have been up until now if one can possibly imagine that. Our children are not even allowed to go out and go clinking because their guns are considered to be firearms under the legislation.

● (1535)

This new wording is confusing. The definition has not achieved its objective. In fact some legal interpretations say paint ball markers will now become firearms.

In 1995 the justice minister ignored 250 amendments proposed by our party. The government ignored many of the substantive amendments proposed by the Liberal dominated standing committee at the time. It has taken five years and \$600 million for the government to see that it has made mistakes.

We have an admission of how well it has worked with the fact that this legislation has come back to the House this time. The government has had to introduce a 20 page bill and 160 clauses of amendments to try to correct its previous legislation.

Government Orders

Actually it has worked so well that the government had to rebate the fees to register guns. The government has gone out to the provinces and said that it will make that free. It charged people \$18, then turned around and said it would make it free. It had to rebate the money to the people at an estimated cost of \$25 each. So that was another real money maker for this program. No wonder the bill continues to climb.

Yesterday the parliamentary secretary gave us a warning that we should heed. I would suggest that what he said threatens the freedom of all Canadians. The quote that I think I accurately heard was that the success of Bill C-15B builds on the success of the firearms legislation so far. There are two mistakes there. First, Bill C-68 has been a complete failure. Second, Bill C-15B continues that way of error.

What concerned me more than that was that he then said that this would lead to the next step which was the fulfillment of the United Nations firearm protocol. This protocol calls for the removal of all firearms from all civilians, that means every Canadian except for the police and the military.

Interestingly enough, this has been taken up by at least two cabinet ministers. When Bill C-68 was brought in, the minister of justice apparently said that and this fall one of the other cabinet ministers said that as well. Canadians need to understand that the noose is tightening, not loosening, on their ability to own guns and on their gun ownership. Actually, I would suggest to Canadians that the government is in fact coming to take their guns.

Ironically, one thing the bill does is it encourages people to use guns, at the same time the government is trying to stop that. There is an infamous use it or lose it provision that is built into the bill. The section gives the CFO the authority to refuse or revoke a licence and a registration for restricted firearms if the owner cannot prove the firearm was used for the purpose for which it was originally purchased. If the person originally bought it for target shooting and if it could be proven that it was not used for that but was used fairly regularly, the authority would be able to remove the gun from the owner.

The government has widened that a little so that it only changes to include any purpose at all listed in section 28. People need to be aware that the clause is there.

There are a number of other critical areas that are not addressed in the bill. They include things like the criminalization of paperwork. If paperwork is sent in and there is an honest mistake in it or if the people employed at the firearms centre make a mistake, then it is the individual's fault who submitted the paperwork and the person is seen as a criminal.

Second, it gives extended search and seizure powers to the police. The police basically have unlimited powers to come into a person's place of residence and try to force the person to co-operate with them. I think we would find that this is odious to all citizens.

Third, registration has been a problem. It is interesting that people I have talked to have registered several guns. I know one gentleman who registered five weapons. He got back 10 registration certificates. He had more registration certificates than he had guns. I am not sure what people will do with those certificates.

There has been arbitrary prohibition and confiscation. The bill addresses only part of that. If members look at page 15 of the bill, the customs agents at the border are allowed to confiscate guns as people come across the border. They are not obligated to give the guns back, even if the person just wants to return to the country from where they came.

One of the main problems is massive non-compliance. We see the failure of the system. I mentioned earlier that we have lost 38,000 gun owners. I do not know where they have gone to, but they have moved from their addresses and the government cannot find them.

We have large concerns about privatization. As this is privatized who will be responsible for keeping the important information dealing with this system?

I would like to suggest that the Alliance does have some positive suggestions dealing with the legislation. We presented a large number of good amendments. We would suggest that it keep part XI in the code as it is presently. We would ask the government to resist turning this agenda over to those people who have no connection and little understanding of animal rights. It is interesting that there was no consultation with the producers, farmers and those people who are involved actively with animals.

We would ask that the government leave the definition of animal undefined, that it increase the penalties as in part XI of the code and, uniquely, that it begin to apply and actually enforce the law.

• (1540)

That has been the main problem with the law up to now, the animal rights part of it in particular. They have not applied the penalties that are there and people have turned around and said that the legislation is defective. If they increase the penalties and have the heart to apply those penalties in the animal rights areas, the legislation will work. We look forward to that.

As my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca said, it is important that we defeat this bill. We certainly look forward to doing that in the near future.

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on April 3 the Dairy Farmers of Canada wrote a letter to me stating that they are very opposed to this bill. The animal rights organizations, including organizations like the Winnipeg Humane Society, have taken direct aim at livestock production.

I would like to talk about chickens for one second. It is deemed that it is cruel to chickens to debeak them which is done when they are being raised in order that they do not attack each other. The cages they are raised in are considered to be cruel. The use of antibiotic growth promoters is considered to be cruel to chickens because it makes them grow a little faster than they would naturally. It is also believed that suspending a chicken upside down in the slaughterhouse when it is killed is cruel to chickens. These are agricultural issues.

I have corresponded with Liberal members. I have a letter that states:

As a farmer, I can say with conviction that whether you raise chickens, pan-Canadian historically significant Canadian horses, or engage in other agricultural pursuits, federal law must not prevent the practice of legitimate and industry recognized activities.

Government Orders

When there is a free vote in the House, how should a member vote in regard to this kind of legislation if one is standing up for agriculture? I am referring to the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey. I would like to see that member stand up for his constituents.

I would also like to see the minister of agriculture stand up for agriculture. We have heard nothing from him in all this time concerning the fact that he should be against this kind of legislation which is bad for farmers and agriculture.

Maybe sometime we will hear from the agriculture minister that he too is opposed to this legislation. It will dramatically lower the incomes of farmers at the same time as he is trying to bring in programs that would raise the incomes of farmers. On one hand he is supporting legislation that is ruining farmers' incomes, including those of some members of the House who raise chickens, but at the same time he is asking what he can do to help farmers out. Could the member comment on that please?

• (1545)

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the legislation in section 182.2 states:

(1) Everyone commits an offence who, wilfully or recklessly, (b) kills an animal or, being the owner, permits an animal to be killed, brutally or viciously, regardless of whether the animal dies immediately

I find that interesting. I know that animal rights groups are going to bring that in. They are going to try to redefine the idea of what brutally or viciously is. It was not included in the previous legislation. There is no reason for it to be included in this legislation.

On the issue of whether government members will stand and oppose the bill, I would ask that the rural members show some of the backbone they claim they have every time before we go into a vote. I would ask that they vote against the bill. Clearly it is in the worst interests of their constituents if they have farmers or ranchers who will be affected by this. I certainly would expect that those people who are involved directly in primary production, as is my friend from Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, as he so eloquently lets us know on a regular basis, would do the right thing. I know he will do the right thing.

I agree with my colleague it is important that the minister of agriculture take a leadership role on this issue. Why should those of us in opposition continually have to raise the issues that are important to rural people and to farmers and ranchers?

The minister of agriculture is supposed to represent the interests of those people. It would be a big step for him to take the lead on a bill like this one, or on another bad bill such as Bill C-5 which is the species at risk bill. Many people across Canada are asking that someone take the lead on it. The Canadian Alliance has done that. We ask that the rural members on the other side and the minister of agriculture stand and defend producers' interest there as well.

Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands knows full well that as the chair of the national rural caucus I have repeatedly led the charge on trying to get a better deal from the government for rural Canada which includes farmers. The member for Selkirk—Interlake is a former RCMP officer. He will be

able to tell the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands whether or not what I am about to say is correct.

The member is talking about frivolous vexatious charges. The process that is laid out in Bill C-15A which would deal with the type of charges that could come from Bill C-15-B is very simple. If somebody does not like the way I am operating my chicken farm, he or she can go to a justice of the peace to lay a charge. The justice of the peace then takes the charge to the judge and the crown attorney. They look at the charge and say whether or not it will stand up in court. The member for Selkirk—Interlake knows full well from his past experience that a crown justice will not go to court unless he has a really good chance of winning the case.

An hon. member: It is not his case.

Mr. Murray Calder: No, but it will have to be his case to charge in court.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We are getting somewhere here and a great deal of interest has been sparked, but let us do this in an orderly fashion. The member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey.

Mr. Murray Calder: My question for the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands is very simple. Given that is the process, how does he think he can improve it, or does he think it works?

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the member is demonstrating how little he understands rural people and rural agriculture. He may have the money to challenge people in court, but many of the people I know are under pressure primarily because of the government's policies and they do not have the money to fool around in court like that.

I would challenge him to walk the walk instead of just talking the talk. I expect that when we vote on the bill at third reading, he will have the courage of his convictions and will stand up to vote against this bad piece of legislation.

• (1550)

Mr. Vic Toews (Provencher, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I was quite interested to hear the comments on Bill C-15-A. It sets up a whole new system of preliminary hearings and will in fact cost farmers more money. Maybe the chicken farmers have more money than other farmers, but I represent a lot of chicken farmers in my riding and I know they do not have the time nor the money to spend on frivolous prosecutions, which they will have to go to court to defend even to get the charge thrown out in that whole preliminary hearing system.

I want to focus on the issue of gophers. I have heard all kinds of discussion about the protection of gophers in other speeches.

When I was young I worked on my uncle's farm. There were two ways to get rid of gophers. One was with a .22. If we did not have the ammunition or the money to buy a .22, the other way was to put water down the hole. When the gopher came up, we disposed of the gopher in the most expeditious way. I am not saying that is the best way to get rid of gophers, but I know that gophers are a huge problem for farmers in western Canada.

Government Orders

Perhaps the member could tell us a little bit about the problems caused to livestock and even humans falling down the gopher holes and breaking their legs.

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, one of the things I want to point out about gophers which again goes back to the gun registration is that people have been trying to adhere to the regulations. There is a 1-800 number they are supposed to call which has been a complete failure. I told some of my constituents I would mention that. I want to make a point of it. It is important that the justice ministry understands that it has been a complete failure.

I also want to talk about the situation in western Canada. This spring we are looking at some very serious things. One of them is gophers. Last spring we had an invasion of gophers. We will continue to have that. We will have other problems as well with drought. There is a chance there will be a lot of grasshoppers in the area. I wanted to make the House aware of some of those things.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I thought I would take a few moments to talk about Bill C-15.

I consider there is a bit of a victory in the bill. My colleagues across the way will be surprised when they hear that. The victory is we started out with Bill C-15. Bill C-15 was an omnibus bill. That omnibus bill had some subjects in it that had nothing whatever to do with agriculture. The victory is that we had the omnibus bill split into two.

One part related to child pornography. That bill was handled very expeditiously in the House.

I give credit to the minister opposite who did that, who listened to the opposition, who forcefully said that an omnibus bill that had many different elements would not allow us to vote fairly. I believe that was a victory for democracy and a victory for the processes in the House. I started with the only positive comments I am going to make directed toward the minister.

I consider myself to be a nature lover, a naturalist. I am an individual who spends quite a bit of my free time outdoors. I am also a pet lover. I have a great interest in pets. We have a dog in our home at present, a cute little Jack Russell Terrier pup called Lloyd. Lloyd, being a pet at home, is very popular, especially with my wife. When I am away from home, this little dog warns her if there is someone around or some animals around and she feels more comfortable. I say that to express my particular feeling about pets and about animals.

I have spent a lot of time hunting. I had a black Labrador Retriever that I trained myself. That dog gave me enormous enjoyment. We would spend many hours together. I taught that dog how to sit, stay, come and go after the pheasants I sought. His name was Sam Hill. Some very interesting commentary has been made about the name Sam Hill. I wanted to name him Boot, but Boot Hill did not seem entirely appropriate.

I will use that preface to say I believe that cruelty to animals and pets is awful and should be punished. It should be punished vigorously. I preface my comments with that, my love for animals, my love for pets and my feeling that animal cruelty is wrong.

I believe however that the bill has taken an approach that is not correct, not accurate, not proper. I will talk about my concerns related to the bill.

Concerns have been directed toward me as an MP who has a very large rural constituency primarily of individuals with livestock, farmers and ranchers. That is one area of significant concern for me as their representative.

The second area of concern relates to medical research. Since I have a medical background and have had quite a bit to do with medical research, the concerns that have been expressed to me by my medical colleagues are significant.

Fishermen, hunters and trappers have also been quite prominent in the letters that I have received in relation to the bill.

Because my colleagues have spent a lot of time on the rural aspects of this issue, let me focus my initial comments on medical research. There is a value toward experimentation that relates to the animal kingdom. I will give some examples.

The use of new medication that has not been tried on humans is often experimentally used on animals. Much of the initial research on stem cells has come from the animal model. I am particularly interested in the use of adult stem cell research and that has borne significant fruit.

Environmental effects on humans is often tested in a way that is gentle and kind and not cruel relating to animals.

● (1555)

I have listened to a number of individuals. I received a letter from an animal activist not so long ago. She wrote that she loved animals more than she loved humans. That sentiment frankly drives some of the individuals who are animal activists.

I do not feel that way. I value humans more than I value animals. The use of animals in medical research is a profound way of protecting humankind. I am quite concerned when my medical colleagues who do animal research are put in a position where they could be not only criticized but prosecuted due to the way the bill is laid out.

Ethical standards for animal research must be fair and they must provide protection for the animals so that there is nothing improper done. Frankly the bill is not adequate in that regard.

I would like to talk briefly about the ranchers that I represent in my riding of Macleod. This is the southwest corner of Alberta in which some of the major ranches exist. I have yet to have one single member of the ranching community express to me satisfaction with the approach of the bill. This is really quite significant because if we do not have the support of those who are the husbands of our livestock, we do not have the support of the main components of those who look after livestock.

My riding is in the west, in the foothills approaching the mountains. It is some of the finest grasslands. There are thousands of ranchers in the area. One would think that I would have one that might say the bill is appropriate, but there has not been a single one and I am in touch with many of them.

Government Orders

Here are the activities that ranchers undertake with their cattle: they brand them, they ear tag them, they vaccinate them, they deworm them, they castrate them, and they squeeze them. They tell me that any one of those activities taken out of context could be criticized as cruel and they believe affected by the legislation.

