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(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 28, 2002

—
Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 28, 2002

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership and associate membership of some standing committees of the House, and I move that it be concurred in.

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ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

• (1000)

[*Translation*]

HEALTH CARE

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure today of tabling the document entitled “Building on Values: The Future of Health Care in Canada”.

[*English*]

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank Mr. Romanow for his hard work and commitment and to reassure Canadians that this report will help the government, as we work with our colleagues, to provide Canadians with a renewed health care system that is there for them when they need it.

* * *

• (1005)

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Finance regarding its order of reference of Tuesday, October 29, in relation to Bill C-3, an act to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Act.

The committee has considered Bill C-3 and reports the bill without amendment.

[*Translation*]

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the twelfth report of the Standing Committee on

MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among all parties in the House of Commons and I wish to seek unanimous consent to move the following motion. For the benefit of members, it is about establishing the new modernization committee of the House of Commons. I move:

That a special committee of the House be appointed to consider and make recommendations on the modernization and improvement of the procedures of the House of Commons;

That the members of the committee shall be the Deputy Speaker, the House leaders and the caucus chairs of each of the officially recognized parties, provided that substitutions may be made from time to time, if required, in the manner provided in Standing Order 114(2);

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, the chair of the committee shall be the Deputy Speaker and the vice-chairs shall be the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and the House Leader of the Official Opposition;

That the committee shall have all the powers granted to standing committees in Standing Order 108 as well as the power to travel inside and outside Canada;

That the committee shall not adopt report without the unanimous agreement of all the members of the committee;

That the committee may make recommendations for changes to relevant statutes and, if it does so, such recommendations shall be deemed to have been made pursuant to an order adopted pursuant to Standing Order 68(4); and

That the committee shall present its final report no later than April 30, 2003.

• (1010)

The Speaker: Does the hon. government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Government Orders

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

CANADIAN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COLLEGE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by people from across Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke requesting that Parliament recognize that the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College is essential to training Canadians for emergency situations, that the facility should stay in Arnprior and that the government should upgrade the facilities in order to provide the necessary training to Canadians.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have five petitions to present on three different issues. Three of the petitions concern child pornography.

Canadians are concerned that child pornography is certainly detrimental to our children and they want Parliament to protect our children by taking all the necessary legislative steps.

TUBERCULOSIS

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition from people in my riding, including the municipalities and local municipal governments, saying that the tuberculosis issue in the Riding Mountain National Park needs to be taken care of and the disease eradicated from the wild herd.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, my last petition concerns the fact that hundreds of Canadians suffer from diseases like multiple sclerosis and spinal cord injury. The petitioners are calling upon Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat these illnesses.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present this morning. The first petition is on child pornography.

They petitioners are urging Parliament to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to ensure that all materials which promote or glorify pedophilia or sado-masochistic activities involving children are outlawed.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition has to do with stem cell research and the potential it has to assist Canadians suffering from numerous illnesses or conditions, and urges Parliament to focus its legislative support on adult stem cell research to find the cures and therapies necessary to treat these illnesses.

CANADA POST

Mr. John Bryden (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition

calling upon the government to repeal section 13(5) of the Canada Post Act in order that rural mail couriers would have the opportunity to collectively bargain.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1015)
[English]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

The House resumed from November 27 consideration of the motion.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to continue to speak today about Kyoto, something we all feel strongly about. The government has decided to ram it through the House without any consultation with Canadians and it is threatening its own members with an election call if they oppose it.

I must make it clear again why I am doing this. I am doing this so Canadians would realize just how much impact this protocol would have on their very way of life, on what they do and what it would cost them. They must remember that they are being asked to change their lifestyle by reducing their use of carbon by 20%.

There is a lot of new material that we need to go through today. Many members will have the opportunity talk about Kyoto and its implications to them. The main message must be that they need to carry this issue home and tell their constituents. I will repeat for members across the way that we must get to families with kids who are trying to get their new house and who drive their kids to hockey games. We need to talk to people on fixed incomes who cannot bear the additional cost that will be put on them by probably a lot of things other than this climate change treaty.

This treaty is asking people to reduce their carbon use by 20%. However this treaty would increase their cost anywhere from 25% to possibly 100% for the very things they need to live. We need to talk to these people. We need to engage them in this issue. I urge people to talk to their members of Parliament. I hope the Prime Minister is getting 10 times the number of e-mails that we are getting so he will know how serious this issue really is.

We have talked about the loss of jobs. We have talked about the billions of dollars this can cost for simply reducing CO₂. It is important that we get on the record Statistics Canada figures that show the situation today for monthly bills and the situation that will exist after Kyoto. These figures are averages and there are probably some mistakes in them. They are the very figures that the government should be making clear to Canadians.

Government Orders

I want to go through these figures province by province and I will start with the province of British Columbia. It is estimated that the average natural gas bill in British Columbia today is \$80.92. After Kyoto that bill would be \$129.47. We should think about that and its effect on the people we should be talking to. These are Statistics Canada and Industry Canada figures. With regard to electricity a bill of \$79.33 would go up to \$122.96. A gasoline bill for the average person driving to work or driving the kids to a hockey game of \$142.83 per month would go up to \$214.25.

We are talking about three things here: natural gas, electricity and gasoline. We are talking about things that the government is asking Canadians to reduce by 20%. It is telling people to reduce their driving by 10%. Interestingly enough, just for the record, with regard to the car count, there are four minister's cars outside the House of Commons at this point in time and one of them is running. It happens to be the environment minister's car. That talks about commitment. We would not want the environment minister to get cold when he goes out to his car.

• (1020)

In Alberta the bill of \$83.50 for natural gas would go to \$133.60. Electricity would go from \$71.58 to \$110.95 and gasoline would go from \$157.41 to \$236.12. I think average Canadians are getting the message that there would be increases.

Let us go on to Saskatchewan. Natural gas at \$79.75 for the average bill would go to \$127.60. Electricity would go from \$80.50 to \$124.78 and gasoline would go from \$155.41 to \$233.12.

We could work these out on a yearly basis with other taxes that Canadians pay but it shows what we are going after. We are using Statistics Canada numbers to come up with these figures. That is the important thing to remember. They do not come from a special interest group.

In Manitoba natural gas would go from \$76.25 to \$122.00. Electricity would go from \$83.33 to \$129.16 and gasoline would go from \$155.03 to \$233.00.

Let us go on to Ontario. Many people in Ontario say that they do not think they would be affected much. For example, the Syncrude tar sands project, 60% of the manufacturing jobs are in Ontario. How can they possibly think they would not be affected? Their jobs would be affected. Natural gas would go from \$91.33 to \$146.13. So far, the biggest impact would be on the people of Ontario. Their electricity bill go from \$91.16 to \$141.30 and their gasoline would go from \$169.92 to \$254.88, according to Statistics Canada figures.

People can say that their situation is different because they do not drive far to work. However, I found a lot of people in Ontario that drive a long way to work compared with my standard where I live. I live eight minutes from my office. How many people watching this and thinking about these figures live eight minutes from their office? I know lots of people who live an hour from their office. They should think about their gasoline bill from these Statistics Canada figures.

Let us go on to Quebec where natural gas or fuel oil would go from \$61.75 to \$98.80. The electricity bill of \$106.00 would go to \$164.30. It is less of an increase because of hydro and so on, but it

would still be an increase. Gasoline would go from \$162.50 to \$243.75.

In New Brunswick natural gas and fuel oil would go from \$70.17 to \$112.27. The electricity bill would go from \$135.50 to \$210.03 and gasoline would go from \$189.00 to \$283.50.

In Nova Scotia natural gas or fuel oil would go from \$99.58 to \$159.33. Electricity would go from \$96.42 to \$149.45 and gasoline would go from \$173.00 to \$259.50.

In Prince Edward Island natural gas or fuel oil is very expensive. It would go from \$114.00 to \$182.40 under Kyoto. Electricity would go from \$74.33 to \$115.21 and gasoline would go from \$193.42 to \$290.13.

In Newfoundland natural gas and fuel oil would go from \$98.17 to \$157.07. Electricity would go from \$118.83 to \$184.19 and gasoline would go from \$162.83 to \$244.25.

Mr. Speaker, can you see what is happening? Can you see why we have to do this sort of thing to show Canadians that it would cost them. There is a cost to Kyoto and they desperately need to realize that.

• (1025)

People out there might be saying that those are averages and asking where the figures came from. Those figures came from Statistics Canada. I guess we have to believe that department. They are the government's figures. If our researchers and I were able to come up with these figures, why could the government not include them in its plans for the Kyoto protocol? It is pretty obvious. The Prime Minister and the environment minister are saying that it would not cost very much and people in Canada would not notice much change. The Prime Minister in waiting is saying that if it would affect Canadians very much, we would not implement it.

Well, it would impact all Canadians a lot. It would impact my children and grandchildren a lot. The government says there is no impact and that it would not impact one province over another. When I look at the actual figures what am I to assume? I assume that the government either does not know, does not care, or is deceiving Canadians. Why would the government do something like that? That is the big question. The only thing I can possibly see is a legacy question. If one were to leave one's successor with enough bad things, then it would destroy him as well.

A lot of politicians will have a lot of trouble with those figures. Trying to convince Canadians that we voted for something that did that to them without telling them I think would put us in a pretty terrible position come next election time. That is really what it is all about.

I also have figures that I would like to share with the House because there are some variations and maybe some people could not relate to the provincial numbers. Statistics Canada breaks this down by city. I do not want to deal with every city in Canada, but let me deal with just a few of them so we drive the message home to people.

Government Orders

I will begin with Victoria, and the member for Victoria just happens to be the environment minister. How are his constituents going to feel when they find out that their member agreed to taking an average natural gas fuel oil price of \$54.42, which is low, to \$87.07? The electricity bill in Victoria would go from \$78.58 to \$121.80. Gasoline would go from \$130.92 to \$196.38.

What will people say about their member of Parliament who supported this, tried to ram it through the House, tried to ratify it by the end of the year, and threatened that we would have an election if we did not vote for it? How will the electorate feel when it finds out that its member was the one who did that?

That should be good for opposition parties, but I want members to know that they have been warned another way. They should think about the next election and they should think about justifying Kyoto and what it means to them.

Vancouver is a major city. Natural gas would go from \$96.25 to \$154.00. Electricity would go from \$85.50 to \$132.53 under Kyoto and gasoline would go from \$150.00 to \$225.00.

• (1030)

My daughter and son-in-law have two young boys, a two year old and a five year old. The husband works in downtown Vancouver. He is a paramedic there. Our daughter is a nurse. She drives every day and takes the kids to a sitter and out to activities afterward. I know that they spend more than \$150 on gas now. I know that they are having a tough time meeting all their bills and all their commitments. They bought a house and have payments on the house. They are trying to give the kids every opportunity they can. The five year old goes to kindergarten and loves it. The two year old has to go to the sitter. Let us say that a gas bill is \$150 and would go up to \$225. I think their gas bill is \$300, so it would go to \$500. That probably is just about enough to literally bankrupt them.

That is what the Kyoto accord is all about. That is what the government refuses to talk about. It refuses to put a cost on it. It refuses to talk about implementation. This is where the rubber hits the road. This is where real Canadians are at. This is where the costs are going to be, so why would we ram this through?

Let us move on to places in Alberta. If in Calgary the bill is \$86.50 for natural gas, it would go up to \$138. The electricity bill would go from \$67.92 to \$105.28. We must remember that Alberta has a lot of coal generated electricity and the stations are going to have to be retrofitted and changed to natural gas. Not only will that natural gas have to be used to provide power for Albertans, it will not be for sale to the U.S., which means it will not add to the GDP, which means it will not be taxed by the federal government and which means that the revenue for the federal government is going to go down dramatically. I suppose, while the government talks about this feel good plan, that it will shut down the tar sands as well. That is literally bigger than Saudi Arabia. It adds to the Canadian GDP and is the reason why Alberta sends such large transfer payments to the rest of Canada.

We must remember that from those tar sands 60% of the jobs generated are in Ontario. Can we see why the people are so upset? Can we see why they are trying to tell the government that?

Yesterday I read out comments from every province as to why they all are so upset about this and not on side.

Let us turn now to Saskatoon. It is \$74 for natural gas today and will be \$118.40 tomorrow. Electricity is at \$76.33 and it will be \$118.31. Gasoline is at \$163.17 and will go up to \$244.76.

I do not want to stand up in the House a year, two years or five years from now and say that there was a speech given back in November 2002 that told the House all about these price increases. I do not want to say "I told you so". I do not want to do that. That is the last thing that I want to accomplish. What I want to accomplish now is to show that this is what is going to happen, so that people can react to this and let their members of Parliament know that they do not want to bull ahead with this until they know what the exact costs are, until we know how the government is going to implement it and how it is going to impact on them.

Let us go on to Winnipeg, where the Manitoba government supports this, sort of. Yesterday the House heard quotes from Mr. Sale and, boy, that is support as long as the federal government is prepared to provide a lot of money for Manitoba's hydroelectricity and get it into the Ontario power grid. That is real environmental support. Really, economics is the cause, nothing else, and I am talking economics today.

Let us look at Winnipeg, where natural gas and fuel oil costs would go from \$82.75 to \$132.40, electricity costs from \$66.92 to \$103.73, and gasoline from \$143.58 to \$215.37. These are Statistics Canada figures broken down city by city and province by province. It is going to cost all Canadians. Do they know it? Are their members of Parliament telling them? That is the very purpose of what we are trying to do here.

• (1035)

Let us look at Toronto. In Toronto the average natural gas fuel oil cost is \$102.92 and will go to \$164.67; electricity is \$87.42 and will go to \$135.50; gasoline is \$188.83 and will go to \$283.25. That is in Toronto where people drive further than a lot of us do. Yes, the government says it will put in more rapid transit and will spend more money. If we are going to spend more money, I would like to ask our finance critic if he thinks there will be billions of dollars to be spent on all of this. After we are finished with health care, I do not really know that this will be the case.

Let us move on to Quebec City or Montreal. Looking at Montreal, it costs \$74.42 for natural gas or fuel oil and will go to \$119.07; electricity is \$103.16 and will go to \$159.90; gasoline is \$155.42 and will go to \$233.13. In Quebec City natural gas is \$58.75 and will go to \$90.80; electricity is \$99.83 and will go to \$154.74; gasoline is \$143.75 and will go to \$215.63.

I know these figures are a little boring, but let us move on to Newfoundland, where right now natural gas or fuel oil costs \$110.83 and will go to \$177.33; electricity is \$125.08 and will go to \$193.87; gasoline is \$159.17 and under Kyoto will go to \$238.76.

Government Orders

Those are the Statistics Canada figures. Those are the numbers that Canadians are not being told about. Canadians have a right to know what it is going to cost, how it is going to be implemented, which industries will be targeted, because targets are talked about, and how we are going to do all of this. Where are we going to get the money to pay initiatives and incentives? Where are we going to do it? Yes, we should do something. Everyone has said that over and over. Ad nauseam, people have agreed that we should do something.

What I am afraid of most in the whole Kyoto protocol debate is that we will have a Prime Minister who is leaving and does not care, who will ratify it, put his name on it, look good internationally and say "I delivered Kyoto". That will be his legacy, just as Mr. Mulroney's legacy is the GST, just as Mr. Trudeau's legacy is the national energy program, bilingualism and so on. They have had legacies, all right, and the Prime Minister's legacy will be Kyoto. I just do not think he realizes what kind of legacy that is going to be for him and what Canadians are going to think of that.

Then we have a Prime Minister in waiting. He says we can ratify it and he thinks maybe he might vote to ratify it. He says if it is going to hurt us at all we will not go ahead with it. One more time for the record, Mr. Speaker, and you could probably say this with me in unison because you have heard it, according to the Marrakesh accord, nations who ratify Kyoto but do not meet their targets in round one by 2012 are penalized another 30% in emissions cuts. In addition, such nations cannot sell carbon credits in round two. The accord goes on to say that countries are given 90 days and if they cannot achieve the targets they can buy credits.

If our finance critic happens to be the finance minister in 2012, he is going to be faced, as will the government, with coming up with billions of dollars to send to places like Russia to buy credits so we can get into round two of Kyoto. We must remember that round one is going to deliver only a 5% reduction of CO₂ in the world, because developing countries are not part of it and the U.S. is not part of it and because so many countries have realized the economic hit and have said they could not be part of this.

• (1040)

There are penalties. No one can stand up and say in honesty that we will ratify this and then maybe not deliver on implementation, because there are penalties.

An hon. member: That is irresponsible.

Mr. Bob Mills: It is totally irresponsible that Canadians are not told this and given the facts and figures before we get into this.

I want to again emphasize the sad state that we are in. I have reviewed this file and I reviewed the first file. We have analyzed it clause by clause and have said what a disaster it is. We have now seen what it is going to cost Canadians. We see the Prime Minister saying that if Liberal members do not vote for it he will call an election and they will be stuck with him for four more years. That is quite a threat. Given Kyoto versus that, it appears that some of them will hold their noses and vote for it, but they will have to justify in the next election why they did.

We have a front-runner for Prime Minister who says he will ratify it, that it is not such a big deal, that if it is going to hurt us

economically we will just ditch it and ignore it. Yes, we will ignore it like the other 200 treaties we have signed since 1992.

Mr. Speaker, if I have not made it clear enough to him, to you, to the House and to the Canadian public that there are penalties, I cannot make it any clearer. I could read the Kyoto protocol into the minutes but I trust that is not necessary. I encourage people to look at the Kyoto protocol on the web, to really look it, and see that there are penalties if we do not live up to it.

I also want to say that across the country in town halls from Victoria to Halifax I have heard the message, "What is Kyoto? The government has not informed us about what it is". People ask how it will affect them. They say that the government says it will not affect them much. If that list of numbers that I just went through does not convince them it is going to have an effect, let me say that is going to have an effect on gas, the vehicles they drive, the speed they drive them at and the size they are, and they will not be able to leave them running. There will probably be some kind of exhaust police. It will affect people's home heating, their electricity and their very way of life and the very standard of living that we are so proud of in our country. I believe this issue is as important as the health care issue should be to Canadians but the government has kept it hidden. Hopefully this has helped draw more attention to it.

People ask if it is going to help the environment. "Is little Johnny's asthma going to be better because of this?", they ask. We need to deal with two things. We need to deal with Kyoto, which deals only with climate change, global warming and CO₂, as well as what Canadians desperately want us to deal with, which is the whole area of pollution.

The government has set an example of its standards. I will use the Fraser Valley as an example. There is a power plant being built on the border, with 12 more proposed, and the government has not even bothered to intervene. I intervened in Washington State on behalf of our party to tell the people in the U.S., in Washington State, that it was wrong, that they could not send us their pollution, they could not send us their sewage and they could not run their power lines down the centre of Abbotsford. They cannot pollute what is already the second most polluted environment in Canada. They cannot put that power plant there.

Government Orders

Why are the power lines running down into Abbotsford? I love this one: because it is too dangerous so there is a law in Washington State that does not allow power lines over inhabited areas. But they are going to put them right down the centre of Abbotsford. The prevailing wind blows that pollution into a u-shaped air-shed. Where is the federal government on this? It was not in Washington State for the hearings. It was not in Abbotsford for the hearings this past month. It did not go to the NEB. I was refused intervener status by the NEB because I did not live in B.C. I was intervening on behalf of the Canadian people and I was refused intervener status.

• (1045)

Where was the government on that? It is responsible for the air. Where was the environment minister? Why was he not there? Why was the Department of the Environment not there? His answer is that they had observers. What good are observers? We are observing them right now as well and they are getting a failing grade. They ask if it will help the environment. We have heard the answer to that.

The fourth question is this. Is there a better way? There is a much better way. Conservation is part of that better way. Transitional fuels are part of that better way. The exciting area of alternate energy is part of that better way. It is not economical today but, as has been pointed out over the last few days, somewhere between 2030, 2040 and 2050 it will be economical. We should be on the cutting edge but we are not. We are asked to ratify a Kyoto protocol which will do nothing to help our environment or to put us as leaders.

The government's failure then is to consult with Canadians. Its failure is to communicate and cooperate with the provinces. Eight out of ten provinces are totally opposed to the ratification bill. The business community is opposed to it. Canadian manufacturers, the chambers of commerce and the small business owners across the country are opposed to ratification without a plan, without a cost, without an implementation plan and without knowing how it will affect them.

An investment freeze is occurring. People are not spending money in the fourth quarter of their budgets because of this. Generally business has slowed down. Canadians are not informed and cooperating. The provinces and businesses are not on side.

To sum up: we do not have a plan; we do not know what it will cost; and the government does not know how will implement it. We have evaluated plan one and plan two, the government's so-called plans, and they are a bunch of fluff words, a powder-puff PowerPoint presentation. It is the only way to describe this thing. It will not work. It cannot work. It will cost Canadians jobs. It will raise the costs of fuel, heating and electricity.

Again, we must stand up in this place for single moms, for parents who are raising their families and for the people on fixed incomes. With our demographics the way they are, people on fixed incomes are only increasing.

What is the rush? In 1992 why did the government sign onto this climate change concept of the UN, then sign onto Kyoto in 1997 with no plan, with no economic impact and with no understanding. Now all of a sudden, since September 3, we have been in this panicked rush to get this ratified.

What have we been doing for those 10 years? Why does the government have to rush through this when the implications are so great for every Canadian? I am afraid Canadians do not understand that. I certainly do not understand that. I do not know why it cannot go to the committee and why we cannot call witnesses. That is how we normally proceed when we sign onto something. Let us bring in witnesses on all sides and through those witnesses we will become better informed, Canadians will become better informed, industry will have input, Canadians will have input, scientists will have input and politicians will have input. Then we can move ahead with a plan that has been thoroughly discussed and thoroughly analyzed.

• (1050)

Why did we not start this in 1998? Why are we doing this so rapidly? In effect the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment have stood up and said "You can talk all you want, we do not have to listen to any of you. We do not have to listen to what this House says. You guys in our party, if you don't vote for this, your stuck with me for four more years; stick that in your ear". That is what he is saying.