We represent a huge number of rural constituents. We have sought mechanisms to be certain that these practices would be set aside as normal practices of industry. The amendments we sought that would have done that have been denied us.

The rancher is in a position of authority when it relates to the livestock. That position of authority is one that could be abused. An abuse of that authority should not be tolerated. However their practices are well established and time honoured and I object to the way they can be criticized.

It is not good enough frankly to just criticize a bill and say that it is not sufficient. I believe in being constructive in that regard. We have looked at the broad ways the bill could be and should be improved. I will go over, in a broad sense, where those improvements should have come.

Taking property rights and making them criminal is inappropriate unless the defence for these offences would follow. That has not taken place in the legislation. That leaves those medical researchers and ranchers who may be charged under the act, and it will happen as sure as I stand here, with defences that are less powerful than they should have.

We just heard in the interchange between members about private prosecutions and the frivolous nature of those private prosecutions. I listened to the member for Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey say that it would be easy for them to be reviewed by a judge.

I have had very little to do with the judicial system, thankfully, but I do know that our judges are profoundly busy and this is not an extra duty that they should have and not an extra duty that they should be asked to entertain. There should have been a review of frivolous prosecutions by the attorney general of each province. That frivolous review would very quickly be set aside. We asked for a review by the attorney general of each province to prevent frivolity and it was denied.

• (1600)

The big improvement was the protection of general industry standards when it came to our ranchers and farmers. That would be so straightforward. Activities such as branding and ear tagging that I mentioned earlier could easily have been looked after in that regard.

I spent a fair amount of time on the animal cruelty portions of the bill but as a representative of rural Canada I would be remiss if I did not talk a bit about the firearms component.

I have vigorously debated against the registration of firearms and I stand here vindicated in some of that criticism. When I originally debated this with the justice minister of the day I said to him as plainly as I could that costs were not being accurately reflected. I did that because I had gone to other jurisdictions that had gone down this road, particularly New Zealand and some states in Australia, and was told that the costs had ballooned. The cost factor was predicted. I am not proud to say this but I feel vindicated in saying that the costs

were not properly given to Canadians. The costs have been enormous and have gone up.

The other thing I said to the justice minister at that time was that the compliance rate would be poor. That has not been proven yet because there is no legislation in place to finally force everyone into registering their firearms. To be legal an individual needs an acquisition certificate or a possession certificate.

I am saying again that the compliance rate on firearms registration will not be what is required in order to get the result that the justice minister wanted. We need 100% compliance by all honest citizens to pick out dishonest citizens. I will tell the justice minister again that the compliance rate will never approach 100%. I say that knowing there are constituents of mine who simply do not know where their firearms are today. They do not know where they are because they are certain that the idea of confiscation is there.

The other thing I said to the justice minister was that the bill would have no impact on criminal misuse of firearms. There would be no decrease in suicides. There would be no decrease in murders with long guns. I stand by that statement. I will say it to everyone who will listen. Statistically I know this will not take place by looking at other jurisdictions that tried firearms registration and by looking at what pistol registration has done to criminal misuse, murders and suicides. There has been no impact.

The bill is trying to improve firearms registration and I suppose I should say good luck. I am using this as a platform to say that long gun registration in Canada has been a failure and will continue to be a failure. I wish there could have been a sunset clause in the legislation. I would feel better if there was a sunset clause stating that if there had been no decrease in criminal misuse the bill would be tossed into the dustbin of history.

The only thing that will replace the Firearms Act is a change of government. A change of government is necessary. It will be a sad thing depending on how deeply we go into the hole as it relates to firearms registration in this country.

Let me summarize what I have said on Bill C-15B. It is a victory for those of us who felt the omnibus bill that preceded it was far too broad. The bill was split off and the child pornography section was passed quickly. I do believe that Bill C-15B should have been substantially amended and still could be substantially amended. I stand firmly on that.

I talked about my medical colleagues involved in medical research as being singled out and potentially prosecuted by the bill. I talked about farmers and ranchers in my riding, none of whom support the bill. I predict that they will be prosecuted under the bill as surely as I stand here for things such as branding and dehorning, which are standard practices on farms and ranches.

Government Orders

•(1605)

I am saying that the firearms registration provisions in this country today will be and have been ineffective. They will not be complied with by legitimate honest citizens. The costs are enormous and there will be no impact on the criminal misuse of firearms.

I wish to say a few words on the issue of the medical community and biomedical research. In my training as a surgeon I was involved in the use of animals in a vivisection sense. This was to allow someone doing surgery to actually operate on live tissue rather than doing the dissection that we did on tissue that was preserved. This allowed me, as a young budding surgeon, to be more adept with dissection, identification of nerve tissue and artery, and all the other tissues that are available.

I have had individuals say to me that is a complete total disregard for animals. I object to that. As I said before, I believe there are priorities there. Would anybody like me, as a young surgeon, to not have been experienced with tissue and to experience tissue on their child for the first time doing surgery?

Therefore I say to the animal activists who themselves will someday face surgery, this is one of those practical issues in research in which the use of animals and the use of invertebrates in some cases is valuable for the medical community. I really want to stress that.

I talked about the ethical standards, the fair use of animals to be certain there was no ethical behaviour. That is quite important. I have been able to tour some of the labs that raise animals used in medical research. I have been surprised by how clean and how gentle the animals are treated. They are treated with respect and dignity. That is quite appropriate.

Do I give any credit to the animal activists for that? Yes, I do. Animal activists have a position in this regard in raising public awareness of practices in that regard. Those individuals who are nature lovers and naturalists do take some credit for that and I give them credit for that.

One thing that I do not give them credit for is saying that they love animals more than humans, which is completely inappropriate.

I have not talked much about the definition of animals used in the bill. The definition broadens significantly how animals have been defined in previous legislation. It includes non-human vertebrates and all animals having the capacity to feel pain. I have asked for the definition to be explained to me better. It has not been explained to me well enough for me to understand because every single animal has the capacity to feel pain.

This goes down to the very tiny cell. Cellular animals have the ability to feel pain from heat, not the pain that we would normally talk about from a blow, a scalpel or from a pin prick but from heat. That pain is demonstrated by a withdrawal from that heat. I can see the potential problems of that definition being used in a way that is completely inappropriate.

•(1610)

There are some ethical concerns here as well. They involve issues related to definitions that I believe we have not even considered. In

my view, the definition is much too broad. In this legislation we have gone away from animal welfare, which I support, to animal rights. To talk about animal rights is to talk about an area that is very, very dangerous, because there is a hierarchy of activity in this world.

I am opposed to Bill C-15B not on the basis that it goes about trying to prevent cruelty to animals but that it has not ruled out my concerns in relation to animal husbandry, to the ranchers and farmers whom I represent, that it has not adequately represented the concerns of the medical researchers and, finally, that it continues with firearm registration, which is an issue that is completely inappropriate in Canada.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance):

Mr. Speaker, I highly appreciate the depth of knowledge the hon. member has shown in regard to the bill. As a medical doctor, he has a great deal of knowledge about the use of animal tissues.

He also highlighted his views on ethical concerns about branding animals and dehorning animals. I have a degree in agriculture with a specialization in animal sciences. I understand where the member is coming from and I thoroughly appreciate his views. I would like to know how the member, as a surgeon, feels about scientific and experimental use of research animals. I would like to hear his ideas. Most of the scientific development of the last few years has taken place because of investment in research and development.

How does the member compromise his views on scientific research and the experimental aspect of animals and distinguish that from the ethical aspect of animals being used in research and experiments?

•(1615)

Mr. Grant Hill: Mr. Speaker, I do think that the animal activists have had a valuable place in our society. They have tried to make sure that animal experimentation and use of animals is ethical and proper.

Recently I did a little more work on the issue of stem cell research. Of course that is a bill that has come before the House and has ethical, moral and scientific components to it. In that regard I have found the use of animals and animal tissue to have been very profoundly useful for the advancement of this science. It does show me that we can use those tissues and animal science in an ethical and moral way.

I did mention that I believe adult stem cell research has fewer ethical concerns than does embryonic stem cell research. I am very keen to see adult cells used so that we do not have the ethical component that does arise there. My concern in that regard is to remove, as much as we can, any of the ethical concerns the public does have in terms of medical science.

Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Canadian Alliance):

Mr. Speaker, again it is my privilege to stand and speak to this bill, although, as with many of the bills that come to us from the Liberals, I can assure everyone that the content of the bill does not contain anything with which I am particularly happy.

Government Orders

The first item that I would like to draw to the attention of members is that in my constituency we have a tremendous number of very responsible firearms owners. They are taking a look at the content of this bill and other provisions that have been brought forward by the Liberals over a period of time with respect to the original bill, Bill C-68, which absolutely makes them want to pull their hair out.

They are looking at the fact, for example, that the government has spent and is in the process of spending more than \$700 million on a useless gun registry when in fact the government very proudly talks about the fact that it will be spending \$200 million to protect us from terrorism. I think that spending \$200 million against terrorists, Osama bin Laden and his ilk, versus \$700 million against law-abiding Canadian gun owners is just obscene. I think the tinkering around the edges contained in Bill C-15B is an example of the government making policy and laws on the fly.

The difficulty we have with this is that it is all bits and pieces. This is an omnibus bill. Omnibus, for those who are interested, simply means that it is a catch-all, a bill where the government threw everything into the hat. Originally this was Bill C-15. In this omnibus bill, the government thought it would do more tinkering around the edges with respect to the issue of gun registry. The tinkering around the edges is absolutely inadequate. The only thing we should be doing with respect to the gun registry is immediately withdrawing it and replacing it with measures that would actually make our streets safer.

It must be said that it is understandable that we should know who should be allowed to legally possess and carry firearms. That is logical and totally understandable. I do not see having a licence for that as posing any particular problem. As a matter of fact, it could well be a benefit. It certainly would give the prosecutors and the police in Canada the ability to take action under law that might be required to diffuse particular situations. The whole issue of this useless registry is that it is sending millions and millions of dollars completely down the drain. I say with respect to Bill C-15B and the whole issue of the tinkering with the firearms registry that it is an absolute waste of time and an absolute waste of money.

I also mentioned that the bill is designated as Bill C-15B as opposed to Bill C-15A, which supposedly we will be discussing at some future point in this parliament, because what the government did at the outset was create a grab bag of things that do not relate to each other in any way, shape or form. For example, what indeed does cruelty to animals have to do with the gun registry? I do not see any connection there at all.

Bill C-15A supposedly also has to do with protecting children, and we will be having a debate about that later, as well as the whole issue of safety for police officers. What does that have to do with cruelty to animals? Only when the Canadian Alliance dug in its heels and said no, it would not be going that route, and this goes back to last June, did it finally force the government into a situation where a legitimate vote could take place on the issue of Bill C-15B, primarily on the issue of cruelty to animals.

• (1620)

The fact that it decided to continue to have the catch-all of the change with respect to gun registry still contained in Bill C-15B was

something that was really quite unfortunate, but nonetheless those are the choices that the government made.

What does the bill do? First, with respect to cruelty to animals, there is not a person in the House, much less anyone in the Canadian Alliance, who would not want to see the protection of animals. Of course we do. Any humane human being does. The stated purpose of the bill is to consolidate animal cruelty offences and increase the maximum penalties. It also provides the definition of animal and moves cruelty to animals provisions from part XI of the criminal code, property offences.

A couple of days ago when we were speaking at report stage on this, I drew out the point, and I draw it out again, that if we are moving the cruelty to animals provisions from part XI of the criminal code, property offences, to another part of the criminal code, that is not just incidental. I pointed out, hopefully fairly forcefully, that an animal is an animal, a human is a human and a human may own an animal. That is pretty simple and straightforward, but not in the minds of animal activists, particularly extreme animal activists. That is what the Canadian Alliance Party and I are concerned about. We are concerned about the fact that if the definition of animal is removed from property offences and put into a different section, this will really open up the door to the potential of vexatious prosecution.

We have been told not to worry about it, that no crown prosecutors would do anything like that, but I had some action take place in my constituency under Bill C-68, which of course is also covered under Bill C-15. That is why I am speaking to it. We had police who unfortunately exercised authority in an area in which they had no right to exercise authority. Not only was the gun owner in this instance personally out of pocket for the cost of the lawyer, that owner was also personally out of pocket for the cost of a door being broken down. There was no authority. Finally when the matter went to court, at great expense I should say, we ended up with a situation where the judge said the police should not have done that. In other words, whenever there is new legislation there is always a trial of the new legislation, either by the police or, secondly, by the prosecution.

Where are we going by removing animal provisions from part XI of the criminal code? What has changed since Bill C-17, which also dealt with these issues? The government has made certain changes from the previously proposed legislation dealing with cruelty to animals, Bill C-17. The main change was the requirement for a person to act "wilfully or recklessly" in killing or harming animals.

Government Orders

However, many organizations, businesses and individuals still have significant concerns with respect to the bill. Who are they? Agricultural groups, farmers, industry workers and medical researchers have consistently said they welcome amendments to the criminal code that would clarify and strengthen provisions relating to animal cruelty and that they do not condone intentional animal abuse or neglect in any way. Many of these groups in fact support the intent of the bill, as the Canadian Alliance and I do, as its objective is to modernize the law and increase penalties for offences relating to animal cruelty and neglect. However, and this is the however, despite the minor improvements to the legislation, these groups advise that the bill requires significant amendments before their concerns are alleviated.

● (1625)

The Liberals have a terrible tendency that I have noted particularly of late. Perhaps it comes from smugness or complacency or the fact that they feel they know everything and what is best for everybody. I do not know what it is. However we end up with recommendations for legislation, whether it is in Bill C-15B or Bill C-15A, or the species at risk act, SARA, that are heartfelt recommendations that reflect the values and concerns of the people to whom we answer. Liberals just stonewall them or at the very best they take them, tinker with them, pound them down, make them almost useless and then insert them. Then they say "See we made the amendment that you want".

One of the central concerns with this bill is that the criminal code would no longer provide the same level of legal protection presently afforded to those who use animals for legitimate, lawful and justified practices. The phrase "legal justification or excuse and with colour of right" in section 429(2) of the criminal code currently provides protection to those who commit any kind of property offence. Note the word "property". However in the new bill the fact that the animal cruelty provisions would be moved out of the general classification of property offences and into a section of their own would effectively remove those provisions outside of the ambit of that protection.

Our party asked that the government members make the defences in section 429(2) explicit in the new legislation and they refused. This is the kind of pattern that I was talking about where we make any kind of reasonable arguments and we are just simply refused out of hand.

Moving the animal cruelty section out of the ambit of property offences to a new section in its own right is also seen by many as emphasizing animal rights as opposed to animal welfare. I know this is the third or fourth or perhaps the fifth time that I have said it, but those who choose not to listen try to say that I and the people in my party are not concerned about animal welfare. Nothing could be further from the truth. What we want to ensure is animal welfare. What we want to avoid is animal rights.

This significant alteration in the underlying principles of the legislation is something that needs to be carefully considered. The Canadian Alliance asked the government members to retain the cruelty to animals provision in the property offences section of the criminal code but it refused. This is not a small issue. This is a giant issue.

I say again, I and every member of my party are concerned about animal welfare. We support the bill in its intent to protect animal welfare. We reject the bill in terms of animal rights because we know where that is going. We know under animal rights that there are many activists. We have seen them, we have heard of them, we have seen their publicity and we have seen some of their very vicious and dangerous activity in which they have become engaged. We must stay away from it. Yet the government will not do anything about it.

Many groups are concerned that elevating the status of animals from property could in fact have significant and detrimental implications for many legitimate animal dependent businesses. Another major and very serious concern is that the definition of animal is too broad, it is too subjective and it is too ambiguous.

That is so typical of the kind of legislation that the Liberals consistently bring forward. What did I say it was? It was too broad. It was too ambiguous. That is so typical of just about every piece of legislation.

In committee just yesterday we were discussing Bill S-7, which by the way came to us through the back door from the other place. The bill is so incomplete and is such a skeletal kind of issue. I asked the Liberals in the committee how in the world could we possibly pass something like that. I asked how we could even be discussing something like it when we did not know what the rules, the regulations, the implications would be. There is no meat, there is no muscle, there is no sinew on the bones of the words that are on that piece of paper.

● (1630)

Of course the Liberals said they would get around to it, to just give them some time. They said they would go to the CRTC, have some hearings and after the House rubber stamped it they would then know what the legislation would be; years after.

I cite another example in my particular critic role, that of blank recording medium. When that was brought forward in 1997, we were told it would be 25¢ charge per cassette. Five years later in the year 2002, the 25¢ per cassette charge somehow has gone to \$200 to \$400 per machine on equipment that now has the capacity to record more. Twenty-five cents to \$400 strikes me as a bit of a jump.

I say with respect to Bill C-15B, the difficulty we have with it is we simply do not know where it is going because of the imprecision of the definition of animal. The definition marks a significant departure, by providing protection for an extremely wide range of living organisms that have never before been afforded this kind of legal protection. Where is that going? What are the unintended consequences of that? That is a statement of fact, we have no idea where it is going.

In terms of practical difficulties on how this definition is worded, it could potentially cause enormous problems by extending the criminal law to invertebrates, cold-blooded species such as fish, as well as an extremely wide variety of other types of both domestic and wild animals.

Government Orders

There is nothing in the mind of somebody who is an aggressive activist that would amaze me. Aggressive activists will take a look at this legislation and will push it as far as they can conceivably push it. Is it possible that somebody could be harassed by an activist, potentially by somebody in uniform who has an overzealous approach to things, a conservation officer or whomever? Is it not possible that somebody working with fish could end up with a problem because it is not precise?

The Canadian Alliance asked the government members to delete or modify this definition but they refused. In her speech at second reading, the justice minister assured us that what was lawful today in the course of legitimate activities would be lawful when the bill received royal assent. She promised the House that these changes would not in any way negatively affect the many legitimate activities that involve animals, such as hunting, farming, medical or scientific research.

The minister's statement was self-evident but misleading. Of course the new provisions will not prevent legitimate activities from being carried out. The law only proscribes illegal activities. The problem is and therefore the concern is that these new provisions arguably narrow the scope of what constitutes legitimate activities.

I say again on behalf of the people of Kootenay—Columbia, I have a wonderful group of people in my constituency. We are about 82,000 people strong. We are the backbone of Canada. These are people who love animals. These are people who understand the relationship between animals and nature. These are the hunters. These are the people who go fishing. These are the people who look after the environment in which these animals live. These are the farmers. These are the ranchers. These are the pet owners who treat their animals with respect, as every member of my party does and I do. On their behalf, I stand here and say that this bill must be voted in the negative.

● (1635)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by my colleague regarding the critically important distinction between animal rights and animal welfare. While I understand that the bill does not explicitly define an entitlement of animals to rights, we know based on the experience of our charter and judicial activism over the past two decades that there is a tendency in this country for legal activists to consciously expand the meaning of legislation to the point where it no longer in any way resembles the original intent of parliament, particularly with respect to putative rights claims.

In support of my colleague's contention, I would point out the fact that there is a strong and growing movement within certain spheres of academia by certain so-called rights theorists, such as the new head of bioethics at Princeton University, the ignominious Peter Singer, to define animal rights as carrying the same moral quality as human rights. In fact, Dr. Singer proposes that a pig carries more rights than a newborn human infant and in fact has published articles to this effect in prestigious international academic journals. The notion articulated by my colleague is not an outlandish one. In fact, it is very much rooted in new post-modern ethical theories that are being articulated in major western universities. Therefore, the spectre

of animal rights is very much a prescient one which should concern all of us in this bill.

I would also point out, in support of my colleague's argument, that the entire tradition of western civilization, the entire intellectual edifice, is predicated in part on the idea that there is a difference in kind and not degree between human beings and animals. While we are all creatures of a common God, mankind is created in the image of that God who grants animals to us for our stewardship. This is an idea which is consistent in every tradition of moral philosophy, from the ancient Hebrew scribes through to the classical Greek philosophers. Aristotle in *De Animus* articulated this. Thomas Aquinas articulated this in *Summa Theologica*. Even the enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke articulated the very clear moral distinction between man and beast, to use the traditional language. Therefore, I would support my hon. member's contention on that.

I have a question for him based on the broadening of the definition of "animal", in fact an entrenchment of a definition which heretofore have been left to the common law. Bill C-15B proposes to define animal as including non-human vertebrates and "any other animal having the capacity to feel pain".

My colleague from Portage—Lisgar, the official opposition justice critic, has raised a very interesting question which I would like to pose to my colleague from Kootenay—Columbia, namely this: given that the courts in Canada have defined the human fetus, prior to full delivery from its mother, as a non-human and given that the human fetus is clearly a living entity of some sort, in fact a vertebrate, and given that the human fetus according to all scientific evidence begins to feel pain from something like six months from the onset of gestation, would my colleague not agree with me that there are at least very strong potential grounds in the bill that advocates for the rights of the unborn human fetus could use it in a way unintended by the government to assert a right of protection against unreasonable pain for the human fetus? I would like him to comment on that.

● (1640)

Mr. Jim Abbott: Mr. Speaker, that is quite an amazing question and not a simple one. My speculation, because I am not a lawyer, would be that his thesis certainly would have some validity. As he says, a vertebrate, other than a human being and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain, does not take a giant leap from that point to where he has arrived.

As I indicated in my presentation, I am concerned primarily with the fact that we are going into uncharted and unknown territory with the bill. The examples I used, with which I am personally familiar from my critic role, are such that I think I have expanded to the point of this being a pattern of the government where it creates a skeleton, does not know where the skeleton will go, does not put any muscle, sinew, fat or skin on the skeleton, and then lets the courts work it out. Therein lies the problem.

Although we sometimes accuse the courts in Canada of being activists, in fact they are not activists. They are simply doing the bidding of the Liberals where the Liberals are deficient, incapable of bringing forward proper, meaningful, well defined legislation, the courts are simply being given a carte blanche. As a matter of fact they have been given a job as a result of Prime Minister Trudeau and the charter and the whole charter industry that we presently have.

Government Orders

Certainly that was a very profound question from my colleague. I have no idea where it will go but it is certainly food for thought.

Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I fully condone the sentiments expressed by my hon. colleague. He worked hard on the bill to cover a diverse range of issues and answered the technical, tough question asked by another colleague.

This particular bill is very compassionate because we have to deal with those who cannot defend themselves, the animals with which human beings have had a relationship for a very long time. We have been cohabitating with animals for such a long time that animals' rights, bioethics and those things are becoming important to the civilized society we live in.

The welfare of animals completely depends on the human race. We have a sort of symbiotic relationship with many species of animals. When we domesticate animals we have an emotional respect for our pets.

However, sometimes it is very difficult to draw a line when we look at the professionalism of working animals and those kinds of things. It is a different issue for some people if we look at the different aspects of dealing with animals, for example the transporting of animals. When we transport chickens they are crowded and hungry for long periods of time. Their conditions are so adverse that I received a letter from one of my constituents saying that chickens were flying out of the truck because they were not properly transported.

Similarly there are other ethical concerns such as the pornographic issue of animals having sexual acts with animals. It is very difficult to draw a line between bioethics, harassment and cruelty to animals.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague if he could throw some light on the harassment, cruelty or offensive types of human behaviour toward animals.

•(1645)

Mr. Jim Abbott: Mr. Speaker, I am not chicken but I want to make it perfectly clear that I and the people of the riding of Kootenay—Columbia are totally opposed to bestiality.

Because of the way in which the legislation has been put together; the fact that we could very well have researchers under siege, as we presently have in many parts of the world; the fact that ranchers, farmers and pet owners could be under siege, along with the researchers, the bill is just an ill-thought out piece of legislation.

The bill must be defeated and yet I rather suspect that the whip will be on with the Liberals. Once again they will pull forward with this legislation and once again we will create a situation of more work for the charter industry.

I congratulate the Liberals. They have done their job. They have kept the lawyers employed.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: 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 Calgary Southeast, Foreign affairs; the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest, Softwood lumber.

[*English*]

We will now proceed to the next stage of our debate where members will have 10 minutes maximum for their speeches, without questions or comments.

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address Bill C-15B. I want to pick up where my friends left off just a moment ago.

Bill C-15B represents a sea change in how government will treat the issue of animal cruelty. The sea change occurs in the fact that the government is preparing to move animal cruelty out of the list of property offences to a new, separate category and, at the same time, define an animal as a vertebrate other than a human being, and any other animal that has the capacity to feel pain.

In a way it is a shocking development. It is more shocking in the sense that the public is largely unaware that this is occurring. Hopefully we are bringing some light to this right now. The reason it is important is that if an animal is not the property of a human being, then who does it belong to? Does that mean that it has self-ownership like human beings? Does that bestow all kinds of rights on animals via the back door without the benefit of a large public debate?

If that is what it is doing, the implications are huge for the country. I wish we had more time to draw attention to this because I really do think that is where this legislation is headed. The government has been completely disingenuous in moving animals into this new category without clearly stating its intent, because what it is now doing is opening the way for the courts to do the clarifying for it.

Other people have spoken in this debate, including my friend from Calgary Southeast, about the tendency of the courts to go ahead and make law on their own. I want to remind people who think that this is some kind of a fantasy, that already the animal rights lobby has stated very clearly that they will go ahead and push this issue in the courts.

I want members to listen to what was said by Liz White, director of legislative revision with the Animal Alliance of Canada. She said:

My worry...is that people will think of this as the means to the end, but really it's [just] the beginning. It doesn't matter what the legislation says, if nobody uses it, nobody takes it to court, nobody tests it.... The onus is on humane societies and other groups on the front lines to push the legislation to the limit, test the parameters of the law and have "the courage of their convictions to lay charges."

I am a pet owner. We have a golden retriever named Jack. We have had many dogs and I have loved each animal we have owned. We have tried very hard to take care of them. As someone who comes from a rural area where we produce animals for human food, I can say that the people who are the most concerned about the good treatment of animals are farmers and ranchers. The first ones to turn in someone who they sense is being cruel to an animal is another farmer or rancher. I can guarantee that is the case. . I know these people and I know that to be true.

Government Orders

Our party has argued that if the issue is that animals are being abused and nothing is being done about it, then by all means we should strengthen the penalties or have more enforcement of the law. We have argued already that we do not have adequate enforcement in Canada today for all kinds of crimes and that instead of making all kinds of new laws, that we should first consider increasing the enforcement.

• (1650)

However, to potentially elevate the status of animals to the point where they have rights on their own is a huge mistake. It certainly is a sneaky way of going about getting something the government may want without involving the public in the debate. It is a serious issue and it has large implications.

If Bill C-15B is enacted it will have a serious impact on rural regions in Canada, and this comes at a time when rural regions are already under assault.

Many of us are deeply concerned about other legislation, such as the endangered species legislation which will have impact on farmers and ranchers. The government has failed to provide a provision in that legislation to remunerate farmers and ranchers whose land is taken out of production in order to protect an endangered species.

Many other pieces of legislation also have huge implications for farmers and ranchers, and Bill C-15B touches on one of them. I am referring to Bill C-68, the firearms legislation, which again is an assault on the rural way of life in Canada. It really indicates a deep misunderstanding of what life is like in rural Canada where a firearm is not a weapon but a tool people use to help them do their jobs.

The government in its wisdom is now going to register firearms across the country at a huge expense to taxpayers. The government has already spent over \$600 million and I guarantee it will spend many hundred million dollars more before it gets the job done only to find out that it is completely ineffective and will have no impact. It will not do anything to stop crime because criminals will not register their guns. When will Liberals get that through their heads?

Bill C-15B is wrongheaded in many different ways. I deeply regret that the government has such a shallow understanding of rural Canada. It has completely missed the boat.

I want to touch for a moment on some of the other implications of Bill C-15B. We heard the member for Macleod who is a doctor speak a few minutes ago about the potential impact the legislation would have on medical research. I want members to consider the fact that when animals are used for medical research they are being used to save human lives. However, the government seems to want to place the lives of animals ahead of the lives of humans. This reflects the government's unbelievable mix up of priorities.