What kind of democracy is that? We are asking Canadians—

Mrs. Karen Redman: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I question my hon. colleague's phrasing of what I would assume people would think is a direct quote. I have never heard the Minister of the Environment nor the leader of the government and the Prime Minister of Canada tell anyone to stick anything in their ear.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): This is very difficult for the Chair to comment upon because we would have to verify the records to see if the minister has indeed said that. I do not think this is a point of order because no rule of procedure has been broken here. Therefore I have to rule that it is not a point of order but I guess your message has been made.

Mr. Bob Mills: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the break and a chance to have a drink. Also, the message is that we have to tell Canadians and inform Canadians. I admit it would be unhealthy to stick Kyoto in everyone's ear so I would advise against it. I would advise the member that it was a figure of speech, in case she needs clarification on that.

Government Orders

The point is, what is the rush before Christmas? Why can it not go through the normal procedure? Why is this being handled so differently? Why are we going to ratify it and then work on a plan? Remember in the Kyoto protocol that by the year 2005 we must show substantial reductions in CO₂. Remember that in 1999 we were 15% over our emissions of CO₂ from 1990 levels. Remember that Statistics Canada said that in the year 2000 we were approximately 20% over in our CO₂ emissions. Remember it also said that in 2001 we were about 23% over in our emissions. Remember that by the time the implementation period comes, even if we do quite a bit coming up in the next few years, probably by 2008 we will be about 30% over our CO₂ emissions.

Our first breach of this contract will come in 2005, yet we have a Prime Minister and a Minister of the Environment who stand here and say that we have 10 years to come up with an implementation plan. We have a Prime Minister in waiting who says, "Hey, if we don't like what we see, we will just not do it".

We have a contract we are about to sign and ratify. Once we ratify that, I know that this leader and all members of our party, if they sign a contract, will live up to it. Before we sign that contract, we have to know what it will cost, how will it be implemented, how will it affect the average Canadian and how will it affect that mom and dad or that person on a fixed income?

They are the people we are talking about. We are not talking about the people in the House. We are not talking about big business and so on. We are talking about the average Canadian. We have just gone through, city by city, province by province, what the costs will be. It will impact them.

I have never felt so strongly about an issue since I have been in the House. Actually, even since I have been interested in politics, I have never felt so strongly about an issue.

What is the rush? Why is the government rushing ahead? That question needs to be asked. When the members go back to their constituencies, the answer they will give will be very important to people. When those prices increase, if in fact we live up to our agreement, and remember our record is pretty terrible, they will have to say that, yes, they were in the House of Commons and yes, they decided to vote for this because they thought it would be good for cleaning up the air and good for the people. I do not think it will go over very well when they say that they voted for it and supported it because the Prime Minister said he would call an election and be around for four more years. They will say to their constituents that they are paying more for their electricity, power and gas because they did not want him around any longer. That reason will not sell very well and it will not be a good selling message when it comes to the next election.

Therefore, I would urge the members on the other side and other opposition parties to really think about this. What will it cost? How will it be implemented? What will be the effects on our constituents, on every one of them, not just the businesses and big industries? Will it really help little Johnny and his asthma?

• (1055)

If it did help, a lot of us here would reconsider. If we really believed that this was targeting the 45 smog days in Toronto, if we

thought it was really targeting little Johnny's asthma or the health conditions of some of our seniors, if we thought that was the case and it would clean up the Fraser Valley, southern Ontario and southern Quebec, then I think we would have a whole different approach.

However, this is about CO₂. This is about climate change. This is about a scientific theory on which the IPCC has 40 models and it says it is 10 years away from knowing for sure. If alternate energy cuts in the way they expect it to in about 2040 or 2050, we may well have a reverse problem some 40 or 50 years from now.

Until we get the science right and until we get the answers to these questions, why are we bulling ahead? That is the question. Why do we have to do this before Christmas? Why can we not send it to a committee? Why can the government not see that conservation, transitional fuels and alternate energy are the future, and that hydrogen energy is the future?

The government does not have a vision. The government does not know where it is going. It is foundering both with the present Prime Minister and the potential future prime minister. We need to cooperate with business, with industry and most important, with the provinces. It is really important that we work with Canadians, that we do something that is good for Canadians.

I am at the point where I would like to move an amendment. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "that" and substituting the following therefor:

This House call upon the government not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on climate change until an implementation plan is in place that Canadians understand, setting out the costs and benefits and how the targets are to be reached and until the plan can be agreed to by the provinces.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I declare the amendment receivable.

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, before getting into the subject of the motion, I would like to thank and congratulate the member for Red Deer on his speech. Although totally in disagreement with his approach and his arguments, I can say at the very least that he is tenacious. I feel this Parliament needs to be open to a variety of points of view. Once again, I congratulate him on his tenacity and rigour in this debate.

First of all, I must say how very pleased I am to speak during this debate on the motion relating to ratification of the Kyoto protocol. This is, I would point out, proof that the very principle of sustainable development can be set in action by debate on this subject.

For the first time in this session, we parliamentarians are enjoying a golden opportunity to express our views and to ensure that the resources we are tapping today will be there to serve future generations. As a result, my party has, and will continue to have, no reservations whatsoever about voting in favour of the government's motion on ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

Government Orders

There is one thing I must emphasize, however, which is that we in the Bloc Québécois have always differentiated between ratification and implementation. We believe ratification is essential, in order to combat climate change.

Unlike certain western petroleum lobbies or even certain political parties within this House, we do not believe that climate change can be solved by a made-in-Canada solution. We do not share the Americans' conviction that each country can have its own solution.

We believe instead that climate change requires an international solution, and ratification of Kyoto. This is why last March, on the initiative of the Bloc Québécois, we in Quebec formed a huge coalition bringing together various segments of Quebec civil society, such as students, workers, academics, environmentalists and representatives of the private business sector, calling upon the federal government to ratify the Kyoto protocol promptly.

Today, therefore, we feel pride, not only to represent this Quebec coalition on ratification of the Kyoto protocol, but also to have this opportunity to share with the House the Quebec consensus on this issue.

I would like to remind everyone that the National Assembly passed a motion unanimously in which all parties, the Parti Québécois, the Liberals and the ADQ, called on the federal government to ratify the Kyoto protocol.

So today, we hope that the consensus that was reached in Quebec will be reached here in the House. We believe the unanimous support that was voiced in Quebec's National Assembly should be repeated here today in this Parliament, by ratifying the Kyoto protocol unanimously.

Why is it important to find an international solution and ratify the Kyoto protocol? First, because there will be a considerable impact on, and change in, the environment and natural heritage of Canada and also, obviously, Quebec.

• (1105)

A group of eminent scientists, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, has already come to the conclusion that there will be many extreme weather incidents. Here are a few examples: an increase in temperatures by the year 2100 of between two and six degrees; increased flooding; more frequent droughts; and the melting of the Arctic icecap. All of these examples are consequences of climate change and global warming due to our use of fossil fuels, which, I remind everyone, are petroleum, coal and natural gas.

These impacts will be significant and dramatic, not only for the environment, but also for economic activity. In Quebec, the level of the St. Lawrence is expected to drop by 15 to 20%, depending on the location, Montreal or Quebec City. It is believed and expected that the level of the St. Lawrence will drop from 30 to 40%. All this will have a direct impact on Quebec's ecosystems.

Major industries, especially tourism, may be affected by this climate change. Therefore—

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I

want to mention to the House that the amendment that was just proposed is not in order.

The reason I must do so before the hon. member is done is in case he himself would want to propose an amendment. If this amendment is not in order, it is important to mention it immediately. This is why I am doing so at this point.

[*English*]

The amendment proposes that this House call upon the government not to ratify the Kyoto protocol on climate change. It then sets out a number of conditions. The initial proposition is that the House call upon the government not to ratify the Kyoto protocol. I draw the attention of the Chair to Marleau and Montpetit, chapter 12, page 453, which says in part:

An amendment should be framed so that, if agreed to, it will leave the main motion intelligible and consistent with itself.

An amendment is out of order procedurally, if it is the direct negative of the main motion and would produce the same result as the defeat of the main motion; or one part of the amendment is out of order.

When the amendment is being debated, the mover of that amendment may not move an amendment to his or her amendment.

The footnote attached to the statement that an amendment is out of order if it is a direct negative is number 30. I ask the Chair to look at this and perhaps come back later because I recognize that this is something that may require some research. It is still important that it be raised now so that it does not deprive someone else from the potentiality of moving another amendment should this one be ruled out of order. Footnote number 30 states:

Expanded negative amendments strike out all the words after "That" [that is exactly what this does] in a motion in order to substitute a proposition with the opposite conclusion of the original motion.

That is exactly what this does. Examples are cited from the *Journals* dating back to June 6, 1923; October 16, 1970; August 11, 1988; and October 29, 1991.

Furthermore, there is a longstanding principle around here that one cannot move a hoist motion to anything other than a bill. This is a hoist motion. A hoist motion can be only moved to a bill, for example, that the bill not now be read a second time, that it be referred back to committee, or that it be dealt with six months hence and so on. That is a hoist motion. This is the kind of formulation that we have here. This is hoist motion formulation that is only in order for a bill and cannot be put as an amendment to the motion.

Had the hon. member wanted to put an amendment that would have been in order, he might have wanted to add that the government ratify the Kyoto protocol once it had received the agreement of the provinces. I could have argued at that point though that he was introducing a proposition that went beyond the scope of the original motion, but I would have put a different argument to the Chair. This is a different thing altogether, although one could still argue that it has in a way brought in propositions that are beyond the scope of the motion, but that is a peripheral issue.

Government Orders

The main issue before the House now is that this motion negates the original motion. It has the same effect as voting against the motion. It is a hoist motion to a motion, and that is only in order if it is a hoist motion to a bill.

I would ask the Chair to look at the two propositions that I have just raised. Were the Chair to rule in a way that is favourable to the point that I am raising, the Chair would then have to recognize that those who are speaking now should not be deprived of the potentiality of making an amendment should that be their wish.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Chair to make a ruling as quickly as possible on the point of order raised by the government House leader. To the extent that I may have to table an amendment, the Chair must make a quick decision on the point of order raised by the government House leader.

Therefore, if it is possible, I would ask you to make a ruling as soon as possible, so that I can present an amendment to the motion, should this be necessary.

[*English*]

Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, in spite of the government House leader's references that he made earlier you have already ruled that the amendment is receivable by the Chair. You ruled that in this place and we count on you for that decision.

I would say to the government House leader that I disagree with his interpretation of what he said the amendment does. It is not a hoist amendment. It amends the motion. That is what an amendment does. An amendment adds something to a motion. It may change it in a particular way. The House is free to vote for the amendment or against it when it is time for a vote to be called. It does not hoist the motion at all.

I disagree with the government House leader's argument and ask, Mr. Speaker, that your previous ruling on the amendment stand, be accepted, and that we continue debate on the amendment.

Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the government House leader is upset by the amendment because it takes into account the wording of the former finance minister, one of his own colleagues. He is upset because it exposes a cleavage within the Liberal Party on this matter over the leadership contest. That is the real source of his problem and angst on this—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): Order, please. I am sorry but the hon. member is not adding to the point of order. That is a matter of debate. Given the complexity of the point of order it would be advisable that the Speaker himself take a look at this. I will take it under advisement on his behalf.

[*Translation*]

In the meantime, I again give the floor to the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, so that he can conclude his speech as if the point of order had not been raised.

• (1115)

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if a ruling will be made before the end of my speech. If the ruling

confirms the comments made by the government House leader, I would then be in a position to table an amendment. Therefore, I would like to know if a ruling will be made before I conclude my remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): I am advised to tell the hon. member to continue his speech. A decision will be made in the next few minutes. I do not know if the hon. member has already prepared an amendment, but I am of the opinion that if his time is up, he will still be given an opportunity to present his amendment, should the amendment before us be deemed out of order.

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, I must point out that an amendment will be ready for presentation before I finish speaking, in case the decision is along the lines of the recommendations of the government House leader.

Getting back to my speech, I had reached the environmental impacts of climate change. Climate change will have not only environmental impacts, but significant economic impacts as well, in future, particularly for the insurance industry. This major industry is in many ways bigger than the oil industry. We need only think of the costs surrounding the ice storm that hit Quebec so hard in 1998. Insurance claims totalled \$1.75 billion, for \$3 billion in damages. The economic impacts will, therefore, be considerable for industries such as the insurance industry.

There will also be major impacts on health. There is talk of the costs related to climate change being in the order of \$500 million annually. This a pretty sizeable amount. When reference is made to the economic costs of climate change, I feel it is also important to consider all costs together. Costs will have to be borne by certain industries in Quebec and in Canada, and there will also be health costs relating to the failure to act to combat climate changes—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast on a point of order.

• (1120)

[*English*]

Mr. John Reynolds: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As House leader for the official opposition I notice that while the debate is going on the government House leader is in the corner debating with the clerks on the point of order that he put before the House. That is not proper. It is like the players being in with the referees.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair): That is not a point of order, it is a question of debate. Let us allow the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie complete his speech.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, I was saying that it is important to consider all the costs, and not just those for a single industry like the power industry for example. It would not be fair or appropriate to take into consideration only one industry or sector when looking at the costs of climate change. We must include health costs, environmental costs and the costs of inaction, as well as those related to a number of sectors that might benefit from the implementation of Kyoto. I believe that the ratification of the Kyoto protocol is a unique economic opportunity for several sectors of the economy.

The environment industry is an example. A number of analyses, including one conducted in 2002 by the Analysis and Modeling Group on climate change, estimate that the environment industry in Canada could make between \$427 million and at least \$7 billion in profits annually until 2010.

Of course, some sectors of the Canadian economy will be adversely affected, but others also stand to gain. I think we must not look backward, but rather forward. We must take into consideration that countries like Germany have made major changes to their energy infrastructure. When we take countries like Germany, which had the courage to develop their wind industry and are now contributing to the effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions around the world, I think this is an example of a nation's willingness to look to the future instead of the past. The Canadian environment industry does stand to make substantial profits as a result of Kyoto. Employment gains are also expected.

What certain lobbies would have us believe is that there will be significant job losses and net losses resulting from Kyoto. On the contrary, a recent study by the Tellus Institute of Boston shows accumulated net benefits totalling \$4 billion for the economy as a whole, and \$1.6 billion by 2012. There will be a net increase of jobs estimated at 52,000 as a result of changes in consumption patterns.

Accordingly, ratifying the Kyoto protocol will create employment in niche areas and in sectors of activity where we never would have thought that jobs would be created. There will be net gains in economic activity in both Quebec and Canada. We are talking about a net annual gain of \$135 per household as a result of these jobs. We are talking about an increase in the GDP of \$2 billion if we act, instead of twiddling our thumbs doing nothing.

Some fearmongers would have us believe that economic activity would decrease. On the contrary, every economic theory indicates that efficiency leads to innovation and growth. For example, why would a business that uses energy efficiently suffer economically? This goes against Porter's theory.

• (1125)

We must see the ratification of the Kyoto protocol as an golden opportunity to develop our potential. It is a golden opportunity for Quebec. Let us not forget that 50% of potential wind energy production is located in Quebec. Resource-based regions, such as the Gaspé Peninsula, the Lower St. Lawrence and the North Shore, can all benefit from the development of these new energy sources. They could even become world leaders in wind energy production, if they wanted to.

If we pursue Canada's current strategy, which has been to fund the oil industry, to the tune of \$66 billion since 1970, not only will we not slow climate change, but we will continue to encourage the increase in greenhouse gases. During the same time period, the government only provided \$329 million to fund green energy sources. Basically, this means that the oil industry received 200 times more money, in the form of subsidies and government assistance, than green energy sources. How can this be explained?

From 1990 to 1999, the oil industry received \$2.5 billion, whereas renewable energy sources received a mere \$76 million. The government should match each dollar given to the oil industry with a dollar toward renewable energy. Why would the government not invest as much in the development of renewable energy?

I think that when we decide to set up action plans, we can achieve results. This is why Quebec strongly supports the Kyoto protocol. The choices made by Quebec in the energy sector during the sixties were environmentally friendly: today, 95% of our electricity is from hydroelectric energy. Since 1990, Quebec has adopted two action plans on climate change. Thanks to these plans, Quebec has the best performance in Canada, when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

What we are asking the government to do today is to look to the future. I can assure the House that we support ratification. If Quebec were a sovereign state, it would have already ratified Kyoto.

We strongly support a quick ratification of the Kyoto protocol, and we believe that there must now be a debate on the ways of doing things, and on the implementation of this accord.

• (1130)

[English]

The Speaker: The Chair is now ready to rule on the point of order raised by the hon. Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons concerning the admissibility of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Red Deer.

I have reviewed the authority cited by the government House leader. I find that while I can certainly applaud his diligent research, the arguments raised are not clearly relevant to the amendment that has been moved before the House today.

The amendment moved by the hon. member for Red Deer is not, in my view, a direct negative or a hoist but rather is a motion that imposes a condition on the main motion. It may well be that it could have been worded differently because it does have the word "not" in it. Had it said for example that "the government defer ratification until", it would have been, in my view, an order, and the effect of the motion, even poorly worded as it may be, has that same effect.

Accordingly, I find the motion to be in order and properly before the House.

I hope that clarifies the position for the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie.

Government Orders

[Translation]

I do remember that he wanted to propose another amendment should this one be out of order. I truly appreciate the hon. member's patience with the Chair in this instance.

[English]

I believe that clears the matter and we can now proceed with questions and comments.

[Translation]

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie for the incredible work that he has done regarding this issue. He has done that work with professionalism. He was conscientious and patient. He used all his qualities and skills in his study of this protocol.

I want to ask him to comment further on this issue. The Bloc Québécois members are convinced—as my colleague has pointed out repeatedly—of the merits of the Kyoto protocol, based on several principles that we value strongly. However, as my colleague mentioned, we make a clear distinction between ratifying the protocol and implementing it.

I wonder if my colleague could give us the reasons why the Bloc Québécois is opposed to the most recent implementation plan presented by the federal government.

• (1135)

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, this is a highly pertinent question. I have always said that the two issues must not be confused, as certain Alliance members have attempted to do in recent months and weeks.

There is a difference between ratification, which proposes an international solution to climate change, and the government's interpretation of this international accord, which penalizes provinces and industries which have made efforts already and made significant progress.

Taking Quebec as my example, it has as I have said managed to restrict its increase in greenhouse gas emissions to 4%, whereas Saskatchewan's rose by 32.7% and Alberta's by 31%.

Where we fault the federal plan is quite simply that it does not take into consideration past efforts by industries and provinces, with its choice of 2010 as the reference year rather than 1990. We have tables to refer to, and they indicate that certain industries and sectors in Canada will increase their emissions. I am thinking, for example, of the thermal power industry, where there would be a 47% increase. The fossil fuel sector will have a 131% increase, while manufacturing, the backbone of Quebec's economic structure, will have only a 3% increase.

How can we impose a similar burden on the manufacturing sector, which is concentrated in Quebec, and which makes up the economic backbone of Quebec, as that asked of the fossil fuel sector, which is expected to increase its emissions by 131% by 2010?

One need not have taken economics 101 to know that the marginal effort that Quebec's manufacturing sector will have to make is greater and more difficult. The marginal cost is greater than that of

an industry, such as the oil industry, that will increase its emissions by 131%.

In the end, what we are asking, is that the federal government agree to a bilateral agreement with Quebec that will take into account the efforts that have already been made. This agreement must recognize the carbon sinks, mostly in agriculture and forests, which are under provincial jurisdiction. The money that the federal government puts into fighting climate change must be distributed fairly.

We are worried about the federal government's approach. Take, for example, the fact that Quebec gets only 8.8% of the climate change action fund. Given that Quebec receives only 8.8% of the money, yet makes up 24% of the population, we are justified in fearing the worst when it comes to how the federal government will fund the fight against climate change in the future. We believe that Quebec will be penalized. We believe that Quebec and certain industries will not be recognized.

Take, for example, the Canadian forestry industry, which has managed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 19% since 1990. It will be treated the same as the fossil fuel sector. This is unfair and unacceptable. This is a misinterpretation and misapplication of the principles contained in the Kyoto protocol.

The Kyoto protocol sets out a common, but distinct approach. Clearly none of these objectives are applied in the federal plan because the plan does not respect provincial economic structures, demographics or energy efficiency, nor does it take into account the differing climates.

We favour this approach because it has proven itself in Europe. We believe that it should be applied here because it is a fair and equitable way to reduce greenhouse gases in Canada.

• (1140)

[English]

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to first make a couple of points. Certainly Quebec benefits greatly from good, clean power from Newfoundland and Labrador, which is to Quebec's advantage and hopefully to our advantage. I also agree with him fully when he says that ratification and implementation are two entirely different things.

However, if the government opposite is completely ignoring the provinces in relation to the ratification, despite their wishes and the wishes of many of us on this side, does he have any degree of satisfaction that the government will recognize the provinces and their concerns when it comes to the implementation?

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Bigras: Mr. Speaker, we believe in a territorially based approach, which would mean a 6% share of the Kyoto objective, or 240 megatonnes, internationally. Share the reduction objectives among the provinces and let the provinces achieve these objectives through action plans.

This is a shared and separate approach; respect provincial jurisdictions and trust the provinces. There can be no partnership without letting the provinces develop action plans that meet their respective objectives.

Government Orders

We are also asking for a fair sharing of resources. My hon. colleague mentioned Newfoundland, and I fully agree with him. However, let us not forget that federal assistance was provided to the Hibernia project, in Newfoundland, to the tune of \$3.8 billion, in the form of \$1.22 billion in direct subsidies, combined with a \$1.66 billion loan guarantee and \$300 million in advances from Ottawa. All this was done using Canadian money, while in the 1960s and 1970s, we in Quebec paid for our own network and hydroelectric power system using Quebec taxpayers' money. The federal government did not contribute one cent to these projects.