The Canadian Medical Association and other research groups, which do fantastic work to protect human lives, are deeply concerned about the legislation. They asked for changes but are not receiving those changes. Many groups have asked for responsible changes. Many groups have asked for changes that would include tougher sentences for people who are convicted of abusing animals but they did not receive those changes. The

government has bulldozed straight ahead and has completely caved in to the animal rights lobby in Canada.

We must remember that many of these groups have more respect for an animal's life than they do for a human life. Some of them have blown up trucks, which is what happened a few years ago, and others have destroyed laboratories and all kinds of things. In many cases these people, in their demented view, would put human lives at risk in order to save some animals, mice, rats or whatever, that may be used in a laboratory. It is completely perverse how they have reversed their priorities.

I urge Canadians who are watching today to write to Liberal members of parliament about this issue. It is unbelievable to see these twisted priorities make their way into legislation. When members across the way get the chance to send a message to their own government, I urge them to say that this legislation is completely beyond the pale. I hope they find the courage to do exactly that.

• (1655)

Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have time to speak to the bill today.

We have heard several speakers make valuable contributions to the debate, none greater than the justice minister for the Canadian Alliance. I meant to say justice critic for the Canadian Alliance. I jumped the gun a bit. He was the justice minister in Manitoba before he came here, so he has that background. He was also the crown prosecutor in Manitoba so he has seen things from both sides and understands well what happens in courtrooms across the country.

The Alliance justice critic made many good points yesterday that were well worth reading. I encourage anyone interested in the issue to read what he said in yesterday's *Hansard*. It was an important contribution. He made it clear that he is concerned Bill C-15B would cause extreme hardship down the road for people who work with animals to make a living. It would force them to bear the costs of frivolous court cases brought forward by extreme animal rights activists and other individuals. In some cases neighbours who are ticked off for some reason may phone the police.

Whether a person is innocent or guilty the costs would be there. No one else would pick them up. That kind of burden would in some cases be too much for farmers to bear. They would not be able to handle it. The justice critic for the Canadian Alliance expressed that and many other concerns very well yesterday.

We in the Canadian Alliance fully support increasing penalties for offences related to cruelty to animals if necessary, although I ask why it would be. I am quite familiar with what happens in Alberta regarding the protection of animals. The provincial law is extremely effective. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or SPCA is designated under provincial law as the protector of animals. It is paid to do so. If there is a complaint in Alberta that a pet owner is abusing a pet the SPCA will come in and deal with it. It is extremely effective. It is not overly bureaucratic. At times it may be overly zealous and a bit hard on people accused of doing something wrong, but it is effective overall. Animals are well protected under the current law.

Government Orders

Why do we need Bill C-15B at all, particularly the animal cruelty section? We do not. If there is evidence anywhere across the country that tougher penalties are required let us look at it and perhaps we will impose them. I have not seen the evidence. The government has not presented any such evidence. In Alberta it is not needed. I ask the government to back off on the legislation. It is not too late. I hope that happens.

Bill C-15B if passed would have an extremely negative impact on farmers across the country whether intentional or not, and I believe it is. I believe it is intentional because in the two years since the original version of the bill was introduced we have been saying okay, let us put something in it to protect people who raise animals as a way of making a living. That has not happened, so I have to assume the government is intentionally targeting farmers.

Anyone who knows farmers knows that no one takes better care of animals. Their livelihoods depend on looking after their animals. People whose livelihoods depend on looking after animals are in the vast majority of cases likely to do a good job, and they do.

• (1700)

I was raised on a farm where we raised every kind of animal one can imagine. After finishing university I bought a farm. My neighbours raised livestock. I have a standing joke I have told here before. Because they live on a farm the husband, wife and children are all involved in looking after the animals. On many occasions I have heard wives or husbands say if they were as well looked after as the animals they would be happy. Farmers spend hours caring for their animals. During calving time they are up every couple of hours during the night. One could not ask for better care. In the vast majority of cases animals are extremely well looked after.

In Alberta when someone is not looking after animals properly people will phone the SPCA. Everyone knows the number. It is well advertised. No one has less tolerance for animals being abused than the people who raise them for a living. This includes farmers no matter what type of enterprise they are involved in. No one is more vigilant regarding neighbours who do not do a proper job of looking after animals. We have an effective system in Alberta. Animal abuse on farms is not tolerated.

Why do we need this legislation? Why do we need to put farmers through this? I know what would happen. It happened with the gun bill which has a lot of discretionary application. Bill C-15B would allow police, on a call from a neighbour who is mad for some reason, to go in and press charges. Whether or not people are found innocent the costs of the court case and the time involved would be real and substantial. They would have to be borne by the people defending themselves.

Why do we need more discretionary legislation? Cases like these have already happened under the gun act on many occasions. In my neighbourhood a former employee ticked off with an employer because of a disagreement phoned the police and told them the person had a gun he should not have had. It did not matter whether or not it was true. The police came in. The employer had shells which were collectors' items. They were packaged in the original boxes. The police tore them apart and destroyed them. That should not happen. The police normally would not do that kind of thing but they did in this case. It happens in many cases. I know of others. It

caused a great loss to that individual. This type of thing would happen under Bill C-15B.

Whether intentionally or not the government would be putting a great burden on farmers across the country. I care about that. I will not stand by and allow it to happen if I can stop it. That is why I am speaking to this piece of legislation today. It should be thrown out. It would make things worse, not better. It would not do a thing to protect animals from being abused.

In 1994 when the former justice minister talked about how the gun registry would save lives we asked him to show us evidence that it would save even one life. It is recorded in *Hansard* in a response to a question in question period. The minister said he could not produce evidence because there was none. He said the government simply knew the registry would save lives.

Well, it has not. Nor will it. Bill C-15B would be the same. It would not protect one animal. My opinion is based on knowledge of what is happening in the real world. The government had better become connected with the real world or legislation like this will continue to come forward and cause problems for innocent people.

It is important that the government admits it once again made a mistake and backs off the legislation. If it feels parts of it are necessary let us pick them out, deal with them separately and put in place good legislation, because this is not. Let us throw it out.

• (1705)

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to most of the debate here today. I always like to pose questions with regard to government bills.

First, what fruit would the animal cruelty legislation bear? I predict the following. People who see themselves as do-gooders would try to crack down on people running family farms and other operations. Farmers or ranchers practising what they consider to be normal animal husbandry would wind up being called criminals. They would face having to go to court or preliminary hearings. They would have to pay a lot of money to lawyers. The legislation would impose on them yet one more burden in addition to those they already bear in trying to maintain their family farms, cattle ranches or other operations.

Some ministers across the way may be able to eke out a couple of extra campaign workers or votes from their urban constituencies. However at the end of the day the bill would be another pain for the people who deal with animal husbandry on a regular basis. People in urban constituencies think they know better but they live in cities and do not deal with animals that much.

Government Orders

Second, who is asking for Bill C-15B? Who demands this type of legislation? I do not hear veterinarians going hog wild about it and saying we need this type of legislation. It is being promoted by a bunch of people who see it as their moral crusade. I have met with some of these people. They do not deal with animals on a regular basis, certainly not to the same extent as farmers, ranchers, veterinarians or others who make their living dealing with animals.

Again, what fruit would Bill C-15B bear? It would be a burden and a cost on average ranchers and farmers. It would be one more regulatory nightmare they do not need. As a result more of them would face difficulty, financially and otherwise, and we would see an increased corporatization of farms.

Who is pushing for the legislation? The Liberals across the way would fall victim yet again to special interests instead of dealing with the broad cross section of the Canadian public, a public which happens to live in a lot of rural areas on the prairies. These are our votes so why should the Liberals care? They did not care about the wheat board. They did not care about Bill C-68 and the long gun registry. They do not care about farmers or ranchers with regard to Bill C-15B. I guess that is the way the cookie crumbles. That is too bad.

One question I have been asking throughout the day has to do with private property rights and search and seizure. I will relate a story to the House. I recently took in a gun auction on my birthday and was told about someone who had been raided. The police had arrived at the door.

Hon. members should try to imagine this. It is a true story. The person had purchased a firearm at some point. The paperwork was fine. It was absolutely tickety-boo because the person had done everything right. All of a sudden a bunch of police officers in S.W.A. T. team tactical gear arrived at the door at 10 o'clock at night demanding to see all the paperwork and go on a search of the house.

• (1710)

As it turns out, in that case the person was lucky enough to have all the paperwork at hand to show them. That way they did not have to be kept up throughout the night with the police searching farms. Imagine that someone who had their paperwork in proper order had police arrive at their door at 10 p.m. to hassle them. It could potentially have turned into an affair of several hours rooting through that person's home. That is a real consequence of what the government has done with regard to firearms registration. A shame is what it is.

There are a couple of other things I would like to add to the debate which I have not yet done today with all the questions I have asked on this subject. There are things the government can do that will actually go after either the criminal misuse of firearms or terrorists or real criminals. Those are some of the things I would like to see the government focus on. It is a shame it does not.

I have been down to our border posts between Quebec and the United States. There are eight of them along the Quebec border. I have visited them a number of times. Some visits were previous to September 11 and I did not bother to ask very many detailed questions at the time. Subsequently I took the time to ask some of our customs officials what changes they would like to see as we do

not seem to get straight answers from the ministers across the way. They do not like to tell us what the problems are or be honest about the problems in their departments or what they actually need.

The customs officials on the front lines say they want sniffer dogs. I do not know if anyone will believe it but for eight border crossings there is one little dog's nose, which is only worth a couple of hours because it gets fatigued and is not able to distinguish between various substances after a few hours of intensive work. One would think that perhaps there would be enough dogs to cover every single border crossing if we were really serious about apprehending criminals.

If people were not just trying to buy votes or looking for a band-aid solution and were really trying to apprehend people who smuggle substances across our borders and if they were really into nabbing criminals and terrorists, there would probably be enough dogs to cover our manned border crossings. But no, instead of having eight dogs, let alone having more for different shifts at 24 hour border crossings, there is just one sniffer dog for all of them. It is ridiculous.

Imagine it is late at night. A car is crossing the border crossing and the customs officer would like to check underneath the vehicle as he or she suspects there may be something wrong. Not only is there a lack of light but it is also drizzling, raining or snowing and visibility is greatly reduced. Perhaps there is even fog, a haze or blowing dust.

Customs officials would like to have a vehicle lift. Rather than relying on a mirror which a person has to use light refraction with in dimly lit circumstances as no one can really see anything, an officer would like to put a questionable vehicle on a lift, raise it up and look underneath. That is entirely reasonable to me.

What customs officials are asking for are not things that aggrandize their own personal titles. They are not asking for executive curls on their uniforms or gold buttons. They are asking for sniffer dogs and vehicle lifts. These are very practical things.

I am going to recap some of the things that have been raised today by my various colleagues, what I think are the best aspects that have been brought forward with this debate.

The government is spending huge amounts of money, \$700 million plus, close to \$1 billion, on a long gun registry instead of twinning highways or irrigation. Those are things that people in rural communities, the farmers and the ranchers could really use. It is practical, tangible stuff. It provides real, long term benefits. It is actually an enhancement of the Canadian economy and our productivity. For some reason, the government is not considering those things.

The government is continuing to spend money on court challenges programs that allow prisoners to use taxpayer dollars to challenge the government with regard to how many types of toothpaste they have.

Government Orders

• (1715)

Imagine how crazy that is. People would think that prisoners in Canada would be happy just getting one brand of toothpaste. No, they have launched court challenges using our taxpayer dollars over the issue of their not having enough brands of toothpaste to choose from.

I see that my time is up and I have so much more that I could communicate to the House. I will leave hon. members with this thought. This system of either registration or dealing with animal rights aspects of things that interferes with animal husbandry on farms and ranches is ridiculous and is only going to wind up in more red tape and a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, anybody watching the debates today on television or perhaps reading *Hansard* in the future might well ask why people were talking about toothpaste selection for criminals and sniffer dogs and so on. They may ask what on earth that had to do with the animal cruelty bill that is before us today. They could be forgiven for asking that question. I think it is a reasonable question.

Why is that happening? Why is it that not a single Liberal has been up today to defend the bill? Maybe there was earlier in the day, but certainly not in the last few hours. Not a single member of the government is willing to defend the bill at this point in time. Why is that? Why is it that out of approximately 170 Liberal members of parliament not one is getting up to defend the bill right now?

Yet on this side of the House almost every Canadian Alliance MP is getting up to speak against the bill. They are being very repetitive. They are talking about twinning highways and sniffer dogs and things like that. It is a reasonable question, why is that happening?

The root cause of this is frankly the lack of democracy in this place. If people out there do not already know, it is because they are not really debating that we have in this place. They are statements that are put on the record.

Even if we convince every Liberal member that what we are saying about the bill is correct, they will be told to vote for it when we vote on it in a few days time. Even the ones who are desperately against it, who have had tons of input from their own constituents that they should vote against it, will still vote for it. It is because this place for the most part is controlled not by the debates that we have here, not by logic and reasonable discussion, but by decisions that are made elsewhere. The decisions are made by unelected people, by a few people in the Prime Minister's Office, by bureaucrats who often make incorrect decisions.

It defies logic to believe that on the government side of the House Liberal MPs are not receiving the same sort of input that we are. That there is not a single Liberal MP who has not had a letter, a phone call, an e-mail or a fax from a constituent pointing out the problems with this bill defies logic.

I have certainly had letters from the other side urging me to pass it as soon as possible. To those people I have sent letters explaining why we are trying to hold it up. It is because there are legitimate concerns about the way the bill will apply to normal farming practices, to research practices and unfairly to people who may

unwittingly cause harm to an animal. These are legitimate concerns and they should be answered by the government.

When people elect their MPs and they send them here, they are hoping to see change. They are hoping that we will come here and be able to effect meaningful change. They hope that when they give us input on their concerns that somehow we will have debates and that we will convince the other side that we are correct and changes to the bill should be made.

Admittedly, sometimes there is incremental change. Sometimes we do cause the government to move slightly. Sometimes pressure groups do the same thing. But the system here remains a long way from being truly democratic. As the saying goes, there are two things people should never see made and they are hot dogs and legislation.