We are asking that, from now on, the federal government contribute fairly, so that Quebec can receive its fair share of the funding for combating climate change in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak today in this important Kyoto ratification discussion.

I will make a couple of points in terms of the process to make sure that everybody understands. Right now the federal government could ratify Kyoto. It is a decision of cabinet. The decision of Parliament, the voting and the debate is immaterial in some respects. However, at the same time, I would like to thank the government for at least providing the opportunity to have debate. I think that is important.

I am disappointed, as I think many other Canadians are, that the government has not put a specific time to when it will ratify. That is something of concern. There is still some degree of suspicion that cabinet will do it but we will see what happens over the next few weeks to come.

One of the many reasons that we are supporting Kyoto is not just the fact that we have to change things in our communities right now but our future and also the way Canada is involved in the world.

We have been very disappointed with the way in which the government has handled this file. It is something it has had over several years, with regard to climate change. It is something it had in its red book from 1993 to be addressed, in terms of reductions. That has not happened. It has increased many times over the years. That is why we have almost had to catch up over the last few weeks.

We now have a situation where the Prime Minister is literally scurrying across the country to meet with premiers because he did not do so over the past few years. Something has to come to fruition, so we will see deal cutting and all those things happening at the last minute.

That does not make for good government and it does not make for good policy. It is truly unfortunate. If we look at the opinion polls and listen to what Canadians have been saying over the years, we would know they have been saying that they support Kyoto and the changes that need to happen, and that they are willing to do that. However when the government introduces a plan at the last moment without the proper consultation, it pits people against one another, which is truly unfortunate.

We have a situation here where we can be part of a world strategy and part of an initiative to actually change some of the things that

have been causing economic and environmental degradation in terms of our sustainability and it has now become a confrontation that was completely unnecessary and, I think, in many respects, unhealthy for the Canadian public. It has to be recognized because it is about the management practices of the government.

We have seen it as well today with regard to our health care. We finally have the Romanow report. However we have a high degree of uncertainty among Canadians about a very particular issue, which is what we are talking about here, the planning business practices of the government. That has not happened with Kyoto.

With regard to the plan that the government has put forward, we have some concerns about it and it still has a lot of glaring omissions but despite that, we will be supporting the ratification. We hope to participate in a fruitful and, more important, a really thorough and more consultative way with regard to the actual implementation plan itself, making sure it hits the streets and gets out there.

We are concerned about the government's record on a number of different things. First, with regard to its plan, 25% of the emissions have still been left out of the whole reductions. We do not know where that will come from right now. It is no wonder businesses and consumers are a little skeptical. They do not know where those reductions will come from, which causes some of the uncertainty that has led to the fearmongering and to all the different elements, in terms of propagating that everybody will lose their jobs and there will be no new growth. That type of environment allows that to happen.

● (1145)

If we are looking at the actual sectors and initiatives that the government has in its plan, one of them is transportation. We have seen the government just recently fall flat on its face with regard to urban strategies. In an urban blueprint that was released we saw that once again the municipalities were left behind. The government provided no tools and no means of resources to support the Kyoto accord in terms of the actual emissions.

With regard to public transit, we know from documents that it has been behind Kyoto all this time. It actually has been in the forefront on a number of different fuel cell technologies and it did not receive anything from the urban task force. It got rhetoric. This is a problem because once again it goes back to the business plan of the government and the credibility. It creates fears and, more important, it shows that the government cannot handle this responsibility. That is certainly something that is out there for debate.

With regard to the actual transit issue, we know that in the past there have been significant differences with regard to our modes of transportation. I come from a municipality that has a 3% transit use. It is not very high. If we do not eliminate or actually almost mandate use in regard to all the times that we have to use our automobiles, we are going to create more problems. People need to be able to have reasonable choices. For example, supplying a portion of the gasoline tax to municipalities would allow them to create some of the sustainable mechanisms that they need for urban transit. That would be an improvement with regard to emissions and air quality.

Government Orders

We have issues with regard to large emissions producers and Kyoto. We also have opportunities that have come out. One I would like to talk about in particular is with regard to the auto industry. It is something that we are very much concerned about. We are very much concerned about the future of it and the fact that the emissions are so related to the actual amounts of vehicles we have, the types of vehicles we have and also the purchasing choices that Canadians are showing. Certain ministers have shown that they have purchased big, gas-guzzling SUVs. It is something they have bought into as consumers and now they have to look at their own practices and set examples, like the rest of Canadians.

With regard to the auto industry, we have been calling for an auto strategy for many years. It is something that is a real problem. We have watched our auto jobs dissipate and there is a real sense of opportunity with Kyoto and the actual auto sector. In Windsor, Ontario, we know that we have DaimlerChrysler looking at a billion dollar investment for a plant. It will not do it if there is not an auto policy. I know that some people have said it is subsidization, that we are giving incentives, but the reality is that our trade agreement with the United States, which the federal government has bought into, allows the United States, its municipalities, state governments and its federal government, to offer a number of different incentives to get the car manufacturers into their communities.

We either have to address that and be on an equal footing on the part of our trade policy or, alternatively, we at least have to look at being able to compete. If we want to compete with regard to their types of incentives, what better way to do it than Kyoto with regard to some of the emissions? What better way is there when we have them coming to us regarding the CAW, General Motors or Ford? They have all signed on in terms of an auto policy and they are all open to being able to create more sustainable technologies. Specifically, it is unfair what the government sometimes does with this type of strategy. It has asked consumers to change their driving purchases in order to reduce by 25%. It is interfering with the market itself but it is not providing incentives to companies to create the sustainable technologies and advance ourselves.

If we do not deal with this issue, it is not a question about the vehicles that we produce today and right now, it is that other markets are going to dry up on us. We know, for example, that California has standards that will affect our ability to sell vehicles there. Right now, as we speak, there is a court case with regard to legislation in California, but it is going to create the standards and the emissions requirements for vehicles. It is the biggest purchaser of automobiles in North America in terms of its single market.

That is the problem. If we do not look at Kyoto and at creating competitive fields that are going to meet those of the different nations that are moving toward these targeted means of their products and services, we are going to see ourselves being frozen out. We are going to be frozen out of future economic development. This is not just about the fact that we can say, okay, there are going to be a lot of jobs lost here right now and there are not going to be any others developing. The fact of the matter is that we are going to be losing the opportunity to trade and compete in the world.

We are going to fall behind in innovation. That is important. We now have the innovation strategy that has been kind of going around the nation, almost like a three ring circus in some respects, because it

is not really funded to any really high degree and, once again, it really does not come together with Kyoto or any of the other initiatives. I have had the chance to participate in these exercises and they are nice exercises to some extent, but when we do not actually put in any resources, it does not create the feeling that we want to have happen with business, technology and innovation.

The auto industry has an effect on one in seven jobs in Canada, one in six in Ontario, and one in seven in Canada. Why can the government not recognize that? Why can it not become involved with regard to the auto sector? We know—

An hon. member: Why not just leave?

Mr. Brian Masse: Why not just leave? Are you asking them all to just leave? We know that the Alliance would want all the auto jobs to leave. I suppose that is its position. I do not think that is probably the best one that most Canadians would assume, but it will certainly create economic hardship.

● (1150)

We have a real opportunity here, not only for the area I represent but for all of Canada. It is something important that we need to recognize.

Let us go back once again to municipalities with regard to Kyoto. I think it would be good and proper for the government to invest in and focus on some of the actual buildings, the infrastructure and the green funds that can happen there with regard to improving energy efficiencies and technologies and also using that infrastructure to promote the efficiency that is necessary. That is an already existing infrastructure for us. It is something we can count on. It is something we can use. The government can also learn how to move those types of innovations and, more important, those types of investments, the buildings, back up to provincial and federal levels. So we do have some of these mechanisms and tools if we are to move along with the urban task force, if we actually are going to put some resources into that initiative, and then we will find that there will be some sustainability.

I want to touch briefly on a number of different things. One of the things that has sometimes been forgotten in the debate is our role in the world. When we look at what is happening with regard to different treaties and different types of agreements, we see that on this particular issue Canada has had a record of saying that we will be supporting ratification, that we are going to support it and be there with other nations. What happens now if we backtrack? If we backtrack at this point, we lose further credibility. We have seen issues recently with public comments like “moron” and stuff like that, where we have seen our reputation suffer.

Government Orders

This is an issue on which the Prime Minister has been out there saying that we support ratification. If we go back on that, what will happen? Will the deal fall apart? There is a high potential for that. If the deal falls apart, who is going to take up the initiative with regard to treaties, with regard to moving the world to environmental sustainability? That is a significant problem. It is something we have to wrestle with because the eyes of the world are on Canada on this issue right now. The world is looking to us for leadership. I cannot imagine how we are going to get scientists together again or how we will get the United Nations to move on other things.

Kyoto has been described in many respects as a baby step. It is the first step to working toward sustainability. If we do not have that now, what is going to happen? Will we have other types of treaties in the future? Will people come forth to champion them? I do not think so. If we do not ratify, I think we create some suspicion with regard to our involvement and there is good reason.

The government can do something for itself here to recover some of its record with regard to the environment. We know that since 1993 the government has not had a good record with the environment, which has been a cost to Canadians. It certainly could have been doing a lot more about this up until now, that is clear. We have seen that during debate over the last few days in the House of Commons. We have seen that from Canadians. We have seen that from the fact that we have had increased pollution. It is not just the fact that it is not willing to tackle Kyoto, it is the connection with the environment and the connection with our health, all those things. There are too many vivid examples that lead people to suspicion.

For example, we have asked for changes to the taxation laws. Why is it that right now polluters can actually write off their fines and the taxpayers pay for it? If the government can move so quickly at this time in terms of drawing up a plan in the last few months and putting it together, why can it not move a lot more quickly to change something that is just ethically wrong? I think Canadians would be appalled to know that a company can pollute and claim that fine on its taxes, and Canadians will lose. Not only that, it takes more money to clean up the environment. The government can move more quickly on those types of initiatives.

I can give the example of the Detroit River, where we had an oil spill from the United States. We heard nothing. The oil washed up on our shores. We heard nothing in terms of what is going to happen. There still is a considerable degree of concern that these things can continue to happen and that we do not invest in that.

With regard to the red book in particular, the Liberals promised to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% between 1988 and 2005. The Prime Minister abandoned that goal a long time ago and that is why we are playing catch-up. That is the real problem.

It goes back to my initial comments about a business plan. All of a sudden it is coming forth at the last moment and it is dividing a nation. That is not healthy. While other nations got on with actually signing the protocol, we are one of the last standing. Why do we have to be at the end of this? I do not understand that. I do not know why the Prime Minister did not champion this from the beginning. It does not make any sense.

●(1155)

It is not like the government has a lot to talk about lately with regard to legislation in the House. It has been busy with a lot of other things internally, but it has not been busy with the actual planning and moving things forward. It is something that should have happened a long time ago. We are coming in at the tail end and that is why the world is looking at us with regard to our actual mandate.

It is unfortunate, because provinces have supported this. We are down to Manitoba and Quebec right now with regard to their support, but other provinces have made overtures about Kyoto in the past. Now they are abandoning, questioning and undermining, I would say, the Minister of the Environment in many respects because they have not been consulted for many years and all of a sudden everything is happening at once.

I think this protocol is something that we have to ratify. It is something important for Canadians. It is something that is going to certainly fundamentally change our way of life. I think we have to make sure that the government is going to commit itself. It is going to be interesting. I know that one of the officials of the Minister of Health said that obviously the minister is considering what is in the best interests of Alberta in terms of her position on Kyoto. We do not know how the Minister of Health is going to vote on Kyoto. That is why we have had all this division. We do not know.

Being Minister of Health involves all of Canada. Health is certainly related to the emissions that we are talking about. There is no doubt about it. There is no doubt about the fact that if we eliminate some of these pollutants there are going to be significant improvements in the quality of life for Canadian. We can control some of those emissions. We can control some of those pollutants. I know that in my area, for example, 50% is local and 50% is from the United States.

If we improve and invest in the technology and reduce some of the emissions, maybe we cannot get Michigan to go just yet, but we can control what we have and that is going to lead to improvements for some of the respiratory problems that we have had. We have issues with regard to birth defects as well and issues that deal with learning disabilities. All those different things have affected us because of the pollutants, while we have contributed so much to this country. Windsor and Essex county contribute \$26 billion annually to the Canadian economy. That would make us the fifth largest contributor if we were an actual province and we have one of the worst polluted environments. We do not get anything back in the way of support from the government for that.

That is why I talked about the auto issue. It is certainly there in terms of our contribution and work ethic and we will continue to do that if the government believes in us. If it abandons us, like the health minister has, then we are forced into a position and we are divided and that is certainly unhealthy.

Government Orders

The health minister should know that. The health minister should know that she represents all of Canada on this issue, but I guess big oil and big gas have too much influence, because that is what has happened. We have abandoned looking at wind in terms of a real strong national strategy. It is starting to come out a little to the forefront. We could have been on this a long time ago. We have other sustainable energy with regard to hydro as well. We have passed up some incredible opportunities and it is unfortunate.

When the government looks at itself in terms of why Canadians are now divided on Kyoto, I hope it understands and appreciates that it is because of its business plan and its management of it. I hope it has the courage and intestinal fortitude to be able to work with organizations that have come forward, like the Canadian Labour Congress. It has come forward and identified that it is concerned about jobs. Paper workers, steel workers and auto workers are concerned about their jobs, but they understand that there is a larger issue and that they are going to have some of their markets shut out in the future.

They are asking for the government to consult with them and to give them the confidence and the wherewithal to be able to have transition if it is going to happen. I think that takes a lot of courage, because they are putting at risk some of their future security. They are saying they believe that if they do this it is going to improve their lives and their children's and grandchildren's lives. They are saying that they can work toward more sustainability and can prosper better as people in a nation, but they cannot do that if they have a unilateral government that is bent on basically running stuff through at the last moment in terms of implementation plans.

I think we need to ratify. I hope the government has the courage to make sure that its implementation plan is strong, thorough and more consultative than it has been to this moment.

• (1200)

Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully and with great interest to my colleague opposite. It is good to hear that he supports the stand which has consistently been taken by the government, by our Minister of the Environment and by our entire cabinet led by the Prime Minister, and this is to ratify this very important international agreement.

I know the auto sector is very big in his area and I too have that sector in my area of Kitchener Centre. Some of those companies are on the leading edge of bringing in good environmental processes in how they manufacture cars. The government also has looked at what comes out of tailpipes.

Could my hon. colleague comment on markets like California, which have very stringent tailpipe emissions, and the fact that we are looking at harmonizing these kinds of markets and doubling the market in Canada because the number of people who live in California is roughly the same as the market in Canada? If we do not ratify Kyoto, we may have a missed opportunity.

The member also mentioned the large resource sector. I also point out that these companies have been on the leading edge. Whether we look at petroleum, Syncrude or Suncor, these are the very companies that are bringing in better environmental practices to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions because they too recognize how very

important this issue is, not only for Canadians and not for today, but a global issue for generations to come.

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, the first thing I want to touch on is with regard to California. It is important to recognize that it is a significant trading partner. The hon. member is absolutely to correct to note that we will lose those markets.

I know the auto companies that I have been in touch with have been calling for, and the Canadian automotive industry will support them, incentives for the development and commercialization of new technology that allows for the harmonization of our products.

This is also important and perhaps the government will reconsider this. I have asked the Minister of Industry repeatedly why he will not meet with 20 plus urban mayors from the auto sector who have asked the for a meeting with him. This is a launching of an urban strategy, a blueprint. The government says it needs to consult and be more involved with municipalities and the minister refuses.

I hope the minister takes that into consideration and looks at the fact that we have Kyoto as a vehicle with regard to incentives and new technologies. I know the Auto Parts Manufacturers Association supports this as well. Everybody is on board right now but the minister and I cannot make any sense of that.

If one has any sense of leadership in this country, when the workers, the auto dealers, the actual manufacturers, the companies, the Canadian public and the mayors are all on side and everybody is clamouring for this, why would they not meet? I think that is important. If we lose out on markets like California that are increasingly growing, then we will certainly reduce our ability to trade.

With regard to the second question, there have been very credible and positive increases with regard to resource technology. It is coming a little slower than what we would like to see. I would like to point out that the 10% ethanol target, which we are calling for now, could have been reached a long time ago if there had been leadership.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Madam Speaker, the government is asking the Parliament of Canada to vote on ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

Yet we are being asked to do so without any chance to debate the merits of the implementation plan or to hear the provinces' point of view on this matter, despite its great importance.

[*English*]

Let us be clear on the facts. There is a significant international problem of global warming. The overwhelming preponderance of scientific analysis supports that view. The problem must be addressed. The most effective way to address it is by way of actions that have two characteristics: first, they are international; and, second, they are effective.

Government Orders

The issue before the House is whether this Parliament should ratify this accord in blind haste by the artificial deadline of December 31 with so many of the facts unknown and do that in the face of the opposition of so many of the provinces that, and let us face this reality, have the power to prevent the protocol from taking effect, resulting in Canada making an international commitment that it may well be unable to keep

The minister acknowledges that the heavy lifting and the most important decisions on environmental issues in the country in the last two decades are due principally to the initiatives of the Progressive Conservative government, in which I was honoured to serve. That was a time of real leadership on the environment both at home and internationally.

This government has wasted that leadership by ignoring two of the principal lessons of our success. First, we worked with the provinces. This government works aggressively against the provinces. Second, we did the homework. This government wasted five years after Kyoto was signed and still has no idea what might be in an implementation plan. In the course of the fall it had driven offside several provinces that had, at the end of the summer, pronounced themselves as supporters of Kyoto. There is a unanimous view that the government handled this file with unparalleled ineptitude.

Compare the preparations for Kyoto with the preparations for the acid rain treaty, for example. We knew that the only way to get agreement from the Americans on acid rain was for Canada to start with clean hands at home. We knew we had a skeptical president to persuade. He actually thought acid rain was caused by trees and we had to persuade him of the facts. We knew we had to have clean hands at home and the only way to do that was through genuine agreement with the provinces. If the federal government then had treated the provinces with the antagonism and disdain that are the hallmarks of this government, then there would have been no treaty on acid rain.

The Liberal government might not like the idea that Canada is a federation, but that is a reality which no amount of condescension and arrogance will erase. As the minister demonstrated again on Tuesday, he prefers to attack my province of Alberta rather than to work with it. Then he pretends surprise that the memories of the national energy program come bounding back in western Canada.

One of the great falsehoods of the government is the pretence that the federal government can do this alone. It cannot. The protocol will not be worth the paper it is written on unless the provinces agree to make it work in their jurisdictions. While the absence of an implementation plan makes it difficult to know what actions are being proposed by the Government of Canada and consequently what jurisdiction they touch, the implementation of Kyoto is bound to affect the following areas of provincial or shared jurisdiction: natural resources, environment, transport, municipal affairs, housing, agriculture, health, land use, land use planning, training, property rights, and local private initiatives so essential to an emissions trading system.

This is not an argument about provincial rights. It is an argument about Canadian reality. Members can argue, if they choose, that provinces should or should not have certain rights. What is relevant to this debate is the incontrovertible fact that they do have powers

which will have an impact upon our ability to make Kyoto work. In some cases a province could stop an important element of the protocol from working.

What we are dealing with is worse than an empty motion. This is counterproductive. It sends a clear signal to the provinces that Ottawa will seek to impose its will. In that atmosphere, it is guaranteed that some provinces will withhold the agreement needed to make Kyoto work.

● (1210)

Let me recall some of the language used by provincial premiers and ministers to describe the federal government's proposal and the process that led to it. I have a random selection of quotes from the premiers, the essential partners in this process. They have who said, "A clear breach of trust by the federal government"; "rammed down the province's throat"; "lack of information"; "une attitude cavalière"; "a moving target"; "contempt"; "tainted process"; "a charade of partnership"; "no way to build a country".

These are not minced words and are not necessary. Had the federal government sought to get the agreement of the provinces, agreement in most cases could have been secured. It did not try. It tried to ram it through. It is presenting us now with a motion which if accepted will be very counterproductive to getting agreement on precisely the issue in which the government claims to be interested.

If the government had been genuinely interested in the House's opinion on the substance of Kyoto, we would have been asked to debate a detailed implementation plan complete with the enabling legislation. However, according to the leader of the government in the other place, that enabling legislation has not been written yet. Nobody in the government has any idea what it will contain. It will not be tabled in the Parliament of Canada for at least three to four months.

We are being asked to vote on something that does not exist and yet it would tie our hands and give the Government of Canada the opportunity to say that Parliament is for it. The problem is the government does not know for what it is asking Parliament to be. Neither does anybody else. Instead we are being asked to sign off on a meaningless motion calling upon the government to ratify a protocol which its impact is unknown.

The government itself admitted the other day, through the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, that, "This motion is not binding on the government". In other words, the debate does not matter. The vote does not matter. The government will ignore both. We are asked to play a game, to put a feather in the Prime Minister's cap so that he can turn an important matter of public policy into a publicity stunt, some kind of desperate grasp for a legacy.

Government Orders

This is a vote with no significance except to create a false impression and a very bad atmosphere of working with the provinces. It does not express the free opinion of Parliament because the government is afraid to let its own members vote as they believe. It does not represent an informed opinion because no one in the House or country knows enough facts to make an informed judgment. It does not limit the government's capacity to conclude treaties unilaterally. Nor does it create any obligation to pay attention to Parliament in concluding treaties. It does not assure the international community of commitments Canada might make because we do not know what those commitments mean and we do not know if Canada can keep them. This treaty makes a mockery of Canada's word on the world stage.

It is precisely because this is so important that we need to ensure that there be the kind of consensus on Kyoto that would make the agreement arrived at some five years ago between the provinces, territories and federal government effective. We cannot afford to make these decisions blindly. We must know with a reasonable degree of certainty what the impact will be, not just on the country as a whole, but also upon individual provinces, individual industrial sectors and individual regions of the country.