Students of federal politics can certainly attest to the fact that although we are supposed to have a democracy based on the Westminster model, in fact we have quite a distinctly different system here in Canada. It more closely resembles a medieval fiefdom than a democracy. Let us look behind the scenes and see what sort of situation leads to the situation we find ourselves in today.

Our Prime Minister enjoys more power than virtually any leader of any other western democracy. Look at the president of the United States. He can have his initiatives vetoed. It is impossible in this place for anybody, including the Liberals on that side, including the minister of fisheries who is standing there. If he does not like something the Prime Minister is trying to do, he has no power to prevent it from happening.

• (1720)

There is something wrong with that scene. It is not the way to get good legislation. It is no wonder that many of the bills that get passed in this place turn out to be disastrous.

I can remember a classic example a few years ago when we were making changes to the railways act. No one, not a single one of us in this entire House noticed that we were voting away our own railway passes. No one in this place had bothered to read what we were discussing. It was not for a month or two later that people discovered that we had voted away our own railway travel passes and the government had to rush through an amendment.

I guess we are all to blame for not reading the legislation properly. I would advance the possibility that it is not unreasonable that the opposition members, other than the critic, would not always read every piece of legislation. However there is no excuse for the government to be putting forward pieces of legislation when it does not even know what the impact is going to be. Not one of the bureaucrats, not a single member on the government side noticed that they were voting away their own railway passes.

In a much more complex piece of legislation such as the one we are discussing today, what is it that has been missed? What is it that the Liberals are ignoring? What is it that they refuse to acknowledge is wrong in this bill? There are things wrong in this bill. We can give many examples.

Government Orders

There is the badly formulated employment equity bill. Look at the distortions that are out there in the marketplace now. One of my constituents phoned me to complain that the public service would no longer employ her because she was not part of a visible minority. I phoned the office where she had made a job application and that was confirmed. What sort of place are we running when we pass legislation that does that to our citizens?

There is the gun registry that my colleague mentioned. What a disaster. When that legislation was coming through the House, we warned the government that it would cost 10 times more than what it had predicted. It promised a cost of \$80 million. It is almost up to \$1 billion now and still the commissioner of police cannot identify a single crime that has been solved or prevented by that registry. What a waste of money.

If only we could have real debates in this place with real votes at the end that were meaningful and counted.

Sadly, even our private members' business has become more partisan as time has gone by. We had an initiative a few years ago where we changed the voting process for private members' bills so that we started the voting from the back rows, presumably so that the front row would have less influence on the voting. It has not made any difference because those in the front row I guess still send their message around and make sure that they get their way.

To the average person, the behaviour and the performance that goes on in this place must seem bizarre but there is a simple reason for it. Most of us, I guess we could say almost work in a culture of fear. If we do not behave ourselves, if we do not adhere to the will of the whip, then we miss out on all the rewards. There are no travel junkets. We do not get to sit on our favourite committee. We will not get the things that we want out of this. Yet all the while the interests of the Canadian people fall into the background because of the structured nature of this place.

Even my opportunity to get up and speak today was programmed. Most of the day I knew almost exactly within 10 minutes when I would stand in this place to speak. During question period, everyone knows who is going to be next up. It is not really a question period where there is freedom for a member with an issue to jump up and catch the attention of the Speaker in the tradition that it was meant to be. We sit in our assigned places. We take our assigned times for the speeches. We lobby to get our assigned time for question period. We lobby to get our assigned Standing Order 31 one minute statement.

This is not democracy. This is not the way we should be passing legislation in this place.

We should be having meaningful debates, not trying to hold up a bill today, as we are, just by talking about anything like I am talking about democracy in this place rather than the content of the bill because there is no alternative. There is no way to convince the government that it is a bad bill. I had no option but to fill up 10 minutes so that we can delay it for another 10 minutes, so that the next colleague in my caucus can delay it for 10 minutes as he is going to do, so that we can go into tomorrow and start it all over again.

●(1725)

What a sad commentary on the way we run this place. Is this really the way a government should function?

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, in listening to my colleague's wisdom on so many issues pertaining to the bill, I was so excited, especially when he mentioned that I was to stand and speak, and how I would delay the bill. I beg to differ on that part because I know that my words will be just illuminating to the other side, to make changes to the bill, to improve the bill and to actually have democracy work in this place once and for all. I know you have faith in me, Madam Speaker, to be able to so do. I hope not to let you down.

As I stand in this place at this time of the day, the energy and the electricity in this place are beyond words. I am so excited to see that there is an audience here who wants to hear what I have to say and what I would like to add to the bill. For the people who have been tuned in watching their legislators talk about the bill, I am sure it has evoked a lot of emotion.

Cruelty to animals is something that all Canadians clearly are concerned about. Almost everyone I know has a pet of some sort at home. They love their animals and they want to make sure those animals are loved and protected and that no one abuses their well-being. I do not think we would find very many Canadians who would disagree with that sort of principle, but in attempting to look at the bill we are discussing here today, Bill C-15B, the cruelty to animals bill, there obviously are some concerns, which many of my colleagues have raised during today's debate, as to how in fact this may affect one side of the equation in trying to approach protection of animals.

As I said in one of my earlier comments when I was asking one of my colleagues a question, it seems to me that the government, when producing legislation, tends to try to divide and conquer Canadians rather than bring all stakeholders together, which is such a shame. We saw that sort of attitude when it came to the endangered species legislation. We have seen that sort of attitude with other legislation. Instead of trying to find consensus and bring the various stakeholders together, the attitude is to divide and conquer and see if it can pass legislation where unfortunately one side over the other will be negatively affected.

When I talk about the stakeholders in this case, I am talking about people who are involved in the production of animals in the form of livestock, such as ranchers and farmers, and those who are obviously far from that sort of production and activity, people who live in urban centres or larger towns. Unfortunately many of the arguments on both sides are not coming out. They are not being dealt with effectively and are not being held at merit for the base of their arguments.

Government Orders

In my own riding I have had so many constituents who have taken the time to communicate to me how important they feel the bill is and how they would like me to support it. I think I will support it on that basis because I have had an overwhelming indication from my riding that my constituents would like me to do so. That still does not make it right, because on the other side, the rural arguments I spoke about, there are real concerns. The government has done such a terrible job in trying to raise those effectively so that we can get people on the same page.

We know what the bill is supposed to do. I will just take a moment to read it into the record. The stated purpose of the bill is to consolidate animal cruelty offences and increase the maximum penalties. It also provides a definition of animal and moves cruelty to animals provisions from the property offences part of the criminal code.

A lot of Canadians may ask what has changed since the last time this type of bill was presented in the House or since the last time we debated it. The government has made certain changes from the previously proposed legislation dealing with cruelty to animals, Bill C-17. The main change was a requirement for a person to act "wilfully or recklessly" in killing or harming animals. However, there are still significant concerns that many organizations, businesses and individuals have with respect to the bill. I started to talk about some of those concerns among some industry people. The people who do have concerns about this legislation, and I will go on to talk about some of them, are agricultural groups, farmers and industry workers. As well, one of my colleagues addressed the idea of medical researchers quite thoroughly this afternoon in regard to some of the concerns they have raised.

• (1730)

All these groups have consistently said that they welcome amendments to the criminal code that would clarify and strengthen provisions relating to animal cruelty. They obviously do not condone intentional animal abuse or neglect in any way. Many of these groups obviously rely on the production of livestock. Their whole livelihoods are based on that. In the production process, some of them actually have relationships that are of the utmost respect for these particular animals because they know that their livelihoods are based on that. The last thing they would ever imagine is to put any type of livestock under any form of cruelty. In fact, they look at ways to be able to minimize the risk or hurt to many of these animals in their production processes.

Many of these groups in fact support the intent of the bill, as its objective is to modernize the law and increase penalties for offences relating to animal cruelty and neglect, but they do, however, have some concerns as to how far the bill can then penalize them if there is an unfortunate feeling that there has been neglect on their part. As I have said, many of them have never approached the issue of animal cruelty in a negative way. They do not intend to hurt the animals. Despite the minor improvements to the legislation, these groups advise that the bill requires significant amendments before their concerns are alleviated. There are a number of main concerns they have raised.

I would like to focus on just a couple of these issues. My colleagues have talked about a few of these issues, especially when it

comes to the definition of animal. The definition in the bill is so broad that we could have a number of challenges in court and a lot of confusion as to how animals may fall into these categories. It sure raises fear in my mind about what sort of door the government is opening by not looking specifically at how we can tighten up that part of the legislation.

There is also this idea, which I think hits it on the head, of moving the animal cruelty section out of property offences to a new section in its own right. That is seen by many as emphasizing animal rights as opposed to animal welfare. This is a very important point because the significant alteration in the underlying principles of the legislation is something that needs to be carefully considered. The Canadian Alliance told the government in committee, at question period and in other ways, that this is something that really needs to be considered carefully. The Canadian Alliance asked government members to retain the cruelty to animal provisions in the property offences section of the criminal code but they refused.

It becomes a fine line, especially when it comes to the idea of animal welfare and animal rights. That is something we all have to come to terms with, because when it comes to the development and production of many of these animals there is no doubt that the concern among Canadians is that these animals are being treated properly, cared for and not being abused. As I pointed out, many of these groups that have a concern with the change realize that it is the last thing that they do when they approach how to treat these animals. They actually treat them with the utmost respect and try to make it as painless as possible and give them the best conditions they can have outside of the wild.

I would like to take a moment to talk about the whole process of trying to put forward amendments. We in opposition try really hard to work with the government, to improve its legislation and support it where we can, but we are shut out at every turn. The opposition has tried on a number of occasions in committee to make legislation better. We know that there is a majority government and that the government will pass the legislation it wants passed.

What disappoints us is that when we try to put amendments forward and try to work with the government to improve legislation so that everyone can live with it happily ever after, the government is concerned only about itself and its own interests and refuses to bring stakeholders together. That is just a shame. I wish we could work together more effectively to protect animals and to bring all stakeholders together but in fact the government is going to force the opposition to vote against the bill and that will not do animals any good.

Private Members' Business

● (1735)

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, today we are talking about Bill C-15B, which refers to the prevention of cruelty to animals act and some aspects of the Firearms Act.

I have spoken to the bill before. As a matter of fact, Madam Speaker will recall that I have spoken to the bill a couple of times. I do so from the standpoint of being a farmer for 35 years. I would like to pick up on some of the comments made by my colleague from Edmonton—Strathcona. Although he does not have experience in raising livestock he certainly has made some excellent points about animal welfare.

Some groups nowadays talk about animal rights. I have a bit of a problem with that. I have no problem, however, when we talk about animal welfare. My colleague made the point that not only it is in the farmers' and producers' best interests not to be cruel to livestock, but it is also in their interests to make sure that livestock does not even suffer any undue stress. Stress affects the way the livestock perform.

For instance, in regard to milk cows, I know there are groups in Canada who think that even the taking of milk from a milk cow is somehow a violation of the animal's rights. We can see how I would have a problem with that concept. If milk cows are not properly fed, if they do not have a high protein, fairly high fat and high energy diet, their milk production drops. After all, producing milk does two things. It supplies nutrients to a hungry nation and it supplies a livelihood to the person who does the milking. If the animal is stressed, milk production goes down, the hungry nation goes with less milk, unless more milk cows are provided, and the producer and his family make do with less income. It only follows, then, that it is in the best interests of the livestock producer, the dairy people or the poultry producers to put their animals under the least stress possible for the benefit of everybody, for the benefit of the system, for the benefit of the country, for the benefit of the economy.

I have no problem with dealing harshly with people who deliberately, maliciously and for no reason at all are cruel to animals. I have no problem with dealing severely with them. However, when the point is reached that the penalty for killing one's dog is a more severe penalty than it is for killing one's neighbour or wife, then I think we have crossed the line of common sense, and indeed, reality.

If we need to strengthen the laws to deal more harshly with cruelty to animals, I think it only follows that we need to strengthen the law so that we deal more harshly with people who are cruel to people, not only for murder but for mental cruelty. We all know people who have suffered at the hands of a parent, a sibling or people at school. There is a case in the news right now about a young person who took his own life and the possibility is that he did that as a result of the taunting and teasing received in school. That is the worst form of cruelty, cruelty to the point that it may have driven this young person to end his life at age 14 because he simply just could not bear the thought of continuing this miserable existence and being constantly teased.

● (1740)

If it is necessary to be more severe and have more severe penalties for those who abuse animals then let us balance the scale. Let us put

something on the other side of the scale and make the penalties more severe for those people who are cruel and malicious to people.

Over the years we raised thousands of head of cattle for slaughter. According to what I read in the bill, even if one causes instantaneous death to an animal, one might be subject to these severe penalties. I cannot quite comprehend that because oftentimes in the cafeteria we are served roast beef, hamburger or fried chicken. Today the entree was fish. It is necessary to kill these animals to make meat. Someone has to kill these animals and I am sure that we do it in a humane way but under this law if the animal dies immediately it may be subject to penalty. That is ridiculous.

It is also ridiculous that in committee at least 150 amendments to the bill were passed. Somehow they were dropped, lost or kicked out somewhere between the committee and the House. What kind of way is that to run the legislature? When we—

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Order, please. I have received notice from the hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley that she is unable to move her motion during private members' hour on Friday, April 12. It has not been possible to arrange an exchange of positions in the order of precedence. Accordingly, I am directing the table officers to drop that item of business to the bottom of the order of precedence.

● (1745)

[Translation]

Private members' hour will be suspended, and the House will proceed with the business before it.

It being 5.44 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CONTRAVENTIONS ACT AND CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT (MARIJUANA)

The House resumed from February 18 consideration of the motion that Bill C-344, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (marijuana), be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, whenever the occasion permits I try in my remarks to the House to develop arguments that form part of a larger, more coherent whole than is permitted by the 10 minute speaking slots that are assigned to us under the Standing Orders.

Private Members' Business

A larger, more complete picture on an issue under debate in the House can be developed by means of public addresses, published papers, opeds or other media. In this way I try to ensure that my contributions to the debates that take place in the Chamber will become part of what I hope will develop over time into an ever more complete, thoughtful and well reasoned organic whole on whatever subject is under discussion.