Five years ago, almost to the day, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of the environment and ministers of energy did meet in Regina, in November 1997, and they did come to an agreement on Kyoto, quite a detailed agreement. They went home from the conference thinking that they had got that done and that was through partnership building of doing it together. Who broke it? The federal government broke the agreement. It broke it unilaterally. Its argument was that it did not need the provinces and the territories and that it had the power to sign treaties internationally.

I heard that argument before. I was honoured to be the lead minister introducing the free trade agreement. Officials, theorists, told us that this was federal and that we did not need the provinces. We said that if we did not have the provinces, we would not get a treaty that could work and so we insisted on having the provinces in. We demonstrated that where there was a determination on the part of the national government to match its rhetoric with its work, we could draw the partners together and get an agreement that would move everybody forward.

• (1215)

The government had that agreement underway and then it broke it unilaterally and tragically to the country.

The Prime Minister went off to Kyoto all by himself and he signed an agreement. What was the scientific basis of Canada's commitment to Kyoto? The scientific basis was the Prime Minister of Canada said he was going to be better than the United States of America. There is science. There is leadership.

Let me deal with the question of treaty making. Of course only the federal government under our law can sign treaties but the practical reality is that in order to give effect to any major international obligation, Canada needs to have the cooperation of the provinces as well as the agreement of the federal government. In the words of the research branch of the Library of Parliament:

If a treaty contains provisions that fall under the provincial sphere of jurisdiction as laid out in section 92 of the Constitution Act, 1867, the federal government must

secure the participation of the provinces so that their legislation will comply with the obligations of the treaty.

The principle is clearly stated in the 1937 Privy Council decision in the *Labour Conventions* case. Provisions of international treaties that fall within areas of provincial jurisdiction can be implemented in Canada only by the provincial assemblies.

[*Translation*]

As far as the Kyoto protocol is concerned, at the very least, there will be interference in each of the following areas of provincial or shared jurisdiction: non-renewable natural resources, forestry and agricultural resources, as well as a number of others. The Government of Canada can choose to ignore this reality if it wishes, in order to obtain ratification, but to what end?

The scope and complexity of the Kyoto protocol guarantee that, without a doubt, there will be tentacles stretching out into areas of provincial jurisdiction. Barring active participation by the provinces in the implementation process, the federal government will therefore be open to court challenges in Canada as well as penalties on the international level.

[*English*]

The issue is very clear. We must have decisions that bring the provinces in, not divisions that drive the provinces away.

As a former foreign affairs minister, I have to say there is a grave danger that we will be signing an international accord that we are not able to honour. Not only will that make us subject to international penalties, it will also besmirch the name of a country whose strength is that our word can be counted on. We are being asked to sign an accord which we do not know whether or not we can honour.

• (1220)

[*Translation*]

Allow me to direct my comments particularly to my fellow Quebecers, who support the Kyoto protocol in such large numbers. I appreciate the desire of Quebecers to improve the environment. Contrary to some other provinces, ratifying Kyoto will be potentially more directly beneficial to Quebec.

However, I question the wisdom of the decision of the Parti Québécois and the Bloc Québécois to play the game of the Liberal government. Quebec might gain something in the short term, but Quebecers know as well as I do, if not better, how dangerous Ottawa's interference in provincial jurisdictions can be. Why allow the federal government to set a precedent that it will use regarding other future issues?

Ever since they first came to Ottawa, Bloc Québécois members have been strongly critical of this government's tendency not to respect the division of powers. We disagree with their ultimate solution to the problem, but Bloc Québécois members and Progressive Conservative members, like some Canadian Alliance members, agree that we must always remain vigilant to protect the provinces' autonomy. Now, they are ready to capitulate for a few short term benefits.

Government Orders

What will happen when the next international treaty goes against the interests of Quebec? Since it will have capitulated regarding Kyoto, what will the Bloc Québécois be able to do if the issue is, for example, work standards in potential free trade areas of the Americas, or other similar matters? How will the Bloc Québécois then be in a position to criticize the federal government for not seeking a consensus among the provinces after today, when it is prepared to allow the federal government to go ahead without any consensus among the provinces? This is a dangerous precedent, particularly since it involves a government that is so used to abusing its federal powers. It did so when it patriated the Constitution and with the national energy program.

Everyone is aware of the Prime Minister's approach to intergovernmental affairs. This is not a government that respects the rights of the provinces. If it can ignore the provinces today, it will do it again in the future. However, later we can have the votes of the Bloc Québécois members in the House. I certainly hope that we can find a way to ensure that there will not be an agreement without the consent of the provinces.

[English]

Under the rules of the House we are not in a position to move an amendment in this debate. If we could, we would move a very simple amendment that would require the agreement of the provinces to any implementation plan. That would make Kyoto an acceptable process. It would give us some opportunity to go forward and deal with the unquestioned problems of greenhouse gases that have to be dealt with. This is an area in which Canada has played a leadership role historically. We have to play that leadership role again, but that cannot be done with this motion.

The motion is a request for a blind ratification. It is asking Parliament to vote with its eyes closed in favour of a motion with unknown implications except for two things. We know there are provinces that will not agree and their failure to agree will mean the treaty cannot be implemented. We also know that if we promise the world that we will implement it and we find out we cannot, then Canada's name will be besmirched in the international community. We want neither of those things to happen.

There is a better way to deal with the problem of greenhouse gas emissions. It has been proven before by other federal governments that were prepared to set forth the goals a Canadian society should seek and then work with the partners in the Canadian community to make that possible.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech of the right hon. member. I would like to clarify a number of things.

We in the Bloc Québécois have always said that we make a distinction between ratifying Kyoto and implementing it. Will the hon. member admit that the fundamental problem in Canada is not with the protocol per se? The problem is that the federal government will not recognize the principles set out in the protocol, stating that this is a shared and differentiated reduction effort.

Does he admit that the current problem does not rest with the protocol per se, but rather with the federal government's interpreta-

tion and approach, which are inconsistent with the shared and differentiated principles for combating climate change?

One must distinguish between the international accord and the way the government opposite is behaving in term of blatantly encroaching on provincial jurisdictions.

Could the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party comment on my remarks on the distinction between the protocol and how the federal government would implement it?

• (1225)

Right Hon. Joe Clark: Madam Speaker, there is obviously a distinction to be made between the protocol and its implementation. Both will be guided by the same sort of principle, which is cooperation respectful of the nature of Canadian communities.

We now are in a situation where at least eight provinces out of ten object to rapidly and blindly ratifying Kyoto protocol. The government is ignoring the provinces on this.

Why should we expect a sudden change of attitude from this Liberal government, the government of the unilateral patriation? Why should we expect this government to radically change its philosophy and say "We ignored the provinces on ratification, but we will cooperate with them on implementation"? It is unrealistic.

We have no reason to believe that this government will change this policy, which is so deeply rooted in the Liberal Party. Why ask now for speedy ratification which would increase the influence of the federal government? It would then be able to say: "We are not alone in seeking this implementation plan. The governments of Quebec and Alberta may not be in agreement with it, but we did not act alone. Parliament also took a position and the Bloc Québécois supported us."

Mr. Bernard Bigras: We support ratification, not implementation.

Right Hon. Joe Clark: You have been a member of Parliament for three elections. You were elected three times. You have some experience with the Liberal Party. The way votes can be used to create confusion among members has become a trademark of that party.

I can assure you that a spokesperson for the Liberal government will go to your riding and say: "The Bloc Québécois supported us. We have their support in principle. There will be some slight differences in details, but it is the partisanship of the Bloc Québécois which is the problem. The Canadian Parliament has taken a position." This is the game played by the Liberal government.

I hope that members of the Bloc Québécois and ministers of the Parti Québécois in Quebec understand that we are witnessing the first step towards serious interference in provincial jurisdiction.

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I have to respond because I find that the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party is raising some quite interesting points. Unfortunately, I would really like there to be further discussion of Quebec's jurisdictions as opposed to Canada's.

Government Orders

I agree with him in the sense that we, members of the Bloc Québécois, are very wary when it comes to federal intrusions in Quebec's jurisdictions. We just had blatant evidence of that this morning, with the tabling of the Romanow report.

However, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party must understand the interests of the Bloc Québécois, which, ultimately, are merely the interests of Quebec. That is often the problem. When we can join forces with other parties to confront the government, I say so much the better. However, it may happen that members of the Bloc Québécois go it alone when it comes to certain issues, because we believe that we must conduct ourselves as though we represent a country, such as Quebec.

If Quebec were sovereign, perhaps it would want to seek shared jurisdictions, support and allies with the other provinces. But we are not sovereign. So, Quebec's representatives might say "This serves the interests of Quebec, so we will vote for it". It may also happen—in fact, this is regularly the case—that it does not serve Quebec's interests. Then we do not necessarily seek associations. We have a job to do with regards to Quebec's jurisdiction, and this concerns Quebec's jurisdiction and defence.

This may lead to divisions among the different parties, but the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party must understand the context in which we are working here, which is to defend specifically the interests of Quebec with, if possible, some allies. If there are no allies, we will still defend the interests of Quebec.

This may lead to various problems. However, I would really like him to understand that we are still friends. But we have a job to do as Quebec's sovereignist members. We try to do that job as well as we can, with the support that we can find. When we do not have any, we are able to weather the storm alone, always with the goal of defending Quebec's interests.

• (1230)

Right Hon. Joe Clark: Madam Speaker, I am perfectly aware of the history of the Bloc Québécois. The hon. member will recall that I was here when the Bloc was created. However, I do not wish to address today—there will be a debate on that issue at some other time—the possibility of realizing the ultimate goals of the Bloc Québécois.

For the time being, and for months and years to come, we are and will be living in a federal system, and the Government of Quebec must act within it. A federal system cannot function without respect for provincial jurisdictions. We must work within today's reality, even if the member is pursuing changes for the future. It is extremely dangerous for us to give our support to this government. It would set the precedent of breaking the constitutional rules of Canada and interfering in provincial jurisdictions. This precedent will be used to justify future interference.

In these circumstances, we are partners. As a member for Alberta, I am a partner with my colleague from Quebec when it comes to respecting the existing federation. The member has changes to propose. However, for the time being there is a system in place and a division of powers.

The federal government does not respect this division of powers. This represents a threat on the constitutional level. It is also a threat

in terms of the capacity to implement the Kyoto protocol. If the Government of Quebec can oppose the implementation of a provision dealing, for example, with international trade in terms of credits, this power will not be exercised in Quebec. Thus, there will be a means to break the Kyoto protocol. This is a threat to the federal system. It is a threat to the international role of Canada. It is truly dangerous and unnecessary.

Without the artificial deadline of year's end, we would be able to reach agreements, as we did in the past. I was there for the agreement on acid rain and I was there for the Free Trade Agreement. I know it is possible to reach a consensus if we begin by respecting provinces and other partners within the federal system. This is what is different today. This is what the Liberal government's approach to the Kyoto protocol lacks. This government has no respect for the nature of our current system. The member wants to change the system. However, we must live within it, at least—

• (1235)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I am sorry, but I have to interrupt the hon. member. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

[*English*]

Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if one thing has saddened me in this debate, it certainly was not the filibuster of the member for Red Deer, but the position of somebody that I respect very highly. To think that the leader of the Conservative Party has taken this tack.

I was minister of the environment of Quebec during the debate on CEPA, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, where the provinces opposed clauses in the act which infringed on provincial jurisdiction. I remember the minister of the federal government fighting very hard to impose the act because he had the right to do it. The record will show that at that time I proposed an equivalency clause to exempt provinces if their legislation was equivalent to CEPA.

The federal minister at that time, the government's ex-minister of foreign affairs, was ready to impose CEPA on the provinces. I know because I was part of the debate day in and day out. Let us not hear the Conservative members saying that they are full of purity and that we are the people to blame. Sometimes in our daily lives we have to take action. The action on Kyoto is now. We cannot wait forever to ratify the Kyoto protocol.

Many years ago we were the brand new continent, the new world. We were the continent of innovation, of Frank Lloyd Wright, Buckminster Fuller, Wassily Leontiev of economics, Salk and Flemming in medicine. Meanwhile, the old world was mired in wars over the first half of the last century, one war more brutal than the other, causing damage and devastation beyond imagination, while this new world thrived.

After the war was over, suddenly there was a great change in mentalities. The victor and the vanquished in Europe came together and formed, against all expectations, an amazing union, which is now thriving, and which now has one of the most stable currencies, one of the prime currencies of the world with the American dollar. Who would ever have imagined it?

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Meanwhile, we of the new world have become mentally the old world, shrinking unto ourselves, led by the super power to the south of us, which is so proud to call itself the one super power in the world. Is that super power teaching us the example of collectivity, of multilateral action, of joining with others to cure the ills of the world so there will not be a rich world and a poor world, and something for the haves and something else for the have nots? No.

What does it do? It retrenches unto itself, negates all treaties that are collective in action and then wants to drag us into its dragnet, saying, "You, Canada, because you are a neighbour, do the same, otherwise you are going to be affected, because we have decided not to ratify Kyoto, the landmines agreement, the biodiversity convention and what else".

I am proud that we have decided to join with those who believe that Kyoto is not only a matter of facts, figures and profits for this one or that one, or this province or that province, but that Kyoto is a matter of fairness and equity in the world. We, along with the United States, who pollute more than anyone else in the world and who are the champions of energy consumption in the world by far, per capita, should live differently, should manufacture differently and should think about those places, the small island states, Bangladesh, the have not countries that are polluted because of our actions as industrialized countries.

• (1240)

I look at what has been happening in the old world, the world of past wars. I look at the French rail system. I look at the windmill miracle of the Danes. I look at the fact that Sweden and Germany have decided, with great courage, to renounce nuclear power. I look at the fact that one can go to any airport in the smallest country, like Finland or Norway, and have fast transit to their airports. They have wonderful fast transit and we do not even have one major city linked by fast transit to our airports.

We are still debating Kyoto. We are still saying that we cannot do it, that we will suffer all the ills of the world if we ratify Kyoto. Where is our resolve? Where is our collective will with those wonderful universities that we have and those wonderful skills?

We have shown courage in so many instances in the world and that is what it is about. All that we have shown by taking the leadership in the landmines treaty, at the biodiversity convention in Rio, within the framework for climate change at Rio, have we lost that resolve that we can do it?

Kyoto is just a small baby step, the 6% that Premier Klein says will cause catastrophe in his land, or the premier of Ontario who says, "Oh, no". I heard the Ontario minister say "It's like putting lipstick on a pig", a great lofty debate.

Kyoto is a collective agreement that will force us to do things differently. I agree with the members of the Bloc who argued that the ratification of Kyoto is one thing that we must put behind us. The implementation plan must come afterwards and that has to be where our mission must start.

It will not only be 6%, we need to look to 2050 where we will have to reduce our energy consumption by not 6%, 12% or 25%, but by as much as 50% if we want to live differently, if we want to live

in a world where those who waste and consume too much have to waste and consume less so that there is an equalization in the world.

The argument that China, Russia and Brazil are exempted from Kyoto is false. In 2005 they will have to join the treaty as well. They will have to be subjected to timelines and percentage targets.

The other day I quoted from a speech that I heard at the United Nations. I will now quote some details from it. It was given by the President of the Republic of Maldives. He said:

Geographically, the Maldives Islands lie in the equatorial calm of the northern Indian Ocean, away from cyclone paths. The brief annual monsoonal turbulences and the occasional high tidal swells hardly ever endangered the 195,000 inhabitants of the islands.

This year, the frequency and magnitude of unusual tidal wave action has risen alarmingly. The period from the 10th to the 12th of April recorded the highest sea level evidenced in the country, during which unusual high waves at high tide struck the islands with a ferocity that inflicted extensive and unprecedented damage throughout the country.

The rich and developed nations clearly have the wealth and the land to defend themselves from a rise in sea level even if they wait for it to occur, yet they are already preparing. Because small states are more vulnerable, we have to prepare sooner. But the Maldives lacks the economic, technical and technological capability to deal with the formidable prospects of a significant rise in sea level.

We did not contribute to the impending catastrophe to our nation; and alone, we cannot save ourselves.

The day before yesterday there was an article in the paper about the tropical glaciers in the Andes that are melting at a much faster rate than the glaciers in the northern hemisphere. The people rely on these glaciers for drinking water, water for irrigation and water for industry. They say that the glaciers are melting so fast that they will disappear much faster than scientists ever believed.

Even today there was an article in the *Globe and Mail* about NASA taking photographs of the Arctic region which show that melting is occurring at a much faster pace than scientists ever believed.

• (1245)

I heard Dr. Robert Corell from the United States, who is now doing a special study on climate change in the Arctic, pronounce that in the year 2075 at the outside the Arctic Ocean will be an open sea.

The other day I was at a press conference where my colleague from Nunavut was speaking along with me. She said something that struck me very deeply. She said that their land was treeless and that they liked it that way. She said that they did not want it to change. She said that they liked their way of life but that it was being threatened by climate change.

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That is really what Kyoto is about. Kyoto is not about us, the rich guys, whether we are in Quebec, Ontario or Alberta, spoiled as we are in our nice homes, with our nice SUVs and our vast parking lots. It is about us doing things differently so that people in the Arctic region and people in Bolivia and Peru will not suffer because glaciers will be melting faster than they ever thought possible. We must do things differently so that people in the small island states and others are given a chance. We, a rich nation, rich beyond compare, must be an example to others by showing them that we can do things differently. This is what Kyoto is about.

I was saddened when I heard that representatives of our mighty, historical, national party, the Progressive Conservative Party, would be joining, of all things, in a filibuster against Kyoto. How does that party appear to the rest of the world, the 93 countries that have ratified Kyoto? What does that party say to all of the European nations? What does it say to Japan? What does it say to all the countries that believe Kyoto is far more than just an instrument to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 3%, 4% or 6%?

Kyoto is just the start of a plan that must make us change our way of living and manufacturing and our way of doing things. This is what it is about.

I urge all my colleagues to show the way by ratifying Kyoto overwhelmingly. I know the Conservative leader said that it does not matter because the executive has the power to ratify it anyway. Of course it has the power to ratify but it will be far more important and symbolic if it obtains, as it will, the backing of a great number of MPs here in this House of Parliament.

I will close by reciting these words by Mahatma Gandhi that I heard a long time ago. He said, "Nature has something for everybody's needs but not enough for the greed of even some".

That is what this is all about. We need to use the benefits of nature, as far as we can in human terms, so that everybody's needs are taken care of rather than catering to the greed of even some.

I ask the people who are against Kyoto today, whether they are from Alberta, Ontario or elsewhere, what it is that motivates them. Is it their own parish, their own economy or their own bailiwick for the common weal?

Today the common weal is far more than Alberta, Ontario and even Canada. It stretches beyond our borders because we are part of an international community where we contribute to the common weal of not just this part of the world, but the whole world. The planet is finite. There is only one and it cannot last forever at this pace. We have to change our ways. We have to change our lives. We have to change the way we produce and we have to change the way we consume energy.

• (1250)

This is why I will be among the great backers of Kyoto. I will vote for it and I hope the House will vote for it overwhelmingly. In closing I would like to say that I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Durham.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I caution the hon. member that he should have stated at the beginning of his speech

that he was splitting his time, however, there is no splitting of time at the moment. Questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis on his interest in the environment and also on his position on this issue.

The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis understands that, in order to find a global solution to climate change, we need a firm commitment from northern countries to significantly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Besides the emissions reduction in northern countries, we need to focus on technology transfers to southern countries and capacity building to help developing countries embark upon similar initiatives and find climate change solutions.

Fearmongers argue that Kyoto could lead to an economic downturn for Canada, a depression and the associated job losses, but I want the hon. member to tell us how ratifying Kyoto will represent a challenge in terms of innovating, developing new technology, maintaining control over our work, and being able to transfer our expertise and technology to developing countries and export them. I would like him to tell the House how Kyoto can help Quebec and Canada to become world leaders in climate change solutions through the development of green energy sources like wind or solar energy as well as hydroelectric power.

Mr. Clifford Lincoln: Mr. Speaker, when I was dealing with the environment in Quebec, I always thought that, despite people's constitutional differences, the environment is the most precious thing that unites them. Whether they are young or old, they meet on the environment issue, because we are really defending the common heritage. So I totally agree with my colleague.

We are in our infancy in terms of green technologies in Canada. Everything still lies ahead when it comes to wind energy, biomass energy, solar energy, geothermal energy. We have so much to accomplish.

If we look at the statistics on wind energy, for example, Germans produce about 8,000 megawatts; a small country such as Denmark produces between 2,500 and 3,000 megawatts. The Americans produce 4,000 megawatts and we, Canadians, do not even produce 300 megawatts.

With regards to solar energy, for example, Japan produces about ten times more than we do. With respect to biomass energy, we have great innovators, such as Iogen Corporation, in the Ottawa region, that use cellulose fibre to produce natural fuel.

There are so many inventive and innovative people in all parts of the country that we must mobilize them in a Kyoto implementation plan, because this protocol is merely a first step. It is a great adventure for society to build these technologies, not only so that we can use them, but also so that we can transfer them to those who need them to deal with climate change, as the member has suggested. This is our common hope.

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•(1255)

Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, I most heartily commend my colleague, the member for Lac-Saint-Louis, who I thought was one of the great environment ministers of Quebec. Among people of the same calibre who deal with the environment there is my colleague, the member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie. He takes the issue very much to heart and passionately devotes his time and energy to it. I congratulate them both.

I would like our colleague from Lac-Saint-Louis to develop one aspect of his speech. He said that he agrees with members of the Bloc who argued that the ratification of Kyoto is one thing that we must put behind us. However, he also said that implementation would come next. I have a little trouble understanding that point. I would like our learned colleague to help me on this.

As Quebeckers, can we be assured that the Kyoto protocol will be implemented fairly and with respect for provincial jurisdictions, with recognition for the work that has already been done in some provinces? Manitoba and Quebec have already started reducing greenhouse gases. I would like to hear the comments and impressions of my colleague on this.