Ideally, the longer term result of this approach would be that as time progresses these disparate commentaries could together be taken as part of a coherent and tolerably exhaustive review of the background to a subject as it percolates its way through the realm of public debate. By the time it is ready to be dealt with legislatively I will have completed a thorough review of the subject accompanied where possible by something that amounts to a kind of policy manifesto.

In my remarks today I will be expanding upon a thesis with regard to the subject of banned and illegal substances that I had partly addressed in an essay entitled "Should we end prohibition?" in the October 2001 edition of the journal *Policy Options*. Today's remarks are given some context by these earlier thoughts. If hon. members find what I say to be of interest I encourage them to seek further information along the same lines by looking at that essay.

Today's debate centres on Bill C-344, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (marijuana). Under the bill it would no longer be a criminal offence to possess marijuana for personal use. However, the possession of marijuana would remain a non-criminal offence and persons found to be in possession of the substance would face fines of \$200 for a first offence, \$500 for a second offence and \$1,000 for any subsequent offences.

Currently, the penalties laid out under subsection 462.2(a) of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act for a first conviction can include fines as high as \$100,000 or six months in prison. The penalties for reoffending range as high as \$300,000 and one year's imprisonment.

The present standard for determining whether marijuana is intended for personal use would remain in place under the proposed law. If any person were found to be in possession of amounts in excess of three kilograms this would be regarded as prima facie evidence of an intent to sell some since it is highly unlikely that one person could possibly consume such a large quantity on his or her own.

My inclination is to support the proposed law for reasons that I will explain in a moment. However, if the law makes it through the legislative process and is presented to the House for third reading I will attempt to hold a survey of my constituents as to how to vote and I will respect their wishes even if these wishes do not correspond with my own preferences.

With this caveat in place I would like to state my personal views. I favour the legislation for two reasons, the second of which I will spend more time on than the first.

First, it would greatly reduce the amount of Canada's limited police and law enforcement assets that are being consumed by the enforcement of the current Criminal Code provisions relating to

marijuana possession. About \$200 million is spent each year in this country on enforcing laws against the simple possession for personal use of all illegal drugs. Of this, \$150 million goes to the enforcement of the criminal sanctions against the use of marijuana. This proposed law would therefore save our police departments \$150 million each year which could be used instead to deal with the many other urgent issues that face our law enforcement officials.

Second, it would pave the way for marijuana to be used under careful monitoring for medical purposes. The most important of these purposes would be for use as a pain relieving agent. It is to this subject that I wish to focus the remaining portion of my remarks.

Marijuana, whether smoked or ingested in another manner, can provide relief from chronic pain and in some cases from debilitating pain when no other remedy is available. It is for this reason that several American states, including California and Arizona, have legalized the use of marijuana for pain relief.

Those of us who do not suffer chronic pain in our everyday lives have little idea just how devastating it can be. In many cases severe, untreated pain can be so overwhelming that individuals who are not able to find relief, find that the pain outweighs all of life's joys. In extreme cases life ceases to be worth living.

● (1750)

I will give one example among the many from which I could choose. A retired New York state police officer named David Covillion suffered chronic back pain as the result of a traffic accident. He was deprived pain medication in the form of a prescription drug that combines acetaminophen and the narcotic oxycodone after his long term use of the drug raised red flags with medical authorities. When this occurred Mr. Covillion tried to go from one doctor to another seeking narcotic prescriptions. Mr. Covillion described his pain in the following words:

As I ran out of medication, I was confined to my bed totally, because it hurt to move...At times I'd have liked to just take an axe and chop my arm right off, but I would have had to take half my neck with it.

When he had been completely cut off from prescription narcotics Mr. Covillion approached Jack Kevorkian, the famous suicide doctor, to ask how to end his life. Dr. Kevorkian refused to assist Mr. Covillion end his life. He then turned to a group called the National Chronic Pain Outreach Association which for a few months was able to re-establish his access to the pain relievers he needed. During this period his quality of life improved and Mr. Covillion's story came to public light. He conducted a number of interviews including the one from which I have just quoted. However he was cut off again from medical supplies, his pain became too intense to bear, and on September 11, 1996 he killed himself.

In a general sense Mr. Covillion's story draws our attention to the need for more generous rules for the distribution of prescription pain relief. In his case the medication in question was not marijuana. It was a story like this one that caused voters in some parts of the United States to reconsider their harsh rules with regard to all forms of pain relief, including marijuana.

Private Members' Business

In California, in 1996, the voters chose by means of a binding referendum to change their state's laws to allow the use of marijuana as a means of relieving chronic pain. This change to California's law and the United States federal government's subsequent decision to ignore state law and to continue to prosecute the users of medical marijuana allows us to engage in an interesting experiment in finding out what happens when marijuana is available for the relief of chronic pain and what happens when it is taken away.

I would like to illustrate this story by referring to a specific example. I am referring to a man named Peter McWilliams, the editor of *Liberty* magazine of which I am also an editor. In 1996 he fell ill with AIDS and with non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Like many people who are afflicted with these illnesses his medication caused him to have severe nausea.

In 1996 it became legal to use marijuana for pain relief and Peter McWilliams began to use it. This allowed him to temporarily conquer his nausea and as a result he was able to keep his symptoms under control. However federal authorities cracked down and seized his marijuana from him. In order for him to be freed from jail where he would not have had access to his medication and to necessary lifesaving treatments he was required to put up as bond his brother's and mother's house. He also had to submit to regular urine testing to confirm that he was not using drugs. As a result his viral load began to soar. He said:

Unable to keep down the life-saving prescription medications, by November 1998, four months after my arrest, my viral load soared to more than 256,000. In 1996 when my viral load was only 12,500, I had already developed an AIDS-related cancer...Even so, the government would not yield. It continued to urine test me. If marijuana were found in my system, my mother and brother would lose their homes and I would be returned to prison.

He stopped using marijuana, and tried to carry on with his medication and the nausea he suffered without the aid of the pain relief drug. On June 14, 1999, his home care nurse arrived at his home to find him dead, having choked on his own vomit.

I suggest that the availability of marijuana for medical use and for pain relief could prevent this sort of tragedy. For this reason the legislation is an excellent measure which the House should consider.

• (1755)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-344, an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

I already had the opportunity to indicate that I would be wholeheartedly supporting my colleague's private member's bill. Why? Let me try to explain myself as clearly as possible.

I believe that the debate our colleague has launched with this bill requires us to ask the following fundamental question: should a person found in possession of less than 30 grams of marihuana be considered a criminal? Should this person be subject to a possible six month prison sentence and, or a fine of \$1,000 for being found in possession of the said substance?

It is important to remember that having a criminal record can have a major impact on one's life—problems finding a job, problems travelling outside of Canada's borders and problems reintegrating

into the community—all because of being found guilty of simple possession or marihuana, as set out in the criminal code.

Our colleague is encouraging us to give this some thought by suggesting a certain form of decriminalization. The bill proposes a maximum fine of \$1,000 or six months' imprisonment. What this boils down to is a form of decriminalization.

As I have already said, I therefore support the very essence of this bill without hesitation. We in the Bloc Québécois are not the only ones who want to see this decriminalization. I have already said publicly a few months ago that I would like to see a pilot project similar to the one in Belgium introduced in Canada, in other words a form of decriminalization, as long as members of the public do not use it in a socially irresponsible manner.

For example, I feel that it is no more acceptable to drive one's car after using marihuana than it is to drive with a blood alcohol content of more than 0.08% after having consumed some form of alcohol. As long as an individual has less than 30 grams of marihuana in their possession and is not behaving in a socially irresponsible manner, we could consider a form of decriminalization. This concludes my remarks on the substance of the bill.

Today, however, I wish to speak to the motion and to the government's amendment, which would prevent us, as parliamentarians, not only from debating fundamental issues, which is what the public expects of us—and this is another such issue—but also from being able to vote on such an issue.

The government has brought forward an amendment that will mean that the Standing Committee on Justice will not be able to study this bill. Whether one is for or against the bill introduced by the Canadian Alliance member, that is neither here nor there. What the government has done by bringing forward this amendment is to make it impossible for parliamentarians to vote on this fundamental issue, which is what the people of Quebec and of Canada expect of them.

Through this motion, the government has indicated that the member's bill, if passed, cannot be studied in committee. It is as though the government already expected parliamentarians to vote in favour of the bill, and is seeking to avoid further legislative measures and studies in committee.

• (1800)

This is, to our minds, a totally undemocratic approach. It limits the opportunity of citizens, and MPs in particular, to debate an issue and then reach a conclusion on it. We are parliamentarians who represent the people for whom we have a duty to act as legislators. The public expects us to do so as well as possible.

The stalling tactic being used by this government, with the motion from the hon. member for Erie—Lincoln, is totally unacceptable. I am issuing a solemn appeal to all in this House, regardless of which side of the floor they are on, whether Bloc Quebecois, Alliance or Liberal. I invite them to take into consideration the fact that the government's motion and amendment are aimed at preventing parliamentarians from voting on this fundamental issue.

We as parliamentarians, regardless of which side of the floor we are on, have a mandate. The public expects us to enact legislation. The members on the other side there, who believe they hold the true power in this House, must vote down the government's motion.

I realize that others want to speak as well. I trust that the colleagues on the other side who may speak after me will back up our approach, which is that the members of this House must be able to decide on issues and must vote.

For the sake of freedom of expression, for the sake of the freedom of MPs to vote on important issues when a House committee has so decided, for the sake of democracy, my hope is not merely that the government's amendment will be defeated, but that at the end of the day there will be a vote in favour of this matter so that the committee may at last look into it.

[English]

Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to enter the debate on Bill C-344, a private members' bill put forward by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

The bill, if enacted, would change the type of proceedings and legal regime governing the offences of possession for the purposes of trafficking in one gram or less of cannabis resin and 30 grams or less of cannabis marijuana. In other words, it would decriminalize the possession of smaller amounts of marijuana.

In thinking through this very important policy issue, I would like to thank my colleagues and friends in Esquimalt and Saanich and the Gulf Islands in the Victoria area for their advice and input. Having said that, the comments which follow are my own.

I support the thrust of what is being proposed for reasons that I am about to elaborate on. The debate, however, should be focused on whether or not the amounts of cannabis proposed are the appropriate levels and also whether or not the bill goes far enough.

[Translation]

In order to create a policy on this, a fine balance must be struck with respect to a number of factors. These include the social and economic costs, the health effects, and the effectiveness and efficiency of various possible strategies.

•(1805)

[English]

First I will give some background. After caffeine, alcohol, tobacco and certain prescription medications, cannabis is the most popular psychoactive drug in Canada. It is the most commonly used illicit drug in the country.

In this debate we should not forget that the use of marijuana does have health effects. There is a link between chronic heavy marijuana

Private Members' Business

use and damage to the respiratory system similar to that caused by tobacco. Cannabis impairs co-ordination and may affect memory.

[Translation]

There are other negative effects as well. We know that marijuana is a substance that merits serious attention.

[English]

One of the strongest arguments, in my view, to support the decriminalization of marijuana possession arises from the misdirection of significant resources that are focused on the control and enforcement of marijuana possession. These people and budgets could be redeployed to combat the use of more destructive drugs such as cocaine, crack and heroin. Costs of illicit drug enforcement to Canadian police, courts and correctional services according to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse total more than \$400 million per year.

Seventy per cent of all drug offences that occurred in Canada in 1995 were offences involving cannabis. About half of all drug offences were offences for the simple possession of cannabis. Approximately 2,000 Canadians are sent to jail every year for cannabis possession. However the evidence suggests that the control and enforcement measures do not deter the use of marijuana.

The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act provides a maximum sentence of a \$1,000 fine and/or six months imprisonment for first time cannabis possession offenders and double the amounts for repeat offenders. Many of these charges lead to jail terms or fines and a stigma of a criminal record. This could mean the death of a job offer to someone otherwise completely qualified and ready to take on a new challenge or career. Despite this, cannabis use remains high and there is no demonstrated relationship between enforcement measures and cannabis use.

It is reported in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* that 1.5 million Canadians smoke marijuana for recreational purposes. A large number of Canadians use cannabis for medical reasons. A study in Toronto found 92% of the drug users who were convicted offenders reported continuing use, typically at the same level as when they were convicted.

•(1810)

[Translation]

It is equally problematic to realize how much cannabis users flout the law. Few of us have not walked into a room or passed a spot where there was an overwhelming odour of marijuana.

[English]

British Columbia's marijuana industry in the underground economy employs an estimated 150,000 people and earns some \$4 billion per year. This certainly does not justify its use or the rationale for its decriminalization but it does give food for thought.

Private Members' Business

Our government more recently legitimized the medicinal use of marijuana. I applaud this step, but more is needed.

A six month trial that was recently completed in the United Kingdom in Lambeth, South London forcefully makes the point that police efforts could be better directed to hard drugs rather than marijuana. Under the experiment people found in possession of small quantities of cannabis were given a formal warning rather than being arrested and cautioned. The six month initiative is estimated to have saved 2,000 police hours and saved potential court costs of £4 million. In addition, the approach used in the six month trial led to a 19% increase in arrests of cocaine, crack, heroin and other hard drug dealers.

In my riding of Etobicoke North hard drugs are a problem and need to be focused on.

At the same time, the number of arrests of cannabis dealers rose by 11%, suggesting that police officers may have targeted dealers found with larger amounts who were excluded from the warning scheme.

The very significant and positive results of this experiment are being closely reviewed by the city of London's metropolitan police with a view to extending the policy throughout the city.

The question before us today, if one supports some form of marijuana decriminalization, is whether or not Bill C-344 is the appropriate response and instrument to achieve this end. In my view it is not for the following reasons.

A system of fines, while preferred to incarceration, may end up consuming more police and more court resources than the current system. In two jurisdictions in Australia, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, where marijuana offences are not criminally prosecuted or penalized but where fines are imposed, approximately 45% failed to pay the fine and eventually ended up before the courts.

The Lambeth, South London experience in my view may be the more appropriate policy model to examine and pursue. In my view, trafficking and possession of cannabis for the purposes of trafficking, even for small amounts, should continue to be viewed as a serious offence. This bill does not appear to do that.