Mr. Clifford Lincoln: Madam Speaker, I think that implementing Kyoto once it is ratified will really be the great challenge for all of us. It will only succeed if we pool our common interests to introduce leading-edge technologies with regard to green energies and to find new ways of doing things. This can only be achieved through cooperation.

My biggest wish is to have some kind of advisory committee. There are so many brilliant people who could help. I am talking about Louise Comeau, of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Robert Hornung and people from all provinces. It seems to me that we should use these resources, that we should call upon these experts who are among us every day.

It is incumbent upon all sectors and all provinces to get these people together in some kind of advisory committee that would provide practical advice to both the Canadian government and provincial governments in terms of how to change our mentalities and our attitudes and how to introduce new technologies. All these people are among us. I could name quite a few. We must be able to get them together and be positive about this whole issue.

I hope that Canadian Alliance members and Progressive Conservative Party members will join us in this initiative. Kyoto and post-Kyoto must become a social vision, regardless of where we live in Canada and what province we call home.

[*English*]

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, I wish I could say it was a pleasure to engage in the debate, but it is with disappointment than anything else that I take part in it, simply because we should not be having the debate at this time.

It is clear to me that with the uncertainties, the lack of detail, the absence of a plan, and the absence of any sense of cooperation with the provinces and industries, that we are not ready to ratify this accord. We should be working toward an environment where we could seriously debate a plan that includes at least a draft of

legislation for implementation of the Kyoto accord. It should include a plan that lays out the costs to the provinces, to industry and to consumers, and the share of the burden they would be expected to bear. We have none of those things.

This whole issue has been a fraud from the very beginning. It has been so badly handled by the government and by those promoting the Kyoto accord that, in spite of the fact that we have been 10 years at this, we are nowhere near the point we should be. That is probably because, not only this government but the government before it, they have never been particularly serious about dealing with the issue of greenhouse gases, the greenhouse effect on earth, and all the rest of those things. Had it been serious, certainly the Conservative government, after its commitment in Rio to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000, it would have come up with some kind of plan and would have taken some kind of action at that point. This government has taken up the cause and has gone ahead and signed the Kyoto accord, and by so doing has betrayed the trust of the provinces.

I was in Regina at the meeting of provincial environment and natural resources ministers where an agreement was reached with the provinces on a position to take to Kyoto. That position was to stabilize greenhouse gases at 1990 levels, not 6% below 1990 levels. The provinces agreed reluctantly to commit to that level. Then the federal government went to Kyoto and unilaterally, without any consultation, committed to 6% below 1990 levels, which is now 30% below 1990 levels.

It is sheer coincidence that the difference between the stabilization of the 0% and the 6% below is the 60 megatonnes which the government cannot find a way to deal with in its latest plan. That may not be that important, but certainly if the government had lived up to its promise, its commitment with the provinces, and had taken that commitment to Kyoto, at least its plan would be a plan to deal with the targets of 6% below 1990 levels.

There is corruption of the whole Kyoto process through the IPCC, the study that was done and the recommendations that were brought forward by that group. The executive summary of that report that is being used all the time on this issue is such a corruption, particularly the conclusions that were arrived at by scientists of the IPCC.

•(1300)

I would like to quote a statement by John Bennett of the Sierra Club of Canada. He said:

—the IPCC has described as an impending “environmental catastrophe” caused by human induced climate change.

I do not know where he got that from because the summary statement of the IPCC study is:

—and therefore that the prediction of a specific future climate is not possible.

That is quite a contrast to what some are saying the IPCC study in fact told them. That in itself is a corruption of the truth and is misleading.

When I look at that inaccuracy, those kinds of misleading statements, it throws into some question the whole issue of whether we are being told the truth or whether we are being fed something that is less than the truth. The more we look at it, the more we have to think that way.

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Although I certainly would not even propose to come close to the efforts of my colleague from Red Deer, I feel no less passionate about the issue, but I do not think I am up to speaking for 11 hours and 45 minutes.

• (1305)

Mr. Clifford Lincoln: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, is the gentleman from the Canadian Alliance making a speech or is it questions and comments?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): That is a point of debate. However, on the point of order, the hon. member has the floor on debate for 20 minutes. Then there will be questions and comments for 10 minutes.

Mr. David Chatters: Madam Speaker, one point of contention on this issue from the very beginning has been the science around climate change. We have raised these issues because there is growing scientific opinion that the science behind the Kyoto accord is badly flawed.

Over and over again we have mentioned such distinguished people as Dr. Tim Patterson, Dr. Tim Ball, Dr. Fred Singer, Dr. Pat Michaels, Dr. Fred Michel, Dr. Howard Hayden, Dr. Terry Rogers. I will not go through their qualifications. They are all well respected scientists in their fields, which are related to the climate change issue.

An hon. member: They were brought to committee.

Mr. David Chatters: In fact they came to committee to warn us about what we were doing.

When we mention their names and present their evidence that there is really something wrong with the science, I hear members as well as the previous speaker, try to discount the opinions of these experts by somehow implying that their opinions are not valid because they are corrupted by the oil industry or the energy industry. That is simply not valid in any way.

Those people have no connection to the oil industry. I do not understand why their opinions, even if they did have some connection to the oil industry, would be any less valid than those of organizations such as the David Suzuki Foundation, the Sierra Club, or the Pembina Institute which receive a considerable amount of funding and not just from the Canadian government.

The Sierra Club received \$213,000 from the British Columbia government when the New Democrats were in power in B.C. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities under the leadership of a current candidate for the NDP received a grant of \$250 million to establish the green municipal program. Why does that funding from governments not somehow put the credibility of their opinions under suspicion any more than those scientists who have a huge list of credentials and years of experience in the field?

I think there is a problem. It makes me suspect that the government is cherry-picking opinions and actually paying organizations to promote its argument. That makes me very suspicious.

That having been said, the science certainly is questionable and should be questioned. The way for Parliament to have dealt with this issue should have been the same way the U.S. government dealt with it. It came to the conclusion that it would not support Kyoto.

We should hold parliamentary committee hearings, whether they be joint Senate and House of Commons hearings or standing committee hearings. We should have a thorough study done of this issue for parliamentarians, where parliamentarians could listen to the scientific opinion on both sides of the issue. We could see the evidence that the member for Lac-Saint-Louis talked about, the pictures of the ice melting and all the rest of it. Then we might be in a better position to understand the issue. We are not scientists or experts. There is this pulling back and forth trying to influence our opinions one way or the other and that is not fair.

There is something that concerns me even more than the questionable science on the issue. I read an article in the *National Post* yesterday under the byline of Terence Corcoran. It was quite shocking. There has been some reference to this agenda before.

• (1310)

This gentleman has brought forward some very credible experts in the field of economics. They have real concerns about the Kyoto accord and in fact have taken those concerns to the head of the IPCC which has promised to review them and get back to them. The article leads off by saying something that is very revealing. It states:

Anyone puzzled by the science behind Kyoto should take a look at the economics. In the words of one leading economic modeller [who is named later in the article] the central 100-year economic projections behind Kyoto and global warming policy making is "an insult to science" and "an insult to serious analysis". And that is probably the good part of any criticism. It is also clear that the economic work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is driven by systemic ideological preferences for state intervention.

I think we heard the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis confirming, in his opinion at least, that is what this whole Kyoto thing and climate change is about.

John Reilly of the MIT Joint Program on the Science and Policy Global Change is quoted in the article as saying:

At one point, the IPCC group attempted to find economists to "tweak" long-range models to get the desired emissions results. "They wanted our group [at MIT] to do this, but we just refused".

Again, do we not get suspicious that there is something going on here that is less than truthful? I certainly do. Professor Reilly went on to say:

Not only did the modelling warp economics. The overall ideology of the operation appears to have been to create scenarios that would fulfill a larger objective. "The bigger issue," says Professor Reilly, is the SRES [Special Report on Emission Scenarios] vision of an economic future of "equal incomes" among all regions of the globe. He calls it the "social justice" issue. "They are of the view that the future world is a matter of human choice. If we want a world where the United States stops growing, and developing countries grow and catch up, we can choose that world. It is not something you can project. You just choose that scenario and if it is a scenario we as a world like, we will create it. We will make it happen".

That should really shock people. The article goes on at some length to describe how they worked in a backward direction to come up with the proposals. Between 2000 and 2050 they have third world countries growing at rates of 50% to 65% GDP, while by 2030 in the U.S. and other OECD countries, economic development grinds to an absolute halt. That goes against 300 years of history. It certainly goes against the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that drives the U.S. and Canadian economies.

Canadians should wake up and question what the real agenda is. This article is backed up by some pretty solid scientific opinion.

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Let us look at the speech the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard made at the University of Toronto where he referred to Canada joining the world in a global effort to make the world a better place for everyone to live in. We listened to the Prime Minister's comments after September 11 about the problem of unequal distribution of wealth in poor and rich countries and how this disparity in income is driving the terrorists in the world to do their work. He said that we are greedy and selfish because we are wealthy and that we should share more of that wealth with the developing world.

In some sense I agree with much of that. It would be more credible if more people like the Prime Minister were taking their own wealth and creating trust funds to help people in the third world, instead of using Canadian taxpayers' money.

• (1315)

The \$2,700 per family after tax income cost of Kyoto is a figure that has been arrived at by a number of different organizations. It may not mean much to the Prime Minister and probably not much to most of the cabinet or most members of the House, since \$2,700 in after tax income would not create great hardship probably for us. However to a huge number of people, I would dare to say the majority of people in Canada, that \$2,700 after tax income will have a dramatic effect on their lifestyle and will make life quite difficult for them.

My colleague from Red Deer mentioned many times that there was some reason to believe that there was some scientific validity to the issue of the greenhouse effect and that we, as inhabitants of this planet, should do everything we could to reduce our footprint on this planet. We should do what is prudent, what is possible and what we can to reduce that footprint, and we should go ahead with that.

I do not think that this government is serious about it, just as the Mulroney government before it. If this government really was serious about what it is promoting, we would see some real action on behalf of it. We really have not seen much but rhetoric. The various copies of the plan that we have seen are full of very fuzzy and warm stuff, but what we look for are real actions.

I remember debating in the House some years ago the federal plan to convert the federal transportation fleet to green fuels. I dare say precious little has been achieved in that direction. Not only has the fleet not been converted, but, as my Red Deer said over and again, a part of the fleet sits out in front of the House on the street, in winter and summer, running to create comfort for the ministers.

Look at the buildings on Parliament Hill. While all homeowners are being asked to retrofit their homes, upgrade their windows and all the rest of it, we do not see many double-pane gas filled windows on the buildings around Parliament Hill. We do not see any effort being made on that, although Canadians are supposed to do something.

If the government were really serious, it would be demonstrating its seriousness by having a real program of action and those things would be happening. We would see those cars outside being shut off. The chauffeurs who drive the ministers around could come into the lobby to keep warm. When the minister is ready to go, they could go out, get in their car and go. In the summertime they could roll the windows down to keep cool instead of sitting with the car running,

the air conditioning going and water running down the street under the cars.

I do not think that it is really serious. If it were, the Minister of Natural Resources would not be driving a Cadillac Escalade. I would like to move a subamendment—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I am sorry, but the member's time is up. I did indicate that earlier. The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake.

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, the Kyoto agreement will have a major impact upon agriculture. Being the chief agricultural critic for the Canadian Alliance, I have been trying to see what exactly this Kyoto agreement involves and what impact it will have on agriculture. If we look at the U.S. analysis on the negative impact of Kyoto on agriculture, we will see that it will be between \$30 billion or \$40 billion, which will make an already less than competitive set of farmers even less competitive and that could happen in Canada.

A farmer from my area by the name of Randall Stefanson who is in the Riverton area, has done extensive post-secondary education in climate change. He has the practical experience along with a vast amount of academic education. He says that this is very bad for agriculture in Canada and it is bad for Canadians overall.

I know the member is from a farming area in Alberta. Could we hear his comments with regard to agriculture and if in fact we should know what we are getting into before we jump in?

• (1320)

Mr. David Chatters: Madam Speaker, I certainly with the member. The Kyoto accord has huge implications for agriculture, an industry which is already under severe stress because of foreign subsidies and all those things.

However there are a number of issues that will affect agriculture dramatically. The cost of energy and the cost of fuel for farmers will have a huge impact. The cost of energy not only reflects on the fuel for their tractors and machinery but the natural gas that goes into fertilizers and the energy costs for the production of chemicals will have a huge impact.

Particularly galling is the fact that farmers, through negotiations by the federal government, have been acknowledged as a way to save carbon and to store carbon in carbon sinks through zero tillage agriculture. One might think the farmers might get those credits to offset the increased energy costs, but no, the federal government is claiming those credits and will use them in its plan. There is no mechanism to even partially offset the cost to agriculture. There will be a devastating effect on agriculture.

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Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to edify my hon. colleague opposite. He mentioned in his discussion the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. It seemed from the way I heard his comments, and I would invite him to clarify, that perhaps it was not as objective as it might have been, because of the \$250 million green enabling fund which the federation dispenses on behalf of the federal government.

I point out to my hon. colleague that this is exactly the kind of partnership in implementation that is necessary to meet the greenhouse gas reductions that are part of the Kyoto protocol. In fact, that money goes to municipalities for pilot projects that can be replicated for such projects as recycling computers. I have had people from the industry say that this is a business opportunity for them. All the projects under the municipal fund need to be replicated in other municipalities. The government is taking this challenge very seriously and is asking our partners to participate.

He also talked about industry. I point out to him that Technology Partnership Canada gives repayable grants to companies such as GFI and ATS, which are in my community. They do factory conversion kits that are deal with cutting edge technology on solar panels and how that may be used in mass transit as well as vehicles. The government has put its money where its mouth is.

He also quoted his colleague from Red Deer. While I do not have *Hansard* in front of me, my recollection of what he said, while I listened to him go on, was that if there was a connection between the Kyoto protocol, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and health, that perhaps he and his party would have to look again at their stance.

I point out that the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions will achieve the kind of clean air quality goals that Canada has. This includes reducing emissions of particulate matter, nitrogen oxide and sulphur dioxide from emitters like thermoelectric plants, refineries and pulp and paper mills.

The targets of Kyoto and the actions that will allow us to reach those targets, which the government contends are achievable in partnership with provinces, territories, municipalities and by asking Canadians as well as large emitters to do their bit, are very achievable and will have a very positive impact on a better environment and lead to a better condition for the health of Canadians.

•(1325)

Mr. David Chatters: Madam Speaker, I was glad to give the parliamentary secretary the platform to make that enthusiastic advertisement for the government's programs, but I did notice one rather glaring error in her comments when she said that the government was putting its money where its mouth was. The government is putting our money where its mouth is, and that is quite a different thing.

I do not argue for a minute that the municipal green fund is not doing some good things, things that should be done. My point is this. Would the Canadian Association of Municipalities and its president be out there participating in panels, selling the government's position on the Kyoto accord, if they had not got the \$250

million grant? I do not think anyone could say that the money they are distributing on behalf of the federal government does not somehow influence their opinion.

Industry is doing wonderful things and using some of the government's programs to do those things. In my own riding in the Tar Sands, the industry has reduced CO₂ emissions by 17% per unit of production, per barrel of oil. That is well beyond the Kyoto accord. However the Prime Minister when in Washington promotes the industry as a source of supply for the U.S. However we cannot increase production by seven times and reduce overall emissions. That is unexpected.

TransAlta Utilities, one of the greatest greenhouse gas emitters in Canada and the main supplier of electrical energy in Alberta, without the commitment of Kyoto, is on track to reduce its net emissions to zero by 2024. It does not need the Kyoto accord. We do not need to be bound by the Kyoto accord. We do not need to engage in this social welfare program for the third world to achieve the things we need to achieve.

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned science and agriculture. Anyone who lives in the west and has seen for example the way the Athabasca glacier has behaved over the last 100 years knows that the climate is warmer now than it used to be. I do not think anyone denies that.

There is some discussion about what will happen in the future, but there is no discussion about the cause of that heating. The cause is that our atmosphere is different than it was 100 years ago. One change is CO₂, which is the one that everyone mentions simply because it is easy to measure and has been measured since the 1850s. However there are other greenhouse gases and most of them are poisonous. My colleague mentioned nitrogen oxides and other acid bases.

With respect to farming and the member's experience of science in farming, one of those gases is ground level ozone. Ground level ozone is produced. It is there on smog days. Peterborough, which is a rural area, is the most polluted place in Ontario on smog days. Ground level ozone reduces agricultural production. I regret that my figures are 10 years old because I am sure these figures are much larger now. However ground level ozone, at a conservative estimate, and conservative is not a word I use lightly, costs farmers in Ontario \$14 million a year in production. Ground level ozone poisons human beings and slows crop production.

Let us address the changes in atmosphere which are irrefutable. We do not have to debate—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I do not know if there was a question in that, but the hon. member's time is up. I will permit the hon. member to answer.

Mr. David Chatters: Madam Speaker, the member continues to engage in this exercise of confusing pollution and greenhouse gases involved in that. That is simply not right. When it comes to CO₂ levels in the atmosphere, there have been times in recorded history where CO₂ in the atmosphere was 1,000 times higher than it is today—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Government Orders

• (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Order, please. It is very hard for the Chair to hear over the screaming of the hon. members, and I use that word deliberately. Resuming debate.

Mr. Alex Shepherd (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it seems to me the previous speaker did not want to get confused by the facts. That is a lot of what this debate is all about.

I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Halton.

I have heard constantly throughout this debate questions about why we should be doing this before Christmas and so forth. I have an analogy. This is a time of year when we think about Charles Dickens, who of course wrote about the industrial revolution in Britain. When we think about that, we think of child labour, of kids pulling coal carts and throwing coal for the blast furnaces of the industrial revolution. We have come so far from that. We think that is a ludicrous thing to do. We all accept that there should not be such a thing as child labour.

The seeds of an exuberant industrialization are the kinds of gases that we are forced to breathe on a daily basis. I would like to use my riding in Durham as an example, obviously because it is my riding but because it is an area where the urban area breaks into the rural area. It is an area of agricultural production. It is an area where people commute to and from the greater Toronto area. The biggest employer is General Motors. There is a great dependency on energy and there is great concern over this file about Kyoto.

I will give some statistics. I know that we keep talking about pollution and about CO₂ emissions, but the reality on CO₂ is that the conditions of climate change actually promote smog. There is definite scientific evidence that shows that these two things are related: that the smog warnings in Toronto are definitely related to CO₂ emissions. There was only one smog advisory day in south-central Ontario in 1993. In 1994 there were six, in 1996 there were five, in 1999 there were nine, in 2000 there were four, and in 2001 there were 24. Up to October of this year there have been 28 smog advisory days.

Health Canada tells us that over 5,000 people died prematurely last year due to respiratory ailments brought on by pollution. This is the air that we are asking people to breathe.

In my former life, I was a practising accountant, a financial adviser and a successful business person and I can tell members that business runs on one basic philosophy: profit maximization. There is nothing wrong with that. That is the game, that is how it is played and if people are efficient and good at it, they will have good profits, and if they are not competitive, they go out of business. That gives us very efficient industries.

There is one big problem with that equation today, that is, there is no cost to business for polluting the air we breathe. There is no cost to business for those respiratory ailments that I just talked about. There is no add-up in dollars and cents of people who are living with the medical impacts of pollution and the effects of climate change. That is a big disconnect when we actually start looking at this whole issue.

We hear spokespeople for various business lobbies who come forward and ask why we do not slow down, why do we not resist this and who say that maybe we could wait until some other day. Really, they are not different from those people back in the 1800s in industrial Britain who said that maybe there was a good reason why they had child labour and it would really upset the whole industrial system to change it. That is nonsense. The simple fact of the matter is that it is nonsense and we have to get beyond that. We have to find a way to leave a better world, not only for people who are living today but for children and for Canadians who are as yet unborn.

• (1335)

I have come by this file somewhat honestly in the sense that I experienced this off the coast of Labrador in late August. It was wonderful seeing the icebergs go by. It was an unexpected experience. It was unexpected because iceberg season is in June. Icebergs are floating back and forth because climate change is going on. The reality is that climate change is for real and so are its impacts on our health.

We constantly hear that we need Canadian solutions for this problem. Passing the Kyoto protocol is simply signing us on to reducing our emissions 6% below 1990 levels. I heard the member for Calgary Centre say that we should wait until all the provinces are on side, but we have been debating this issue in Canada since 1990 and still the provinces are not on side. There will always be people kicking and screaming all the way down to the point at which they have to realize that they are hurting people's basic health.

From 1990 until now emissions have increased. We are now talking about having to reduce them by almost 20% below 1990 levels in order to meet the conditions of the Kyoto accord. Every time we say we will wait, we will do another study, or we will do something else, the fact of the matter is that we are going in reverse. We are not coming to a solution for this basic fundamental problem.

The people of Durham have made it very clear to me. People have sent me e-mails and letters. They have told me they want me to support the Kyoto protocol. They say they know there is something wrong with the environment. They know there is something wrong when they see the smog every day when they go to work in Toronto. One individual told me his wife is coughing more than she ever did before. People know that there are some fundamental problems with our environment. They know we have to take some significant responsibility for making changes to that.

I would like to get back to the business envelope. What are we actually asking businesses and indeed all Canadians to do? We are asking businesses to reduce their consumption of energy. Getting back to the business model, we are asking businesses to reduce their consumption of energy, which in fact will save them money. The reduction of the use of fossil fuels in their businesses, if they can do it more efficiently, will simply reduce their cost of production. Ultimately we are asking businesses to make more profits. What better solution can we have?

Government Orders

Some will say yes, but we do not have the technology to achieve that. The renaissance period in history produced the cuckoo clock. The two major wars probably produced more innovation in our society than was produced at any other time in our history. Necessity, that is, a law, an agreement, will undoubtedly create a necessity among business and open the innovation thought process that goes on in the heads of all of us to find better ways to do business once we realize there is a significant cost to dumping our garbage in the air and having people breathe it. It is a good policy position to take.