For these reasons I will not be supporting Bill C-344 in its present form. Perhaps a committee of the House, like the special committee on the non-medical use of drugs, could review the subject matter more comprehensively.

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on Bill C-344 and I wish to underline my support for this bill and congratulate the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. To me this is a very important piece of legislation. It is long overdue in terms of government action and much needed from all aspects. I wanted to indicate this although it is private members' hour.

My support for this bill is certainly in line with NDP policy and our longstanding position to decriminalize marijuana. There are obvious reasons for our support. They have been enunciated by many members in the House. One is obviously and clearly the whole question of a more appropriate way than is presently the case for

dealing with a victimless crime and providing an avenue for dealing with marijuana in a more appropriate non-criminal way.

The second reason, as we have heard so clearly from the Association of Canadian Police Chiefs, is that we are talking about a lot of money and a lot of resources that are tied up in pursuing folks for possession of marijuana.

I understand from the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca that we are looking at about \$400 million a year as a result of the police having to deal with charges for possession and prosecuting those offences. That is a lot of money that could be invested in so many other desperately needed areas of our criminal justice system and in pursuing crime prevention in all aspects of our society.

I also think it is important because right now as we speak we are facing a great deal of concern from Canadians about the government's decision to provide access to marijuana for medical purposes. We know that whole approach is replete with many difficulties. There are many problems in the system. The doctors are concerned. Patients in need of marijuana for medical purposes do not have access to it. It is not clear at this point when that will be sorted out. It probably would make sense at this point, in the context of that issue, to remind the government how useful it would be to move on this long overdue area of decriminalizing marijuana.

That is the essence of our position and why we support Bill C-344.

I want to take one minute though to speak on the process that we are all engaged in and add my voice to those concerned about the hijacking by a Liberal member of this parliament of this private members' hour and the parliamentary process.

It is clear, as others have said, that this has been a poison pill. It has been an attempt to remove our parliamentary rights to pursue business and to promote ideas through private members' hour. Taking away from members the right to put forward an idea and to have members of the House vote on that idea is clearly unconscionable in a democratic process.

We have seen too many times where legitimate private members' business has faced many hurdles along the way, notwithstanding this incredible arbitrary decision on the part of what would appear to be the Liberal government. We have seen so many private members' initiatives actually discussed, debated, voted on and then sent to committee where the government then has used the heavy-hand of the process to shut down a bill, shut down the idea, delay, stall and prevent action on a very important initiative. This is just like the icing on the cake. It is the worst possible scenario we can imagine in terms of private members' work in the House and the whole parliamentary process.

I hope the government will see its way clear to give some direction to its own private members to withdraw this amendment and allow this legitimate and constructive proposal by the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to go forward, to be voted on and then proceed to committee. It is much needed, and we appreciate the member for his contribution to the work of the House.

Private Members' Business

•(1815)

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to the bill. I would like to take a moment to thank the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca for bringing the bill forth. The bill is extremely timely and important. It is an issue that has been ignored by parliamentarians and parliaments of Canada for far too long. It is time we dealt with in a serious and legitimate manner.

I understand there are other speakers trying to get some time on the floor tonight so it is not my intent to speak for a lengthy period of time. However before speaking to the bill, it is extremely important that we first speak to the amendment. The member of the NDP who spoke before me used the word hijacking of the bill. I would use the word treachery; treachery of another parliamentarian.

Private members' business is the single opportunity for individual members of parliament to bring issues of importance forth on their own. It is so important that we have changed the way we vote in the House when we do private members' business. We vote from the back to the front, so we cannot see how the leaders of the various parties vote first and therefore cower some of their own members into falling the lead of their colleagues who happen to sit in cabinet.

We get five hours a week to deal with private members' business. To put an amendment in that would verily remove this bill from the justice committee and put it over to another committee is absolute treachery on the part of any parliamentarian. I do not care in what party that individual sits. The issue of private members' business and the issue of free votes on private members' business should be sacrosanct at least in this place.

I said upon rising that the issue for the decriminalization of marijuana and an act to amend the Contraventions Act and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, or specifically marijuana, Bill C-344, is a timely bill. It would put this issue to the justice committee and allow for further study. It is the job of every parliamentarian in the House to vote down the amendment and ensure that the process is followed and that the bill actually gets to the justice committee.

Whether or not members support the bill, it is absolutely incumbent upon individual members of parliament to ensure that the process is followed. If we allow this process to be hijacked for nefarious and treacherous means, then the whole point of being a member in the House is in question. The right to be here is already then given up.

We can talk about the dollars that are spent on law enforcement and trying to control marijuana. We can talk about the fact that we have already legalized the medical use of marijuana. It is still extremely hard to access even for medical use. The issue here is simple. The majority of Canadians at some point in their life have broken the law and smoked marijuana or cannabis.

Are we going to continue to have young Canadians and Canadians everywhere hold a criminal record because they were caught with a marijuana cigarette or because they made a mistake in judgment at some time in their life? I do not think so. I think it is up to the Parliament of Canada to deal with this issue in a comprehensive way, and decriminalization is a start.

There are other issues here and those issues should be fleshed out in committee. We should come back here with a package that we can all look at, that we can weigh the pros and cons and make a decision about this substance.

There are other health issues. We have talked about tobacco, and there is a serious health issue with smoking marijuana. There is the definite tar in the substance that will cause the same effect on our lungs as tobacco smoking causes. We know for a fact that it lowers the white blood cell count. Therefore, there are health issues around marijuana.

•(1820)

There is also the fact that with the prohibition on alcohol everyone was drinking. With prohibition Canadians finally came to their senses and said "We cannot control this, so let us legalize it and that will give us some form of control".

Some kid who is 16 years old who has a criminal record because of being caught with too much marijuana in his or her pocket would not be arrested when crossing the border to the United States. However people might not be 16 when they are arrested. They might be 24. They might have graduated from university and have a job south of the border but find they cannot access the job because of a criminal record.

There are all kinds of issues around this. That is why it is important, whether one supports Bill C-344 or not, that it goes to the justice committee which has an opportunity to study it and bring back legitimate proposals to the House on which we can make clear decisions.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. members who spoke in their eloquent interventions on the bill.

I address my speech not to the House but to the Canadian public. There are two parts to it. Number one is private member's Bill C-344 that seeks to decriminalize simple possession of marijuana. However the much larger issue is the poison pill amendment that the fascist, draconian government has—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): That is borderline. We must respect the use of certain words out of respect for our colleagues and the House.

Mr. Keith Martin: Madam Speaker, I was not addressing it to any particular individual. I was merely speaking the truth about the organization across the way.

I wish to tell Canadians what the government has done to a votable private member's bill. Since the last election there have been 245 private members' bills introduced into the House. How many have been made votable? Two. Two out of 245 private members' bills introduced in the House have been made votable. There are none from the government.

Adjournment Debate

Government members have as tough a time to introduce private members' bills in the House as we in the opposition do. The government on one of only two votable private members' bills introduced a poison pill amendment at second reading that prevents members of the House from voting freely on a private member's bill. It violates our basic rights and the rights of the public of the country to vote freely on legislation.

The Prime Minister's Office, by introducing the amendment, hijacking the bill and hamstringing the democratic rights of every single individual in the House and every Canadian, has violated the basic tenets of democracy in Canada. The government has prevented the House from voting freely on a private member's bill. Whether we agree or disagree on the substance of the bill is irrelevant.

I beseech all members of parliament, if they have an ounce of democracy within them, if they believe in the reasons why they became members of parliament, and if they believe in their hearts that they are here to legislate and innovate for the people of the country, to vote against the amendment.

If they vote for the amendment they are voting for an undemocratic violation of the basic rights of every Canadian and their rights as members of parliament. They are voting against their freedom to vote freely on a private member's bill. In fact they are destroying private members' business forever.

I do not think the public understands what my colleagues have mentioned on this side. They used the words hijack, treacherous and draconian to describe this particular amendment that will prevent the House from voting freely on it.

It means that by allowing the government to introduce the amendment and have it voted upon they are allowing and destroying the right of every member of parliament to vote on private members' business. It is making a sham of private members' business, forever destroying the rights and ability of every single member from every part of the House, including the government, to innovate and fight for ideas.

If we cannot do that the House is a sham and should be closed down. The government may as well call a spade a spade and tell Canadians that Canada is not ruled by a democracy. It is ruled by a dictatorship called the Prime Minister's Office. That is what is taking place in Canada.

If members from the other side vote for the amendment then they too have given up the last single sliver of opportunity to innovate and fight for ideas in our country. All of us may as well go home and quit this job because it has no purpose and meaning whatsoever.

The bill would decriminalize the simple possession of marijuana. It is a bill that would save money and lives. If members disagree with the essence of the bill they could vote for or against the bill. If they want the bill changed then they should vote for the bill because it would then go to committee where we could all fight over it and change it for the betterment of the public. By doing so the bill could come back to the House where it would be voted on democratically by the representatives of the people of Canada.

● (1825)

The bill is not new. Some government members want to have the essence of the bill sent to a committee with no power. This is not new. The government had the Le Dain commission study this issue ad nauseam. How often must we study an issue. How often do we have to study the studies on an issue? Why does the government not have the guts and the courage to do the right thing and act on issues that are important to Canadians? Why does it not act rather than maintaining this persistent level of inaction, subterfuge and treachery which continues to make a mockery of this parliament? Why does it persist in that? Why does it not just tell the public that we now live in a dictatorship, violating and abusing the history of this country and the lives that have gone before us laid down through two world wars fighting for democracy and the basic principles of freedom? Why does the government not say that to Canadians and be honest?

The bill will save lives and save money. It can be used as a stepping stone to deal with the more important issues of reducing substance abuse. I have a private member's motion, Motion No. 358, that deals with four particular points: reducing consumption; preventing substance abuse through the head start program which was passed by the House in 1998, yet the government has done nothing about it, but the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia are moving in that area; reducing trade barriers so that countries like Colombia can produce other substances; and reducing consumption here so that wars, for example, in Colombia will be stopped, which are driven by drug consumption in North America.

I encourage everybody to vote against the amendment and vote for the bill.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): It being 6:29 p.m., the time allotted to debate has expired.

Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, April 10, 2002, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion are deemed put, and a recorded division deemed demanded and deferred until the end of government orders on Wednesday, April 17, 2002.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

Adjournment Debate

• (1830)
[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance):

Madam Speaker, on March 6 I attended a major speech given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Canada-Israel committee which elicited an extremely negative reaction for suggesting that civilian casualties regardless of their cause were equally reprehensible. In other words, making no distinction between civilians tragically killed as bystanders in the course of defensive military operations and civilians deliberately targeted and killed in terrorist attacks.

Understandably, members of the Canadian Jewish community, people who know personally many of those innocent Israeli civilians under daily threat from suicide bombers, snipers and rocket attacks, were extremely upset by these remarks. Only a few days later there was a vivid illustration of the folly of the minister's remarks. On the evening of March 9, as Israelis came out onto the streets after the Sabbath, yet another horrifying suicide attack killed 11 Israelis in a Jerusalem cafe one block from the prime minister's residence.

I rose in the House on March 11 to ask the minister whether in light of this new terrorist attack, and we have seen many more since then including a suicide bombing which took the lives of 26 Israelis as they celebrated a Passover Seder Supper, military action to root out terrorists was the moral equivalent of those terrorists killing innocent civilians?

The minister responded with indignation to this question saying that he had not suggested any moral equivalence whatsoever. Unfortunately, both as the former chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade and now as minister, he has been guilty of embracing the worst kind of moral equivalency when it comes to Canada's relations with countries ranging from Iraq, Cuba, the United States and Israel.

In the days after the September 11 attacks the minister made comments endorsing the absurd root causes theory of terrorism, blaming the attack on New York City on some combination of poverty in the Arab world and U.S. foreign policy. This notion is interesting, considering that most of the September 11 hijackers came from privileged backgrounds in Saudi Arabia, a country which has been a prime beneficiary of U.S. foreign policy.

More recently we have seen the minister's moral equivalence theory crop up again in his hasty press comments from Barbados last week. The foreign affairs department had no comment when the Netanya Passover bombings occurred. However, when Israel in the wake of this terrible provocation responded by attempting to root out terrorist cells it still knew to be at large Canada quickly joined in the international condemnation.

Canada's position vis-à-vis Israel often seems to be one of «cet animal est méchant: quand on l'attaque il se défend».

The minister accused Israel of employing “disproportionate force” in its actions on the West Bank while merely calling for Arafat to condemn terrorism. Counting on Arafat to condemn terrorism makes a fundamental mistake. Yasser Arafat is not a helpless bystander who

cannot control more radical elements who commit terrorism, nor is he even a silent, passive endorser of terrorism. He stands at the head of a hierarchy including his al-Aqsa brigade which organizes and plans its own terrorist acts and deliberately tolerates similar acts by others.

Canada calling Israeli actions disproportionate when we have seen the evidence over the past two weeks, invoices for suicide bombs discovered in Arafat's offices, bomb factories found in secret tunnels, terrorists on Israel's most wanted list who have been in and out of Arafat's revolving door jails captured, is another error.

The minister is once again playing the dubious game of moral equivalence. Canada is engaged in a war on terrorism in Afghanistan which we have endorsed. It is led by the United States. That has not been criticized by the government as moral equivalence.

In closing, I would like to quote Frank Dimant of B'nai Brith Canada when he said last week:

It is becoming increasingly apparent that there is a double standard in the war on terror. When Americans are attacked, Canada supports and even participates in an unremitting campaign to eradicate the terror.... When Jews are attacked, when every day brings another suicide bomber—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to my colleague on this issue.

The number of recent victims of the conflict in the Middle East since it began 18 months ago is some 1,500 dead on both sides. Many thousands have been injured. People's livelihoods have been destroyed and mutual trust has been shattered as the habits of dialogue which once existed over the last decade between the Palestinians and the Israelis have been abruptly abandoned. The only way to end this conflict is to convince the Israelis and the Palestinians to cease their fighting and to resume negotiations and dialogue.

Canada makes no moral equivalency between suicide bombings and the response to terrorist attacks. We have consistently condemned all forms of terrorism while we have repeatedly affirmed Israel's right to defend itself and to protect its citizens. However, an escalation of this conflict will not result in any solution to the underlying problem. Innocent civilian casualties, regardless of their background or religion, regardless of anything of differentiation, are not justifiable. Canada condemns the death of all innocent civilians.