I will talk about General Motors in particular. I have talked to that company and it has told me it is concerned about this issue. It is concerned, not because of itself, as it has done great things by reducing car emissions and reducing its plants' emissions, but it is afraid of what it calls a cascading effect. In other words, it is afraid that the parts it buys, the people who transport things to it, the steel industry, will all have higher costs and those higher costs will impact on General Motors and its products will become less competitive when shipped south of the border.

Irrespective of the fact that I understand the General Motors concern, I can tell members that a simple rise in the Canadian dollar from 63¢ to 70¢ would have a greater devastating impact on the automotive industry in this country than anything that Kyoto could do, and I think General Motors realizes that.

Finally, the important aspect of this is that we have to be first. I think we owe it to our industries to tell them that we want them there first, first with innovation and technology, because it will make them more competitive in the future. I think even General Motors recognizes that.

I look forward to passing this protocol. I think the people of Durham are very supportive and want us to move forward on this issue.

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, first, I would like to avail myself of my right to ask questions and make comments about my colleague's speech, in order to make a certain number of points.

The hon. member is right when he says that the issue of climate change has been talked about since 1995. He is entirely right. However, where I disagree is when he says that the provinces have refused to fight climate change. I believe we have to establish a certain number of facts since it is not all provinces that have refused to face up to the challenge of climate change. For example, Manitoba and Quebec have agreed to put together action plans to reduce climate change. It is an important and historical mistake to lump all provinces together. That is the first point.

As for the second point, when the hon. member says that businesses and industry must do their part, I agree with that, but this approach relies on a national vision, a coast-to-coast vision.

Depending on whether one is in Quebec, in the west, or elsewhere in the rest of Canada, it becomes clear that the performance of certain businesses and industries is different. For example, in Quebec, the manufacturing industry has succeeded in lowering its greenhouse gas emissions by 2%, whereas in the transportation

industry, emissions have increased. This is completely different from what is happening in western Canada, where it has become clear that emissions will increase by close to 131% in the fossil fuel sector alone.

Will the member not acknowledge that, in the end, the best strategy for reaching the objectives is to set different objectives for each province, which would lead to each strategy being adapted based on efforts that have already been made?

For example, Quebec could implement measures in the transportation sector, because that is the sector that requires major improvements, whereas western Canada could choose not to implement measures in transportation, but in the oil industry instead. Would it not be better to adopt a territorial strategy instead of a sectoral one, as the member appears to be advocating?

[*English*]

Mr. Alex Shepherd: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. First, yes, very definitely, a number of provinces have taken very concerted actions in recognition of climate change. In my own province in the recent summer months, we have seen a hike in energy rates. We have now been able to determine that one of the major reasons why we had a hike in those rates has to do with the fact that coal fired generating plants had to be curtailed in the Toronto area because of smog alerts. Actually Quebec was the net benefactor of that. The Province of Ontario had to buy energy, and at high rates, I might add, from the Province of Quebec.

The fact of the matter is that we have a province saying it is not so sure about Kyoto while at the same time it has significant problems and it had better start getting on side for the benefit of its own people. Ontario has been dragging its feet on the investment in new coal fired plants for so long that it is way behind the eight ball.

On the question of the industrial sectors, I disagree. I do not think that we can develop a territorial orientation to this. In fact, the whole concept of the Kyoto accord is that we are part of a global environment and we are part of a global problem. I do not think we can start regionalizing how we are going to deal with the matter of Kyoto. In fact, I am one of those who believes that we should have a covenant approach, covenants on an individual industrial approach. It would solve some of the very problems that the member has talked about.

He said that some of the manufacturing industries in Quebec are on side and have done good things. Under a covenant approach we would recognize that. The commitment to reducing greenhouse gases would probably be less in the transportation industry, let us say, which historically has not been as forthcoming. Using a covenants approach that has a sectoral approach, which is what Britain has done to some extent, I think would be more successful than a territorial approach in any case.

Government Orders

• (1345)

Mr. Julian Reed (Halton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in 1939 this Parliament debated for three days about going to war in Europe. There was no plan but we went to war. We have been debating for four days this new challenge, this new quest we have, and we will do it partly with a plan and by taking up the challenge as we did in 1939.

I am excited about the prospects but I am concerned about the motivation. There have been various times in our history when we have been motivated to act, the last one being in the seventies with the oil price crisis. That prompted the largest single conservation effort that had ever been seen in North America, and it was all voluntary. People gave up their large automobiles and moved into compact cars. The speed limit in the United States was reduced to 55 mph on its major highways and so on. It was done because of the perception of a crisis.

Today our crises are more in number but more remote. The disappearance of permafrost in the Mackenzie Valley does not seem to affect us directly. The thinning of the ice cap in the Arctic does not seem to affect us because we are here. The polar bears that are starving in Hudson Bay, because they do not have enough ice to go out and hunt their traditional food, does not seem to affect us. If it is childhood asthma, it is the neighbour's son or daughter down the street and it is not our problem. If it is the 1,800 premature deaths in Ontario, as recorded by the Ontario Medical Association, it is not our problem because old Fred lived a good life anyway and although he died of respiratory causes he was on his way out.

That kind of avoidance of reality is what I see in the flat earth society across the way. I do not want to single out the oil industry because many elements of the oil industry have done wonderful things to move into the new era. It recognizes Kyoto. Royal Dutch/Shell, BP and Suncor recognize Kyoto. They are all headed in that direction.

Here is the kind of thinking that governments were faced with in the past. It was related by retired Senator Nick Taylor. He remembers that salt water was a byproduct of extracting oil. That salt water was spread on the gravel roads in the oil field to keep down the dust. However, when the contamination of the water tables raised complaints from ranchers and farmers in the area, the government went to the offenders in the oil industry and said that they had to put that stuff back in the ground. The oil industry said that was outrageous and that it would be the end of profit. But they did and they repressurized the reservoirs and were able to extract more oil.

Then the government began bothering industry about burning all that useless natural gas. The byproducts were drifting downwards and making people sick. The government went to the offenders in the industry and said that they had to capture that gas and save it. They said that was outrageous, that it would be the end of profit. But they stored the natural gas and by golly found a use for it.

• (1350)

Then there was the sulphur escaping from the wells. The government said to capture it. The industry said that was outrageous but they captured it and many made more money from selling sulphur than selling gas.

Today in Saskatchewan the industry is importing 95 million cubic feet of carbon dioxide a day to pump into and pressurize the oil fields. Texas is sequestering 40 million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. It has learned how to do it and do it well. I am always intrigued by the kind of denial that I hear across the way, almost in every area of this quest on which we find ourselves.

I would like to refer my Alberta friends to a discussion paper that was commissioned by the Alberta government in 1988. It was on the potential for reducing carbon dioxide emissions in that province. I have the executive here. It is rather intriguing because it outlines in detail every investment that could be made and the amount of time it would take to get a payback. It includes the tar sands. It shows, for instance, that with an investment in retrofit energy conservation of \$6.7 billion alone would result in first year savings of \$2.2 billion per year. The average payback of the investment would be 3.1 years.

This was done for the Alberta government. I am not sure where the Premier of Alberta hid it when he began to rail against Kyoto and its possibilities, but here it is in black and white. It is probably available somewhere on a dust covered shelf in Alberta in throbbing colour. To accomplish what we want to accomplish with Kyoto requires willingness, recognition of the problem, innovation, creativity and vision. We are going into this quest with both a plan and the opportunity to apply our vision, ingenuity, creativity and so on.

The reason why we must do both is because technology changes continually. What was valid information in 1978 or 1979 is no longer valid in 2002. I recall the first work we did on ethanol in Ontario. The product was studied and deemed energy negative. In other words more energy was needed to manufacture the ethanol than we got back. Today, because we did it, we now have a technology that produces 34% more energy than is required to manufacture ethanol. That is improving all the time and will continue to improve as the years go by.

Members across the way should remember the old Chinese proverb "The journey of a 1000 miles begins with the first step." Unless we are willing to take the first step, nothing will happen. If the flat earth society were ever in power, nothing would happen at all. People would rail that it was the end of profit, the world was going to hell in a handbasket and all the rest of it.

• (1355)

The truth is we are faced with one of the greatest opportunities that we have ever had in this country. We are determined to shoulder it and get on with the job. It will result in a cleaner environment, in health—

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): Order, please. Questions and comments. The hon. member for Athabasca.

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, that was an interesting and patriotic speech, but the speaker missed the mark substantially because he used the oil industry as such an example. I would hold the oil industry in western Canada as one of the most innovative and entrepreneurial sectors in the entire Canadian economy. We can meet the challenge. We are doing it now without Kyoto. The problem is, and the member does not seem to realize it, the costs of production would rise in the oil industry, and in every other industrial sector, as a result of Kyoto because of the increased costs of production.

The United States, where we send 80% of our product, operates on a world market. If our costs were higher and we were unable to serve that market at world prices, that oil would simply come from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the Middle East somewhere instead of Canada. Our industry would shut down. When it comes to the Middle East, part of the profits of that production are supporting terrorism in the world. Does that make any sense to the member?

Mr. Julian Reed: Madam Speaker, I tried to point out to the hon. member that the oil industry did take up the challenge. When it started the industry said that it was outrageous. They could not do it and it was the end of profit. However the industry did it and made a profit. Every time the oil industry has been challenged, it has risen to the occasion and has done it. It resisted at first, then did it because it had to, and then learned to make a profit.

International Nickel in Ontario was faced with the same challenge. It said that it had to close its doors and move away from Sudbury. Then it learned how to utilize the sulphur in the smelting process and not emit it into the atmosphere, and it made money.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Madam Speaker, concerning the speech of my colleague, who is a member from a riding in Ontario, I understand the great virtuous principles that he tried to convey to us just now in his speech, but the fact is that the federal government is far from being consistent with the virtuous approach that the member is advocating.

From 1990 to 1999 alone, the government subsidized the oil industry to the tune of \$2.5 billion, as opposed to \$76 million for green energies. This is a lack of consistency.

Today, it tells us about the shift that we must make. I understand, as the member does, that what was true 40 years ago is not always true today. But when we look at the last 10 years alone, their speeches of today are not consistent at all with what they did in the last 10 years, even during the mandate of the Liberals opposite.

Is making a firm commitment to green energies not what we should really be doing? Should Canada not be committing itself to producing at least 15% of its energy through green energies and thus ensuring that it practices what it preaches? If not, we have before us a government that is totally inconsistent.

• (1400)

[*English*]

Mr. Julian Reed: Madam Speaker, with great respect to my friend, it seems to me that we are producing a fair percentage of our

energy as green energy at the present time. He should know because he comes from the province of Quebec, which has the largest percentage of green energy production in the country. However, what was valid 20 years ago is not valid today. The government is taking the bull by the horns and it is beginning to move in the right direction.

It was deemed valid to support tar sand development when that happened and that commitment was made. It was deemed valid to support nuclear development when that commitment was made. We are changing direction now and taking a new track. We will be moving in the direction of green energy, not as fast as we would all like, but we are—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): I am sorry to interrupt but it is time for statements by members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

MAGNA FOR CANADA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Ms. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 11 remarkable young Canadians, finalists in the 2002 Magna for Canada Scholarship Awards.

These annual awards are presented to students who best expressed their ideas to the question, “If I were Prime Minister, I would...”, and filled in the gaps.

More than \$70,000 in scholarships and internships were awarded to this year's finalists. They are: Paul Braczek, Andrew Carson, Benoit Champoux, Andrew Deonarine, Sean Martin, Steve McIlvenna, Robin Rix, Carl Shulman, Alex Sloat, Anne Swift and Alyssa Tomkins.

In their winning essays the students presented a refreshing and innovative vision of Canada, ideas that reflect hope and diversity.

I ask members to join with me in congratulating such outstanding young people. We look forward to—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos): The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake.

* * *

GRAIN FARMERS

Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Canadian Alliance): Madam Speaker, three farmers, Ron Duffy, John Turcato and Bill Moore, still sit in an Alberta jail for the crime of taking their own wheat across the border.

More cases involving persecution of grain farmers in Saskatchewan are pending and the fate of these farmers will be decided in court in January. These are ordinary Canadians who simply want the fundamental right to sell their wheat to the highest bidder.

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The minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board refuses to take any responsibility for forcing these farmers into jail and does not seem prepared to take any action to prevent more farmers from going to jail.

Canada prides itself on being a country that guarantees its citizens the right to freedom of choice. It is what our soldiers fought and died for in both world wars.

With the refusal of the minister to recognize this fundamental right and to remove the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board, do we really have the right to claim to be a country based upon equality of citizens and free enterprise principles?

* * *

WORLD AIDS DAY

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this Sunday is World AIDS Day, a day to celebrate the volunteers who assist those afflicted by this tragic disease, the professionals who work tirelessly to find new treatments and, I hope soon, a vaccine.

Because many Canadians with AIDS live longer, we have become complacent. In Canada the prevalence of HIV has increased 66% in 10 years, with 4,000 new infections each year. HIV-AIDS now affects youth, women in poverty, aboriginals and children born with the syndrome. Each patient's care costs \$150,000 a year. Worldwide 40 million people have AIDS, 50% of which are women, 3.2 million children and 13.2 million orphans. Eight thousand people die each day. We cannot be complacent.

Our Prime Minister promised last year increased efforts toward HIV-AIDS at home and internationally. Canada's AIDS strategy still stands at \$42 million a year for research, treatment and services. Canadian research has increased world understanding of what triggers HIV, with hope for a cure. It is time to increase funding for the Canadian—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

* * *

● (1405)

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Dr. Tito Scaiano, a chemist at the University of Ottawa, on being named winner of the 2002 Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering.

For the past 30 years Dr. Scaiano has been at the forefront of research into the interactions of light and molecules, which has contributed to the development of free radicals, antioxidants, photo-activated pharmaceuticals and better sunscreens.

With more than 500 journal articles to his name, Dr. Scaiano is Canada's most widely cited chemist.

The 2002 Herzberg award guarantees that Dr. Scaiano will receive \$250,000 over the next five years to supplement his existing research funding of \$1 million for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council.

I also congratulate NSERC which, over the last 10 years, has contributed over \$5 billion into basic research, university-industry

projects and the training of Canada's next generation of scientists and engineers.

* * *

[Translation]

FÉDÉRATION DES CAISSES POPULAIRES DU MANITOBA

Mr. Raymond Simard (Saint Boniface, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that today is the 50th birthday of the Fédération des caisses populaires du Manitoba. Founded in 1952, the federation today serves in excess of 34,000 members through its 9 branches and 31 service points in Saint-Boniface, Saint-Vital and numerous rural communities.

With assets of \$560 million, the Caisses du Manitoba are actively involved in the francophone community, facilitating numerous economic, social, educational and cultural projects. This cooperative movement makes a direct contribution to the vitality and development of Manitoba's francophone community.

I would like to pay tribute to all the early pioneers who had the tenacity to succeed in creating this prosperous financial structure for the benefit of franco-Manitobans. The Caisses du Manitoba have constantly provided their members with highly competitive services while keeping abreast of the latest technology.

Congratulations to the Fédération des caisses populaires du Manitoba, a great francophone institution.

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[English]

CANADIAN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COLLEGE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Canadians will be interested to learn that the move to Heron Road in Ottawa by the Emergency Preparedness College in Arnprior is now being described by the defence minister's department as a temporary location as the Prime Minister seeks to reward one of his backbench MPs with a permanent relocation of the college to his riding.

The minister insists on playing politics when the safety of Canadians is at stake.

Canadians are being told to avoid crowds and to stay off planes by the Liberal government this holiday season, yet more than a year and \$396 million later, still no new safety training programs.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission has confirmed that since 9/11 the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness has no training programs in the event of nuclear sabotage.

The ministers must quit playing politics with the safety of Canadians, direct the Arnprior college to get on with the role for which it was intended, spend its precious resources on programs that will allow Canadians to feel secure in their own country, and drop the plans to move the college.

* * *

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is another example of the erosion of health care in rural Canada.

Two doctors, serving 8,000 patients, have retired in the village of Lakefield, Ontario. This is part of a trend that has seen Peterborough county steadily depleted of physicians. One township, Havelock—Belmont—Methuen, after a great struggle, has been able to establish a nurse practitioner program, but not even this is in sight for Lakefield.

Therefore I am pleased to see that the Romanow report recommends that \$1.5 billion be allocated to create the rural and remote access fund. Recommendation 30 of the report states:

The Rural and Remote Access Fund should be used to attract and retain health care providers.

On behalf of the people of Peterborough riding and Canadians in all parts of rural Canada, I strongly urge that this recommendation be implemented immediately.

* * *

[Translation]

TELEPHONE SERVICE

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 2002, while the federal government is proposing initiatives to connect certain regions to the Internet, hundreds of people still do not have basic phone service. This is the case with the residents of Saint-Michel-des-Saints in the riding of Berthier-Montcalm.

Yet back in 1999 the CRTC announced its intention to provide better service to areas where costs were high. Three years later, however, the CRTC is still busy negotiating service improvement plans.

In reply to a question I asked last week, the Minister of Industry admitted that he had no authority over the CRTC. This is a very serious matter. He is the one really responsible for the CRTC. Before promising new technologies to people in the regions, the minister ought to have made sure he had the CRTC fully on side. Before promising the moon to people in the Quebec regions, the minister needs to think twice before opening his mouth.

* * *

• (1410)

[English]

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Mr. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the International Criminal Court is not only an historic development in the struggle against impunity, but it is also an historic milestone in the struggle to end impunity for crimes of sexual and gender violence.

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First, the ICC treaty criminalizes sexual and gender violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Second, it provides important procedural protections for women victims and witnesses, with the court required to protect the safety, well-being, dignity and privacy of victims and witnesses.

Third, the rules of evidence are designed to shield victims of sexual violence from damaging or intrusive attacks on their sexuality or credibility.

Fourth, it requires that the election of judges take into account the need for gender equity.

It requires that the ICC prosecutor appoint advisors with legal expertise on sexual and gender violence, and it facilitates victims' direct participation in court proceedings so that the woman's voice can be heard.

In a word, international humanitarian law will no longer be able to ignore the victimization of women who are raped, trafficked and persecuted by horrendous acts of violence.

* * *

HIV-AIDS

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, nothing in the history of our world will kill more people than AIDS.

I just returned from Africa and saw the devastation it is causing. With many countries having one-third of their populations HIV-positive, and with more than four million people a year dying from the disease, nothing is left in its wake except millions of orphans and eviscerated economies.

AIDS is killing Africa and yet many of its leaders refuse to even acknowledge the problem. Some, like Robert Mugabe, deliberately make things worse.

We must wage nothing short of a war against AIDS. Pressure must be applied to national leaders to acknowledge the problem, and implement critical prevention and treatment programs.

The World Health Organization must purchase the patents for essential life-extending anti-retrovirals so that they can be freely distributed in developing countries.

Inaction will lead to wide swaths of our world being without adults, without viable economies and with a sea of orphans bereft of hope. This must not be allowed to happen.

S. O. 31

COMPUTERS FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Ms. Sophia Leung (Vancouver Kingsway, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on November 25 I had the pleasure of announcing at Nootka Elementary School in my riding that 50,000 computers have been donated to schools in British Columbia as part of a computers for schools program.

This program, sponsored by Industry Canada and business partners like Telus, B.C. Hydro, refurbishes old computers for schools across Canada.

Six years Nootka Elementary had only six computers. Today, with the help of the computers for schools program, it has over 60.

I want to congratulate Industry Canada and the countless business partners of the computers for schools program for providing computers for schools, not only in my riding of Vancouver—Kingsway but indeed for schools right across Canada.

* * *

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Romanow commission released its long awaited report for rebuilding our health care system.

My New Democratic colleagues and I welcome its recommendations which put before us a solid prescription and a treatment plan that can be implemented with the urgency that is needed.

This reports highlights that some people, in particular aboriginal peoples and those in rural and remote parts of the country, cannot always access medical services where and when they need them. The report states that these problems must be tackled on a priority basis or they will eventually erode public confidence in medicare and with it the consensus that it is worth keeping.

Commissioner Romanow has recommended new initiatives to improve timely access to care, to enhance the quality of care the system provides, a more coordinated approach to health human resources planning and a special focus on the health needs of aboriginal peoples.

New Democrats hope that the federal government can find the political courage to rebuild our health care system and enhance care in our communities.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the softwood lumber crisis is taking a heavy toll on both forestry workers and sawmills. There have been hundreds of job losses and several sawmills have closed, all of which makes it more urgent than ever to implement an aid package that takes what is happening into account.

However, so far, the federal government has done no more than apply ineffectual half measures that are poorly suited to the situation. What is worse, the training programs offered have the effect of pushing workers into other trades, thereby encouraging them to

move to large urban centres in search of work. Basically, the government measures are a subsidy to move away.

As for the sawmills, the government is abandoning them to their fate by refusing to provide them with loan guarantees that would allow them to get through this unprecedented crisis. Instead of coming up with a specific plan to help rescue them from a slow death, the government would rather issue empty statements that do not reassure anyone.

* * *

● (1415)

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, I proudly present the top five myths perpetrated by the member for Red Deer during his misleading monologue over the past week.

Myth No. 5: He says that the Kyoto protocol will not reduce air pollution. Fact: It will.

Myth No. 4: He says that the Kyoto protocol is only about CO₂. Fact: It identifies six greenhouse gases.

Myth No. 3: He says that the Kyoto protocol does not address nitrous oxide. Fact: One of the six greenhouse gases it addresses is nitrous oxide.

Myth No. 2: He says that the IPCC is a group of 200 scientists. Fact: It is a group of 2,000 scientists. He has repeated it seven times and every time he drops the zero.

Myth No. 1: He says that none of the IPCC scientists say people will be dying from the heat and the Prime Minister is wrong to suggest it. Fact: The PM is right. It says exactly that on page 12 of its report. He repeated this misstatement yesterday even after I corrected him.

Thankfully, Canadians can now hear from better informed MPs.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, we are presently witnessing the confusion created throughout the country by the government in relation to the way it is handling the Kyoto issue.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans is also creating concern and confusion in the way it operates.

Last week the minister leaked to his leaky caucus his intention to close the Atlantic cod fishery. Where is the plan to address the crisis?

This week we hear that the same department is removing 15 fog horns along the Vancouver coast against the advice of all those involved and affected. Where is the plan?

The government is proceeding in the same way it is proceeding on Kyoto. No plan. As Yogi Berra once said, "It's déjà vu all over again".

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[English]***HEALTH**

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today Roy Romanow reflected the government's distrust of private delivery within the public system. Like the current and former health ministers, he wants to put a stop to private delivery.

Is it still the plan of the government to shut down private delivery options in the provinces?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, on behalf of the Government of Canada, let me thank Commissioner Romanow for the work he has done.

The report, which I tabled in the House this morning, is entitled "Building on Values". It is very important for us to keep in mind the values of Canadians as we move forward working in partnership with the provinces to renew the system.

We know what Canadians want. They want a—

The Speaker: The hon. member for West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast.

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are about as anti-health care as they are anti-American.

The Canadian Alliance and the provinces have supported the idea of allowing alternative delivery options within the public health care system. Canadians do not care who provides their health care as long as they have timely access to quality health care regardless of the ability to pay.

Why does the government think that a public monopoly is the only way to provide quality, timely health care for all Canadians?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that Commissioner Romanow has tabled his report. This report will form the basis of discussions among the federal, provincial and territorial governments. It will form the basis of ongoing discussions among health care professionals.

As the hon. member knows, our goal is to provide high quality, accessible health care within a publicly financed system.

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the government could have purchased 26 MRI machines for the cost of Roy Romanow swanning around the country for answers which Canadians already knew.

For 10 years the government has abused federal oversight to stifle innovation in the provinces. Now Roy Romanow proposes building health care to a 1960s model with a twist. He is proposing paying half the dollars while imposing twice the conditions.

Why is the government proposing new and expanded conditions on the provinces which will only stifle provincial innovation in health care?

● (1420)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all it is quite clear that the hon. member knows very little about the health care system.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. We have to be able to hear the Minister of Health in her reply. The hon. member asked the question. I am sure he wants to hear the answer. The hon. Minister of Health has the floor.

Hon. Anne McLellan: What I was trying to say, Mr. Speaker, is that the hon. member knows very little about the health care system if he thinks the cost of the Romanow commission would buy 26 MRI machines. He is so out of touch in terms of the cost of high-end diagnostic equipment in modern health care.

Let me reiterate that we are committed to working with the provinces and territories. In fact, we are the first to concede that the provinces and territories have been innovating. They are innovating on the ground in terms of how they deliver high quality health care.

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today the government has a choice, either to follow Romanow and the past 10 years of Liberal rhetoric backward into slower, more bureaucratic health care, or to step forward into modern, efficient and innovative health care already provided and started by the provinces. Which road will the government take?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear throughout and long before today that the government is committed to working with the provinces and the territories.

We acknowledge the fact that they are on the first lines of health care delivery. They are innovating and dare I say, they are innovating with our assistance, be it in relation to primary health care renewal, be it in relation to pharmaceutical utilization, be it in relation to high-end diagnostic equipment.

We are going to continue to work in partnership with the provinces and territories and Canadians to ensure we have a sustainable health care system for the future.

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, that would be a change over the last 10 years.

We support the right of the provinces to contract out to alternative service providers so that Canadians can get off the waiting lists and be provided with the health care that they deserve.

The real question is, will the government continue to tie the hands of the provinces on real health care reform?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would love those people on the other side to get past the rhetoric around health care reform. They talk about real health care reform. I want to know what those guys think real health care reform is.

The provinces have been working on real health care reform. The provinces have been working on new models of primary health care delivery. They have been working on new models of home care and new models in relation to pharmaceutical utilization.

Oral Questions

Those members would suggest that the provinces and the territories working with us have not been innovative, have not been delivering—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we did not need the Romanow report to know that there is a need to reinvest in health. After making massive cuts in health, the government waited for 18 months, to the detriment of patients, obviously planning to tell those who provide the services “Now, let us tell you what to do”.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister admit that the Romanow report is the tool the government was waiting for to impose its views, and add more structures, bureaucracy, and controls, a lot of red tape that will not help doctors in the least, let alone patients? Could he not say yes to health and no to bureaucracy?

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. As I have said before in response to questions from the Bloc Québécois, we are committed to working in partnership and in collaboration with the provincial governments.

Everybody on this side understands that delivery of health care is primarily a provincial responsibility, but we will work with the provinces to ensure that we protect a publicly financed, high quality, universally accessible system.

•(1425)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, obviously, the minister did not listen to my question. She answered using a prepared text. Could she listen this time?

Doctors, hospital staff and CLSCs are unanimous: the role of the federal government is to adequately fund health care, not manage it. Andrée Gendron, of the Association des CLSC, sums up what they think by saying “We do not want the federal government to come and tell us how to organize our services”. The burden of proof rests on the government.

Instead of listening to Roy Romanow, could the Deputy Prime Minister listen to those who are working with the patients and are saying yes to health, and no to the bureaucracy in Ottawa?

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have no intention of administering the health care system. That is not the role of the Government of Canada.

Our role is to work in collaboration and partnership with the provinces and territories. Our role is to help fund the system. Our role is to ensure that the five principles of the Canada Health Act are respected, and where necessary enforced, because they represent fundamental values of all Canadians regardless of where they live.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, health care stakeholders from Quebec are worried. Lisa Massicotte, spokesperson for The Québec Hospitals Association

said that there should be no strings attached to funding and that it should be up to the provinces to decide how these funds are used.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister understand that Quebeckers want health care services to be administered and provided by hospitals, physicians and nurses, not federal bureaucrats, and that any decision along those lines would be ill-advised and inappropriate? The government has already done enough harm to the health care system.

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find this question very interesting.

Far from dictating how any province or territory should deliver its health care system, it lets in the province of Quebec for example, \$239.3 million to be spent in relation to medical equipment. That money was transferred to the province and in fact the province used that money to purchase new medical equipment. We did not dictate what equipment or where it should go. The province however took the money very happily.

There is \$133 million under the primary health care transition fund. Again—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Hochelaga—Maisonneuve

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Ménard (Hochelaga—Maisonneuve, BQ): Mr. Speaker, will the Deputy Prime Minister finally admit that his government's cuts to health care are largely responsible for the problems being experienced across Canada and that his duty now is to fix the mess by reinvesting in health care, not by tromping into health care management?

[*English*]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again let me reassure everyone in the House and all Canadians that the federal government has no intention of micromanaging the health care system or, as the hon. member suggests, tromping or tramping, whatever his word was, in relation to the provinces' responsibilities regarding the delivery of health care.

We are committed to working in partnership with the provinces and territories. I believe that is what all Canadians want. They want the bickering and the fighting to stop. They want us to work together to ensure we have a renewed health care system.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Romanow's diagnosis is clear. The prescription is convincing. The treatment plan is comprehensive. Romanow has set out this plan based on solid evidence and Canadian values.

The health minister says she supports the values, but does she support the prescriptions in the report that flow from those values?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Commissioner Romanow has worked for some 18 months and has talked to thousands of Canadians in one form or another around the future of a renewed health care system. I hope the hon. member is not suggesting that I or anyone is in a position today to analyze in detail the multitude of recommendations that Mr. Romanow has outlined.

Oral Questions

We as a responsible government will take up his report. We will review those recommendations. As early as next Friday I will begin discussions with my provincial and territorial colleagues.

• (1430)

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to genuinely congratulate the government on having the foresight to appoint the Romanow commission. However, I am deeply disturbed and I am sure Canadians are going to become more and more disturbed as they see the finance minister already out undermining the report and the health minister, in her earliest responses, doing the very same thing.

Does the government have the fortitude to move urgently on implementing the Romanow recommendations?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reassure the hon. member that the government has the fortitude to work with the provinces, the territories and all Canadians to ensure that we have a renewed health care system based on Canadian values. Canadians want a publicly financed, accessible, high quality system. That is what we will work toward to ensure.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: Order. There seem to be a lot of private discussions going on particularly at the far end of the chamber. Perhaps I could encourage hon. members to move to the lobby for that purpose. There is a lovely lobby just out the other side of the door.

The right hon. member for Calgary Centre has the floor. I hope I will be able to hear him more easily.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, I can recommend that lobby. I live very close to it.

The government has now received two reports on health care. The ball is in its court. I have two questions for the acting prime minister.

First, when does the Government of Canada expect to table new legislation on health care reform in the House? Second, when the Prime Minister meets with the premiers in January, will he present them with a detailed federal proposal as a basis for discussion and will that proposal be made available simultaneously to Parliament and to the public?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate that the discussions around the development of a plan for the renewal of our health care system will begin in the federal-provincial-territorial forum next Friday when I meet with my colleagues. Finance ministers will be meeting in mid-December. Obviously this will be an item on their agenda.

All of this leads to a first ministers meeting at which one hopes, and we certainly expect, that the Prime Minister and his first minister colleagues will be able to sign off on a plan for the renewal of health care and will be able to agree to dollar amounts to ensure—

The Speaker: The right hon. member for Calgary Centre.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, the question was whether the Prime Minister would be taking a position and, as a basis for discussion, whether that would be made available.

I understand the government will not have had the time to review the Romanow report in detail, but I want to ask about the principle of one specific proposal.

Commissioner Romanow is recommending that Ottawa be bound by legislation to pay at least 25% of health care costs. Is that a position that the Government of Canada is prepared to consider?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, the Romanow report has many recommendations. We will consider them all in detail.

In fact, it is much too early to make concrete predictions or decisions around either total dollar amounts that we might very well put into a renewed health care system or the funding profile of those new dollar amounts, but quite clearly those are important discussions, which will begin next Friday with my colleagues, will carry on with my colleague, the Minister of Finance, and his colleagues, and ultimately end with first ministers in January.

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EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the finance department's announcement of a 10¢ cut in employment insurance premiums would have been better news if it would have offset the hike to the CPP premiums for 2003. They are going up substantially in 2003.

The net result of today's announcement is that the tax burden on Canadian workers and employers will rise by almost \$100 million next year. That is the wrong direction.

Given that the EI account has an almost \$40 billion surplus, why will the Minister of Finance not reduce EI premiums further so that Canadian workers and employers will not face a tax hike just after Christmas this year?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today that we were able to indicate to employers and to employees an over \$800 million reduction in EI premiums for next year.

Since 1993, year after year we have announced reductions in EI premiums. It is a pattern that is well established. It is a pattern that will continue. That is a big change from the bad old days of the early nineties when, in spite of a recession, EI premiums were going up very sharply.

• (1435)

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the bottom line, and the minister should know this, is that Canadians will have less take home pay this year as a result of this CPP hike. That is the bottom line.

Canadian employers will have less money to invest in new equipment and training to improve productivity.

Why does the finance minister think it necessary to continue building this massive EI surplus rather than giving Canadian workers and employers a tax cut?

Oral Questions

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I actually do agree with the hon. member that we want to continue giving Canadians a tax cut. That is why we continue to implement the largest tax cut in Canadian history, which was announced in October 2000: \$100 billion over five years. That is real money.

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[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government took office, it made drastic cuts in health funding. We can now see the results of this measure. The whole health system is suffering from chronic underfunding.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister tell us why it was so simple and quick to make cuts in health funding, but now, in order to correct this government's mistake, it would take structures, bureaucracy and the federal government's involvement, when its sole responsibility is to put money back into the system to make it work better?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is trying to oversimplify the complexity of a national health system. Today, we received Mr. Romanow's report. This is a serious piece of work. The report deals with a very complex issue, and we are committed to doing our share.

This is a job that involves not only the federal government, but also the provincial governments. Together we believe that we must build in Canada a health care system based on Canadian values that are clearly understood.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Romanow report opens the door to dozens of federal interventions in health.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister realize that the burden of proof rests with this government? It must demonstrate how the health system will work better with more structures, more bureaucracy, more reports, more statistics and more conflicts with those who already manage it in the provinces and in Quebec.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but nobody is recommending more officials. Nobody is recommending more bureaucracy.

In fact, what we want to do is work in partnership and collaboration with the provinces and territories to ensure that every dollar spent on health care, as many of those dollars as possible, is going to front line delivery to improve the quality of health care for all Canadians.

Let me reassure the hon. member that we on this side of the House have no intention of trumping, in the language used by the previous questioner from the Bloc Québécois, on the ability, on the authority, of the provinces to deliver—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Medicine Hat.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today is the day of the finance minister's annual pre-Christmas mugging of workers and employers.

Today's announcement of a pathetic 10¢ cut is 40¢ less than the actuary says is needed to keep the EI plan solvent.

Why should workers and employers have to pay artificially high EI taxes to finance every non-related EI project that the government dreams up?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reduction today of EI premiums continues the series of 10 consecutive reductions in EI premiums, part, as I said earlier, of the \$100 billion tax reduction package.

We have reduced EI premiums. We have reduced personal income taxes and corporate income taxes. We have reduced taxes so much there is no other period in Canadian history that has seen such a reduction.

Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, taxes as a per cent of GDP in Canada have never been higher than they are today.

Every time the government wants to go out for a cup of coffee it dips into EI premiums.

The government owes workers a 50¢ rate cut. All it has done it cut the rates by a dime.

Is it not true that EI premiums have less and less to do with funding EI benefits and more and more to do with financing the government's out of control spending?

• (1440)

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is such a crazy question that I am obliged to put two and two together here.

That party does not like the Romanow report because it wants to privatize health care and it will pay for that by cutting EI premiums. It would take so much money out of government revenues that we could not afford to offer a public system.

That is what that party is all about. Why does it not just come clean and admit it?

* * *

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has caused irreparable harm to the health system with absolutely unprecedented cuts. The Romanow report confirms it; unfortunately, this report recommends giving federal public servants responsibilities for control which are inappropriate. It is on the wrong track.

I would like the Minister of Health to show us how giving responsibilities, control and statistics to federal public servants will improve health care in emergency wards.

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me say again, and I wish everybody would listen, that in fact it is very clear that the provinces and territories have the primary responsibility for the delivery of health care.

We are committed to working with them in partnership. For example, that is why we provided money for medical equipment. That is why we provided money for primary health care renewal. That is why we are working with them on common drug reviews and pharmaceutical utilization studies.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Minister of Health wants to get involved in the health care system along with her public servants, to stick her nose into something that is none of her business.

The provinces are responsible not only for providing health care, but also for identifying needs, planning, coordinating, providing and overseeing care. None of this concerns the federal government. We would ask that it mind its own business and let the doctors, nurses and managers in Quebec look after health.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the fact that, for example, we transferred \$239.3 million to the Government of Quebec for medical equipment and Quebec made the decision, the Government of Quebec and health administrators made the decision as to how that money would be spent. We transferred \$133 million in relation to primary health care renewal—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Order, please. There is so much noise that we cannot hear the minister's answer. There is too much noise coming from across the way. The hon. Minister of Health has the floor, and she has the right to speak. Give her a chance.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan: Mr. Speaker, honestly, all I have to say in conclusion is that far from administering the health care system in the Province of Quebec or elsewhere, our goal is to work in partnership to ensure that the provinces and the territories can provide that high quality—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Wetaskiwin.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Health, who just happens to be the senior Liberal in Alberta, said:

...we must ensure that there is nothing, as we move forward to implement Kyoto, that in any way would undermine or impede the growth of projects like the oilsands—

It is too late, I am afraid. Husky Oil and Petro-Canada have already pulled back \$5 billion in investment in western Canada alone.

If there was an implementation plan, why did she not share it before Lloydminster lost the Husky Oil upgrade?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, may I suggest that for someone to ask a minister about another department is out of order, and if he were to ask a question about a vote already being taken, were that to be the case it would be equally out of order.

The Speaker: I thought the question was eventually being directed to the Minister of the Environment. I am sure that the hon. member for Wetaskiwin will make that clearer in his supplementary.

• (1445)

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I was asking the Minister of—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Speaker: I think we had better go to the hon. member for Wetaskiwin. We will have to take the government House leader's answer as an answer.

Mr. Dale Johnston: Mr. Speaker, it was far from an answer, but we on this side are not used to getting answers from them anyway.

The whole concept of ratifying Kyoto before we know what is in it and implementing it is absolutely bizarre in the extreme. The only plan the government seems to have is to ratify and then not implement.

Given that there is no guarantee that projects like the oil sands will have any protection, could the Minister of Health confirm that she will be voting against the Kyoto accord?

The Speaker: I think the question is out of order. A member cannot ask questions indirectly of a minister that are really of another minister. We will move on to the hon. member for Brampton West—Mississauga.

* * *

HIV-AIDS

Ms. Colleen Beaumier (Brampton West—Mississauga, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week is HIV-AIDS Awareness Week, and December 1 represents World AIDS Day—

The Speaker: Order. It seems to be very unruly in the House today. I assure hon. members that I am having trouble hearing, so if they are having trouble I am not surprised. I can only say that maybe members sat in the briefing session too long this morning having to stay quiet and listen to the briefing on the report, which unfortunately I missed, but I am here to listen to the questions and the answers.

The hon. member for Brampton West—Mississauga has the floor. We will want to hear her question.

Ms. Colleen Beaumier: Mr. Speaker, this week is HIV-AIDS Awareness week. December 1 represents World AIDS Day.

The recently released UN AIDS report confirms that the AIDS pandemic is worsening. There are currently 42 million people living with HIV worldwide. This will increase to 50 million by 2005. More than 95% of new infections are in developing countries.

Oral Questions

Would the Minister for International Cooperation please tell Canadians what Canada is doing about this?

Hon. Susan Whelan (Minister for International Cooperation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in addition to the \$50 million announced by our Prime Minister for the international AIDS vaccine initiative, and in addition to the \$150 million committed by the government for the global health fund to fight HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, today I was able to announce an additional \$19 million toward six initiatives in developing countries around the world, which includes a \$2 million increase to the core fund for UN AIDS.

It is unfortunate that the other side does not want to be quiet to hear how we are working to fight this terrible disease. We are committed to putting more resources toward HIV and AIDS.

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HEALTH

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is a great day for medicare. Roy Romanow has touched the soul of Canada and given us all hope for the future of our health care system.

Today we have been given the vehicle and the road map. Now all we need is the driver.

Since the health minister has talked about going to the health ministers meeting next week, I would like to ask her if she is going with a clear indication that the government accepts in principle the Romanow blueprint and is ready to act.

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think it is very clear that Canadians have told all levels of government that they want us to act to ensure that they have a renewed, high quality, accessible health care system.

I can reassure the hon. member and all members of the House that when I meet with my provincial and territorial colleagues next week, I will carry forward that commitment, as I know they will all come with a commitment to work together to ensure that we have a renewed, sustainable health care system for the future.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am asking the health minister specifically about the Romanow report, "Building on Values", which speaks for all Canadians. We are asking her today to show leadership on this report.

Will the minister start by clearing up ambiguities that she has created around non-profit health care? Will she stop waffling on private ownership and say, as Romanow has said, "No, not now, not ever"?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, the Romanow report is a monumental piece of work in terms of the consultations and research that was done.

The government will study the recommendations of Mr. Romanow. In fact, I have no doubt that much of the work that Mr. Romanow has done will animate our decision making as well as the decision making of the provinces and territories as we move forward to ensure that we have that publicly financed, accessible, high quality health care system based on the values that all Canadians share.

● (1450)

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, when the former minister of finance introduced the Canadian health and social transfer in 1995 he effectively removed the ability of citizens to monitor how much the federal government contributes to the health care system. A succession of reports, including Romanow, Kyte, Mazankowski, Kirby, and in fact the Auditor General, have called for the government to put an end to that failed experiment.

To the new minister, maybe the kindlier, gentler minister, is he prepared to consider undoing the mess created by his predecessor?

Hon. John Manley (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): I will try to be kindlier if I can, Mr. Speaker, that is for sure.

What I would say of course is that we want to review the report. What we are interested in, I believe, and I think it is true on all sides of the House, is better outcomes in the health care system.

If we and the provinces agree that one of the ways to achieve better outcomes is to divide the transfer, then that is certainly something that we would have to consider very positively.

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, the former finance minister also mentioned that he thought the provinces should account for health care spending, which they have been doing since the agreement on health care was struck between the provinces and the federal government in September 2000. Now the former finance minister is suggesting those report cards are not sufficient.

Does the current health minister agree with the former finance minister on that point? Are those report cards sufficient or not? Should that reporting system be changed?

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): I must confess, Mr. Speaker, I am having a little trouble understanding what the hon. member is referring to in terms of report cards.

If, however, he is referring to the first ever performance indicator reports which all the provinces, territories and the federal government published at the end of September, that was a momentous step forward in terms of our ability as a government to provide Canadians with information around health outcomes. That was the first time ever we have been in a position to provide those performance indicators.

Of course, what we will do is revise them—

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

* * *

TERRORISM

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Liberal recklessness on terrorism does not stop with Hezbollah.

Oral Questions

Today the Canadian foreign affairs department quite rightly advised Canadians not to travel to the Philippines until further notice and the Canadian embassy in Manila has been closed down in light of threats by Islamic terrorists. The major Philippine terrorist group, Abu Sayyaf, with links to al-Qaeda, can legally operate and raise money in Canada, though it has been banned in the United States for five years.

We are convinced of the danger of these groups in other countries, but the Liberals entertain them here in Canada. Why?

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the Solicitor General announced the names of six new additions to the list, including Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. He also said that the listing of entities was a work in progress.

If the member opposite wanted to be helpful, instead of criticizing the government, he should be thanking the men and women who do such good work in ensuring that Canadians are safe and secure in this great country of ours.

[Translation]

Mr. Stockwell Day (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, an observer in the know about foreign affairs said that yesterday's refusal by the Liberal government to add Hezbollah to the list of terrorist entities was disappointing and unscrupulous. This courageous remark is from a Liberal parliamentarian. Even the Liberals are disgusted by this dangerous omission.

Is it true that the government is afraid of embarrassing the Prime Minister by adding to the list of terrorist entities a group with whom he chatted during the Francophone Summit?