Adjournment Debate

We have strongly and repeatedly urged Chairman Arafat to take all necessary action to prevent further terrorist attacks, including the horrific suicide bombings which are an affront to us all. The use of suicide bombers against innocents is intolerable, a perversion of all religious faiths, an offence against humanity, and a tactic that is never acceptable including in resistance to occupation. Employing children as instruments of war to target the innocent is a moral outrage. It must stop.

Chairman Arafat and those in positions of authority who fail to prevent such practices bear the gravest personal and political responsibility. The world sees post facto condemnations for the empty gestures for what they are. We have called on the Palestinians to bring justice to those who are responsible for such atrocities. When the speaker of the Palestinian legislative council visited Ottawa recently, we indicated to him that there is no alternative to such action if legitimate Palestinian aspirations are to be realized.

The Canadian government will continue to urge the Palestinian leadership to eradicate terrorism. Canada does not finance the Palestinian Authority through CIDA which was mentioned earlier. Canada's development assistance program in the West Bank and in Gaza is entirely administered through credible Canadian partners and international organizations such as the World Bank, or it is managed by our missions themselves. These funds aim to alleviate poverty and promote development and are subject to very strict criteria. By encouraging such measures to reduce poverty and yes, promote democracy, our assistance is indeed a tool to promote peace and tolerance.

In closing, Prime Minister Sharon and Foreign Minister Peres have both expressed their appreciation for Canada's assistance to the Palestinians as they encourage us to increase that support, recognizing as they do, that it is economic development which will be a necessary condition for peace and stability.

• (1835)

Mr. Jason Kenney: Madam Speaker, in that response we really hear the inherent contradiction in the government's policy. On the one hand, the parliamentary secretary and the minister say that they affirm Israel's right to self-defence but in the next breath they say that they are opposed to the escalation of violence. What she did not quote were the remarks of the foreign minister when he characterized the Israeli response of counterterrorism as a disproportionate use of force.

Is our military action in Afghanistan an escalation of violence? Of course it is but it is a justified and necessary escalation of violence in order to put an end to the perpetration of terrorist violence. Possessing the right to self-defence and recognizing it is utterly meaningless unless we recognize the right of a responsible state like Israel to use it as it has.

Israel is not being disproportionate. It is not sending suicide bombers into Palestinian villages. What Israel is attempting to do is exercise counterterrorism against acts of terrorism. I submit that is a proportionate and responsible use of force by a democratic state against an outlaw band of terrorists trying to kill innocent civilians. That is neither disproportionate nor an unjust escalation.

Ms. Aileen Carroll: Madam Speaker, I will first like to correct the record. I think it is very important to say that the Minister of Foreign

Affairs did not say that the actions on the part of the Israelis were disproportionate. The Minister of Foreign Affairs made it clear that what would not ameliorate the situation would be a disproportionate response. There is a big difference between judging something disproportionate and indeed calling for responses that are not within the category of disproportionate.

If we were to look back at the history of war, which we could spend a longer time doing than the one minute that I am allowed, we might see that frequently what is perceived as disproportionate or what is perceived more along the lines of what the hon. member has said, is that escalation is frequently in the eyes of the person who would make the judgment call.

He says that escalation is necessary to succeed but I submit that the view of further escalation is what causes wars to grow and continue.

• (1840)

LUMBER INDUSTRY

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Madam Speaker, I am up tonight on a question I asked the Minister of Health some time ago. In fact I wrote the Minister of Health on February 7 on an issue regarding pressure treated lumber. It was another softwood crisis in the looming. The pressure treated lumber industry needed approval of a chemical called CVA.

The reason I raised that issue on the floor of the House of Commons was that CVA was not approved by the Government of Canada for use in this country which meant that the pressure treated lumber industry was at risk. About 2,000 workers depend on this industry for their jobs.

What happened was that the chemical, CVA, was approved in the United States but not in Canada. Canada only approved the use of CCA, a different chemical which was outlawed in the United States. I have basically abbreviated a very long and complicated story.

When I raised this issue on the floor of the House of Commons it was a follow up to a letter that I had sent the minister.

I took the courtesy of approaching the minister on February 18, the first time I had raised the question in the House. The minister, based on the letter I gave her, was really interested in getting the question resolved. She understood the importance of getting the chemical approved because 1,800 jobs across the country were at risk, 300 of them in the constituency I represent here in the House of Commons. A company by the name of Marwood was certainly at risk if this chemical was not approved.

The good news is that I am here tonight to congratulate the minister for her really quick action on this. She fast-tracked its approval. It is a temporary approval because the approval of any chemical takes some time but the good news is that she paid special attention to this issue and worked very hard on it, along with her parliamentary secretary who is here tonight representing the government. I want to thank him as well because in the follow up question a couple of weeks ago, I again spoke to the parliamentary secretary and he gave me some very encouraging news on the approval of this chemical. About two weeks or 10 days ago, that chemical was approved.

Adjournment Debate

I am simply here tonight to thank the government for its very fast action on this. It has saved at least 300 jobs in my riding and 1,800 jobs or more across the country. It is a perfect example of how the House of Commons can work and work well when we want it to.

Madam Speaker, again, I want to thank you for the opportunity tonight to speak on this issue and thank the Minister of Health.

I know the parliamentary secretary is not used to this type of thing because it is usually confrontational back and forth, but I wonder if he could explain to the listening public whether it is the Minister of Health who actually approves these types of chemicals because it is the pest control management branch of the Department of Health which usually does this, which is another story in itself.

Again, it is a good news story and I want to thank the government for its fast action on this.

• (1845)

Mr. Jeannot Castonguay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first I want to thank the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest. There is no question that on this specific issue we have the same view. There is no question in my mind that this is a great example of what we can accomplish when we take the time to share information in a positive way and look at the objective we are reaching for. Even if we have different views at least we can co-operate. This is the way I was in my previous life when I worked as a physician in my own community. I welcome this type of approach here.

I believe that we on this side of the House have a role to play and the other side of the House has a role to play. It is a great demonstration of what we were able to accomplish in establishing priorities. There is no question about it. I was also aware of the importance and urgency of the situation for people from New Brunswick and people from the rest of Canada.

We were able, through this generous approach, to talk to each other, to focus on the objectives and to realize what was important to do. Through this we were able to have the Pest Management Regulatory Agency approve two new products. One is called ACQ

and the other is called CBA. Through this the industry will be able to provide the new products on the market and at the same time slowly eliminate the other one, CCA. The producer has agreed that it will eliminate this in domestic products by 2003. It will remain available in industrial products.

This is great news and I want to thank the member again for his generous remarks to the minister. I hope that in the future we will be able to continue to work with this approach.

Mr. Greg Thompson: Madam Speaker, I think we are all left speechless in this place tonight because it very seldom happens that we are so congratulatory.

Just to sum up, the fast action was appreciated. I was invited by the company president to the little community of Tracyville in appreciation of the action on this. It was a good and very positive outcome and we do appreciate it. I would not be wrong in saying that I am speaking on behalf of those 300 employees as well as the president of Marwood, Ross Creelman, who really appreciates the minister's fast action and the assistance the parliamentary secretary provided on this file.

Mr. Jeannot Castonguay: Madam Speaker, we were both involved on this file and I realize there were other members in the House who were really involved in this. I would especially mention the member for Fredericton who approached me on a few occasions to talk about the file. It was a great result and it is good for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Pursuant to Standing Order 38(5), the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

[*English*]

Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a. m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.48 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Thursday, April 11, 2002

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Regan 10271

International Criminal Court

Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale) 10271

Mr. Day 10271

Ms. Lalonde 10272

Mr. Robinson 10272

Mr. MacKay 10273

Petitions

Trade

Mr. Robinson 10273

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Regan 10273

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos) 10274

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Cruelty to Animals and Firearms) and the Firearms Act

Bill C-15B. Third reading 10274

Mr. MacKay 10274

Mr. Breitreuz 10276

Mr. Breitreuz 10277

Mr. Macklin 10280

Mr. Bailey 10281

Mr. White (North Vancouver) 10282

Mr. Anders 10283

Mr. Fitzpatrick 10284

Mr. Anders 10286

Mr. Schmidt 10287

Mr. Jaffer 10289

Mr. Anders 10290

Mr. Sorenson 10291

Mr. Anders 10293

Mr. Hilstrom 10294

Amendment to the amendment 10296

Mr. Stinson 10296

Mr. Anders 10297

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) 10297

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Infrastructure Program

Ms. Allard 10300

Whistleblowing

Mr. Grewal 10300

Tourist Industry

Mr. Charbonneau 10300

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Mr. Lee 10300

International Criminal Court

Mr. Pratt 10301

Dentistry

Mr. Jaffer 10301

Honneur au Mérite Competition

Mr. Duplain 10301

Catherine Bergeron

Ms. Girard-Bujold 10301

Curling

Mr. McGuire 10301

The Environment

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) 10301

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Mr. Caccia 10302

Health

Ms. Davies 10302

Regional Development

Mr. Roy 10302

Canadian Forces

Mr. Bertrand 10302

Middle East

Mr. Casey 10303

World Youth Championships in Athletics

Mr. Price 10303

Softwood Lumber

Mr. Elley 10303

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

G-8 Summit

Mr. Reynolds 10303

Mr. Boudria 10303

Mr. Reynolds 10303

Mr. Boudria 10303

Mr. Reynolds 10303

Mr. Boudria 10304

Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) 10304

Mr. Boudria 10304

Mr. Thompson (Wild Rose) 10304

Mr. Boudria 10304

Softwood Lumber

Mr. Duceppe 10304

Mr. Pettigrew 10304

Mr. Duceppe 10304

Mr. Pettigrew 10304

Mr. Paquette 10304

Mr. Pettigrew 10304

Mr. Paquette 10305

Mr. Pettigrew 10305

Fisheries	
Mr. Blaikie	10305
Mr. Thibault	10305
Infrastructure	
Mr. Blaikie	10305
Mr. Manley	10305
G-8 Summit	
Mr. Clark	10305
Mr. Boudria	10306
Mr. Clark	10306
Mr. Boudria	10306
Fundraising	
Mr. Day	10306
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale)	10306
Mr. Day	10306
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale)	10306
Softwood Lumber	
Mr. Crête	10306
Mrs. Stewart	10306
Mr. Crête	10307
Mrs. Stewart	10307
National Defence	
Mr. Benoit	10307
Mr. Eggleton	10307
Mr. Benoit	10307
Mr. Eggleton	10307
The Middle East	
Ms. Lalonde	10307
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale)	10307
Ms. Lalonde	10307
Mr. Graham (Toronto Centre—Rosedale)	10307
Child Pornography	
Mr. Toews	10308
Mr. Cauchon	10308
Mr. Toews	10308
Mr. Cauchon	10308
Parliamentary Precincts	
Mr. Richardson	10308
Mr. Boudria	10308
Health	
Ms. Wasylycia-Leis	10308
Ms. McLellan	10308
Leadership Campaigns	
Mr. Nystrom	10308
Mr. Goodale	10308
Fisheries and Oceans	
Mr. Keddy	10309
Mr. Thibault	10309
Mr. Hearn	10309
Mr. Thibault	10309
Justice	
Mr. Spencer	10309
Mr. Cauchon	10309

Mr. Spencer	10309
Mr. Cauchon	10309
Fisheries and Oceans	
Mr. Roy	10309
Mr. Thibault	10309
Mr. Roy	10310
Mr. Thibault	10310
Leadership Campaigns	
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	10310
Mr. Manley	10310
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	10310
Mr. Manley	10310
Regional Economic Development	
Mr. Bertrand	10310
Mr. Drouin (Beauce)	10310
Airport Security	
Mr. Moore	10310
Mr. Collenette	10310
Radio-Canada	
Ms. Gagnon (Québec)	10311
Ms. Copps	10311
Ms. Allard	10311
Ms. Bradshaw	10311
Airport Security	
Mr. Moore	10311
Mr. McCallum (Markham)	10311
Canada Post Corporation	
Ms. Bourgeois	10311
Mr. Manley	10311
National Revenue	
Mr. Stoffer	10311
Ms. Caplan	10311
Business of the House	
Mrs. Skelton	10311
Mr. Goodale	10312
Points of Order	
Question Period	
Mr. Heam	10312

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Cruelty to Animals and Firearms) and the Firearms Act	
Bill C-15B. Third reading	10312
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	10312
Mr. Toews	10313
Mr. Hilstrom	10313
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	10314
Mr. Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands)	10314
Mr. Hilstrom	10317
Mr. Calder	10318
Mr. Toews	10318
Mr. Hill (Macleod)	10319
Mr. Grewal	10321

Mr. Abbott	10321
Mr. Kenney	10324
Mr. Grewal	10325
Mr. Solberg	10325
Mr. Benoit	10326
Mr. Anders	10327
Mr. White (North Vancouver)	10329
Mr. Jaffer	10330
Mr. Johnston	10332

Business of the House

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos)	10332
--	-------

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Contraventions Act and Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (marijuana)

Bill C-344. Second reading	10332
----------------------------------	-------

Mr. Reid	10332
Mr. Bigras	10334
Mr. Cullen	10335
Ms. Wasylycia-Leis	10336
Mr. Keddy	10337
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	10337
Division on motion deferred	10338

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Foreign Affairs

Mr. Kenney	10339
Ms. Carroll	10339

Lumber Industry

Mr. Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest)	10340
Mr. Castonguay	10341

MAIL  POSTE

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

Lettermail

Poste-lettre

**1782711
Ottawa**

If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:

Communication Canada - Publishing
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

En cas de non-livraison,

retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :

Communication Canada - Édition
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

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

Also available on the Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire at the following address:

Aussi disponible sur le réseau électronique « Parliamentary Internet Parlementaire » à l'adresse suivante :

<http://www.parl.gc.ca>

The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Additional copies may be obtained from Communication Canada - Canadian Government Publishing, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9

**On peut obtenir la version française de cette publication en écrivant à : Communication Canada - Édition
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S9**