[English]

Mr. Lynn Myers (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is so outrageous it will not even get a response.

The Solicitor General has said many times that we will not discuss the names of specific entities that may or may not be listed because to be listed is very serious. The work that is being done to list an entity is a very thorough and deliberate process. We do not list entities based on opposition allegations nor newspaper reports.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

HEALTH

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Romanow report says that we must not end up with 13 different health systems. What Ottawa wants is a uniform system. In Quebec, we already have a system that is different and that includes CLSCs and a universal pharmacare program.

How can the Deputy Prime Minister conclude that he will improve the health system by denying the differences that already exist, instead of giving the money directly to those whose job it is to provide health care? It is clear that what is needed is money.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, far from denying regional differences we encourage provincial and territorial flexibility. We understand that even within provinces there are different needs as one moves from a large city like Montreal to parts of northern Quebec.

Let me reassure the hon. member there is no desire to create a one size fits all system. If the hon. member were to read Mr. Romanow's report, she would know he underscores the fact that it is impossible to have a one size fits all system in Canada.

[Translation]

Ms. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, could the Deputy Prime Minister tell us how creating a second pharmacare program, when one already exists in Quebec, will help doctors and nurses provide better health services in the emergency wards of Quebec hospitals? The government simply cannot prove this.

[English]

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have heard many of the same questions from the other side of the House this afternoon. I will keep delivering the same answers as long as my voice holds out, which will not be very much longer.

Let me again reassure everyone in the House that we are committed to working with the provinces and territories. We respect that within provinces there are obviously regional variations. We will work with the provinces and territories to ensure we have a system that is based on the values of all Canadians, regardless where they live.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, today's *Globe and Mail* headline blared, "Gun registry to cost around \$1-billion". A *National Post* editorial calls on the government, "Time to ditch the gun registry".

We hate to say it but we told you so. At a time when lineups for health services in Canada have reached critical levels, \$1 billion would have bought, installed and operated 238 MRIs. Can the minister explain to Canadians how \$1 billion blown on a useless gun registry was a better investment than 238 MRIs?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, we on this side of the House have no concern with regard to the question of the policy. The gun registry policy is a good and valid one, and on this side of the House we will continue proceeding with it.

Oral Questions

Implementing the program has always been a challenge, and it is still a challenge. However when we look at the impact that it has had in our society, it represents values highly supported by the Canadian population. It is a wonderful investigative tool for police forces. It has been more costly but, overall, it is worth proceeding with such a fantastic value as protecting our society.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Ontario's public safety minister, Bob Runciman, has blamed Ottawa for diverting money to a useless gun registry instead of using that money to address the real problem of the recent outbreak of handgun crime in Toronto. Last week the justice minister claimed that the revocation rate was higher compared to the previous system. The justice minister's own statistics revealed the opposite. Revocation under this new scheme is half of the old FAC program.

Does the minister have new statistics to justify the wasting of \$1 billion of taxpayers' money?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Of course, Mr. Speaker, the program has been a bit more costly. Some provinces have opted out. We brought some changes as well to the program following consultations. The technology has been more expensive, but members should look at the results. It is valuable to our society and it is protecting our society. It is a wonderful tool used by police forces in their investigations. For example, police access the online registry 1,500 times per day.

* * *

• (1500)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Great Lakes hold about 20% of the surface fresh water in the world and the entire drainage basin measures some 750,000 square kilometres on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Ms. Paddy Torsney: The Canadian Alliance members supposedly care about the environment. I would hope they would listen to the question, but obviously not.

Can the Minister of the Environment tell the House what the government is doing to reduce pollution and restore areas harmed by pollution in this precious Great Lakes basin?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as part of the Government of Canada's ongoing commitment to restore the Great Lakes basin ecosystem I announced on Monday of this week that 14 projects will be funded under the Great Lakes sustainability funding, which totals some \$600,000. They include the Burlington, Hamilton and Scarborough areas. I would like to thank the members for Burlington and Scarborough East for their support.

The projects focus on restoring habitat for fish and wildlife, developing new ways of managing waste water and preventing agricultural runoff. We are doing this in partnership—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lanark—Carleton.

[*Translation*]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, after the lumber giant Weyerhaeuser came out in favour of a tax at the border, the Quebec minister of natural resources agreed this was a good idea.

Of course, most companies involved in the softwood lumber war, including the Association des manufacturiers de bois de sciage du Québec, see this as voluntary taxation and something that will never be collected.

Why is the federal minister allowing the various factions to fragment the united front we are presenting to the United States?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I am extremely attached to the united front we presented to the United States. I congratulate the governments of British Columbia and Quebec on their extraordinary contribution.

As for the strategy, I would say the opposite, that we are still on the same wavelength. Canada is open to negotiation with the U.S. but not capitulation. We do not want to find ourselves being charged a 25% tax in order to avoid a 27% countervailing duty, and required as a result to pull from the courts a case that is going very well for Canada.

This is what we want, to be open to negotiation. To back up our negotiation, however, the court challenges will continue.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the Minister for International Trade is allowing the fear of a lengthy siege to ruin our united front in the courts.

Why does he not propose a better plan to help workers out while the legal proceedings drag on?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has responded very well to the situation. My colleagues, the Minister of Human Resources Development, the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Natural Resources, have put several million dollars into the development of new markets around the world. We will continue with our approach.

[*English*]

We will fight the pine beetle in British Columbia. We believe in this industry. We stand by our workers and our communities, and we will prevail. We see that the American producer associations are in trouble. They are the ones that now realize their strategy has backfired.

The Speaker: That will conclude question period for today. I know we have not finished the list for the first time in months, but there was too much noise.

POINTS OF ORDER

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mr. Jim Pankiw (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to your ruling yesterday, I wish to apologize for not respecting the authority of the Chair. Having spoken to you afterward and as you pointed out, the technical and procedural points I was attempting to make could have been made when I first responded to this matter. I wish to highlight that disregarding your authority was not my objective.

Furthermore, with respect to your determination that language used was unparliamentary, I withdraw those words.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

* * *

● (1505)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I notice today that we have 12 days left in the calendar until we take the Christmas break. I know of the government House leader's ability for music and bands. I do not know if he wants to sing us *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, but I wonder if he wants to tell us what we will put on the parliamentary tree in each of the last 12 days we are here.

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the short answer is a partridge.

Mr. Kevin Sorenson: That's not a partridge. That's a turkey.

Hon. Don Boudria: Even I have to admit that is a good comeback.

This afternoon we will debate the third reading of Bill S-2 respecting a number of tax treaties. Tomorrow we shall consider report stage and if possible third reading of Bill C-4 respecting nuclear safety. If necessary we will continue with this bill on Monday. We will then return to the debate on the Kyoto protocol.

A little later next week we will deal with Bill C-3, the Canada pension plan amendments. Thursday, December 5 shall be an allotted day.

I am in the process of consulting with colleagues and other parties with a view to having one or more take note debates starting early next week.

Mr. Loyola Hearn: Mr. Speaker, in his 12 allotted gifts that he will give us, will he include fish rather than partridge and ensure that during the first possible opportunity we will debate the serious issue of the Atlantic cod closure?

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has expressed an interest in one possible topic. Others have been expressed by other House leaders. I will not get into a detailed discussion of that on the floor of the House but his interest in that topic is noted.

Mr. Dick Proctor: Mr. Speaker, will the possible take note debates to which the hon. government House leader referred take place in the evening or during the day?

Points of Order

Hon. Don Boudria: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that there are several items on the parliamentary agenda, as the hon. member knows, these take note debates would take place if they are held, and I believe some will be held, in the evening.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, I noted that you had some concern that you did not work through the entire list of questioners during question period. I want to respectfully suggest why that happened.

The Minister of Health was on her feet today at least 15 to 20 times. Every one of those responses went overtime. You had to consistently get up, and I know you are generous to us when we all do that. However when a minister of the Crown, who we knew would be up quite a bit today because of the Romanow report and some of the other health issues out there, consistently does that over and over again, then that is why you do not get to the end of your list. Who gets punished? Not the government side, but the opposition parties, particularly the smaller opposition parties located at this end of the chamber.

I know I have to be very careful, Mr. Speaker, because I do not want to be critical of you. In your generosity I know you are reluctant sometimes to stand and cut off a minister, or in fact some of us, which you could do at any moment with me. However the fact of the matter is that even some of her colleagues today were wincing. They understood that she was going overtime. The minister understood, but she did it consistently.

What I am saying is if you want to get to the end of that list every day, would you exercise your authority over the Minister of Health when she continues to do this day in and day out in this place.

● (1510)

The Speaker: I appreciate the generous assistance of the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest and his suggestions. I must say he is correct when he says the Minister of Health was consistent in going overtime, but I think the Speaker was consistent in cutting her off. I appreciate the fact that the questions that were asked were ones that the minister had lengthy answers to and that she wanted to go on obviously at greater length. However there are rules.

The problem today it seemed to me was the noise. I had to interrupt the proceedings so frequently to try to get some order so I could hear the minister and other members asking their questions because of the constant noise in the chamber. I would not accuse the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest of uttering a single word during question period, but there was noise certainly from his end of the chamber and it made it almost impossible for the Chair to hear.

When the Chair stands up and delays things by appealing for order and urging hon. members to assist the Chair, as the hon. member is doing with his shoe at the moment, I know that while the assistance is appreciated it does take a lot of time away from questions.

Speaker's Ruling

To answer one other point the hon. member made, yes it is true that parties do lose questions but I assure the hon. member that had we completed the list today the two members who would have had a question were one from the Bloc Québécois and one from the government. Therefore it was not just the opposition that lost out, the government missed a question, and I know the member was bitterly disappointed, and the hon. member for the Bloc Québécois was completely disappointed to have missed her opportunity to pose a question.

While we might have gotten a few extras in, which I am sure would have included members from the hon. member's party, if not the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest himself, in the circumstances we did reasonably well considering the brouhaha.

I can only say that if hon. members would cooperate with the Chair and be quiet during question period, as they were for example during the hon. member for Lanark—Carleton's question, we would have gotten through the thing in record time and would have had a lot of extras as well, which of course is the Chair's preference in these matters, if the Chair can have a preference in any matter.

I thank the hon. member for his intervention. I am sure his colleagues will all pay close attention to his suggestion that we all stay quiet, which I know is really at the bottom of his remarks.

KYOTO PROTOCOL RATIFICATION MOTION—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Deputy Speaker: I would now like to deal with the point of order raised on November 25 by the hon. Leader of the Opposition relating to Government Motion No. 9, standing in the name of the Minister of the Environment.

The hon. member argued that the motion calling upon the government to ratify the Kyoto protocol on climate change was out of order and should not be received by the Chair.

I would like to thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for raising the matter, the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, the right hon. member for Calgary Centre, the hon. member for Fraser Valley and the hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia for their contributions on this matter.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition in raising the matter argued that it was both a requirement of international law and established Canadian practice for the government not to ratify a treaty that required legislation for its implementation until the legislation itself had been passed by this House. He claimed that in order for the Kyoto protocol to be implemented, enabling legislation must first be passed by Parliament, followed by ratification. He therefore asked the Chair to consider the motion out of order and to remove it from the Order Paper.

There is in my view one fundamental issue that needs to be addressed in the case before us: Is there anything in Canadian parliamentary procedure or practice to require that the motion before the House be preceded by enabling legislation? Put another way, in the absence of enabling legislation, must the Speaker find that the motion is not in order?

[*Translation*]

I have examined with great care the arguments raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition in this regard and wish to make the following points.

● (1515)

[*English*]

First, it is the view of the Chair that the intent of the motion put by the Minister of the Environment is clearly not in and of itself a ratification of the Kyoto protocol. The power of ratification lies with the Crown, not with Parliament nor with this House. Rather the motion allows for debate in this House on the issue of ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

The adoption of this motion would constitute a show of support for the government to move forward to ratify and implement the agreement.

As has been pointed out in some of the arguments made by members over the course of the debate, it is one of the prerogatives of the Crown to make treaties without the necessity of parliamentary approval. As R. McGregor Dawson explains on page 205 of the *Government of Canada*:

Parliament may be consulted and even asked to approve international agreements and treaties, but this is largely a matter of convenience and political strategy: the actual ratification is purely an executive act.

There is no legal or constitutional requirement for parliamentary approval of ratification of international agreements. The government could choose however to table an agreement in the House. It may also choose to move resolutions in the Commons and the Senate to seek approval for such an agreement. The government has a third option: to seek approval from the House to introduce enabling legislation to change Canada's statutes in order to implement the agreement. It is on the latter point that I will focus my comments.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition argues that all necessary legislation to implement the terms of a treaty should be in place prior to ratification. A study of past events would suggest that there may be treaties that actually need no legislation for their implementation. It is also possible that the Canadian government signs a treaty and never ratifies it or ratifies a treaty and later decides not to implement it for whatever reason. The essential point here is that treaty ratification is an executive action, a prerogative of the Crown. It is not conditional on Parliament first adopting implementing legislation.

Speaker's Ruling

A review of House records shows that the House, by resolution, approved the 1965 Auto Pact between Canada and the United States without first seeing implementing legislation. It may be the case that a treaty, whether or not already ratified by the government, requires legislation if it is to be implemented as a matter of Canadian domestic law. In this regard the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement of 1988 and the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1993, came before the House as appendices to implementing legislation. The bills in each case stated that the Government of Canada had already entered into the free trade agreements. The title of each bill indicated that the bill was to "implement" the free trade agreement. Each implementing bill contained provisions amending the federal laws of Canada so as to give effect to the free trade agreement already entered into and attached to each bill. There was no indication in these bills that the government was seeking parliamentary approval of the treaties in order to ratify them.

[*Translation*]

The issue is whether implementing legislation must be adopted before a treaty is ratified. This does not appear to be a rule of procedure or a practice of this House.

To illustrate with another example, during the second session of the 36th Parliament, the House and the Senate passed Bill C-19, enabling legislation which was required to enact or implement Canada's obligations under the treaty entitled the "Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court". The bill listed new offences under the Criminal Code and amended our extradition and mutual assistance legislation.

[*English*]

As I noted previously, many international agreements do not require enabling legislation. Enabling or implementing legislation is required only when an agreement necessitates amendments to Canadian statute law. Of the more than 1,400 international agreements entered into by Canada from 1928 to 1978, only 111 required enabling legislation and of these 47 dealt with taxation matters. From 1979 to 1986 another 500 agreements were entered into and of these only 33 required legislation.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

It is also worth noting that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted at Rio de Janeiro in 1992, was signed by a minister and ratified by Canada, without any enabling legislation.

[*English*]

When the government last week tabled its plan to implement the Kyoto protocol, it did not include as part of its package any enabling legislation. One can only assume that the government, through consultations with its legal advisers across the relevant departments, has determined that no enabling legislation is necessary at this time.

I join with many of my predecessors in pointing out that it is not part of the Speaker's mandate to comment on points of law. In a ruling delivered on April 9, 1991, Speaker Fraser stated:

The Speaker has no role in interpreting matters of either a constitutional or legal nature.

This principle is clearly outlined as well in the 4th edition of Bourinot at page 180, which states:

The Speaker...will not give a decision upon a constitutional question, nor decide a question of law, though the same be raised on a point of order or privilege.

It is not up to the Speaker to rule on the constitutionality or legality of measures before the House. The Chair cannot assume that the Kyoto protocol will require implementing legislation. Perhaps it will. At the moment, the House is being asked to consider a resolution calling upon the government to ratify the treaty. If members object to this resolution being before the House when no implementing legislation has been adopted, this might be argued in the debate on the resolution and taken into account when the time comes to vote on the resolution.

While the hon. Leader of the Opposition has raised an interesting point concerning the motion currently before the House, the Chair must conclude that Canadian practice does not support his premise that the ratification of all international treaties necessitates the prior passage of enabling legislation. Accordingly, I must conclude that the motion of the Minister of the Environment is properly before the House.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to your ruling. As I understand it, in quick summary of its major elements, the precedents say that the requirement of enabling legislation does not apply to all treaties but that when it does apply certain rules of the House are then put into effect. You subsequently said that you have come to the conclusion, since no enabling legislation has been presented, that the government has consulted its law officers and that there is no enabling legislation necessary at this time.

I draw the Speaker's attention to the statement made formerly in debate, in question period, in the other place, when the leader of the government in the other place said some weeks ago that there would be implementing legislation with respect to this treaty introduced in the early spring. I think she said only the early spring. She did not specify a date. However she was categorical about the fact that there would be enabling legislation. She was categorical about the fact that this is a ratification that requires enabling legislation.

If the Speaker is ruling that the Leader of the Opposition's motion does not apply because there is not a requirement for enabling legislation, then that argument is undercut by the words of the government's representative, the government's leader in the other place. I would ask for clarification on that fact.

It seems to me that her statement makes the case quite clearly that this is a ratification of which enabling legislation is, without any doubt, a consequence.

● (1525)

The Deputy Speaker: Respectfully to the hon. member for Calgary Centre on his intervention, I believe my ruling deals with the matter quite adequately. I would encourage the member, and others who might have the same keen interest, to obtain a copy of my ruling from the table. I would hope and I believe that upon closer scrutiny he will find that those concerns have been addressed in the ruling.

I will only repeat in part a very short few lines from the ruling. It states:

Government Orders

There is no legal or constitutional requirement for parliamentary approval of ratification of international agreements. The government could choose however to table an agreement in the House.

I know the hon. member for Calgary Centre was not trying to draw the Chair into a debate over the ruling. The Chair will leave that matter as it is and will now call for orders of the day.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre very briefly.

Right Hon. Joe Clark: Mr. Speaker, I simply want to reserve my right, after I have taken the opportunity, as you have suggested, to read the ruling, to raise the matter if I then believe it is worth raising.

The Deputy Speaker: Those rights are always available to members at all times.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

TAX CONVENTIONS IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2002

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill S-2, an act to implement an agreement, conventions and protocols concluded between Canada and Kuwait, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates, Moldova, Norway, Belgium and Italy for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion and to amend the enacted text of three tax treaties, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the third reading of Bill S-2, the Tax Conventions Implementation Act, 2002. The legislation would enact tax treaties that Canada has recently concluded with seven countries.

As hon. members know, Canada's economy relies significantly on international trade. In fact, Canada's exports account for more than 40% of our annual GDP. What is more, Canada's economic wealth depends on direct foreign investment to Canada as well as inflows of information, capital and technology.

Tax treaties impact on the Canadian economy, particularly because they help facilitate international trade and investment by improving the tax landscape as it related to cross-border dealings.

This is significant because Canada's economy is likely to become more intertwined in the world economy. Fortunately, Canada is well positioned in that it currently has over 75 tax treaties in force with other countries. Passage of the bill will of course see the number increase.

Canada benefits substantially from having tax treaties in force with other countries. Our tax treaties, for example, assure us of how Canadians will be taxed abroad. At the same time, they assure our treaty partners of how their residents will be treated here in Canada.

On the flip side, tax treaties do not impose tax, nor do they generally restrict countries from taxing their own residents as they see fit under their domestic laws. Rather, tax treaties pay attention to setting out the rules under which one country can tax the income of a resident of another country.

When considering the treaties contained in this bill, it is important to know that the absence of a tax treaty makes unrelieved double taxation a real possibility. Unrelieved double taxation occurs when a taxpayer who is a resident of one country earns income in another and both countries exercise their right to tax the income without offering any form of relief in respect of the foreign tax paid.

Taxation of the same item of income twice without relief is understandably a situation that produces unfair results and which can give rise to adverse economic impacts.

The bill legislates seven tax treaties. The new treaties with Kuwait, Moldova, Mongolia and the United Arab Emirates are the first comprehensive tax treaties Canada has ever signed with these four countries.

In addition, our tax treaties with Belgium, Italy and Norway are updated to ensure that our bilateral tax arrangements are consistent with current Canadian tax policy.

Enacting these seven treaties will provide taxpayers and businesses in Canada and these countries with more predictable and equitable tax results in their cross-border dealings.

Canada's domestic law, like that of most countries, contains provisions that provide relief from double taxation. Our tax treaties give taxpayers the added comfort that Canada and its treaty partners will not depart from providing the relief from double taxation that they have, quite frankly, come to expect.

To alleviate the potential for double taxation, the treaties resort to one of two general methods. They either grant the exclusive right to tax certain income to the country where the taxpayer resides, or the taxing right is shared, but the country of residence is required to eliminate double taxation by providing relief for the tax paid in the other country.

For example, Canada will have the exclusive right to tax the employment income of a Canadian resident employed by a Canadian company who is sent on a short term assignment, say for three months, to any one of the seven treaty countries in the bill.

If, on the other hand, the same person is employed abroad for a longer period of time, such as a year, then the source country can also tax the employment income, and Canada must credit the tax paid in the other country against the tax otherwise payable here on the income.

• (1530)

Beyond the basic commitment to relieve double taxation, the treaties in the bill foster cooperation and establish other important mutual understandings as to how each tax regime would interface with Canada's system and vice versa.

In this vein, a short discussion of how the treaties in the bill affect the rates of withholding tax is warranted. Each treaty establishes limits on the amount of withholding tax that could be levied in respect of certain payments. In all cases where maximum rates of withholding tax are set out in Canadian tax treaties, they are always established at a rate lower than the 25% rate provided under our domestic law.

Government Orders

Withholding taxes apply to interest, dividend, royalty and other types of payments that Canadian residents make to non-residents. For example, a maximum withholding tax rate of 15% would be levied on portfolio dividends paid to non-residents under each treaty in the bill. There would also be a maximum withholding tax rate as low as 5% on dividends paid by subsidiaries to their parent companies.

With respect to interest and royalty payments, each treaty would cap the maximum withholding tax at 10%.

As for periodic pension payments, the maximum rate would be set at 15% for all countries, except that, in the case of Belgium and the United Arab Emirates, no cap has been established. Without tax treaties in place, Canada could tax these particular payments at the general 25% rate, as set out under the Income Tax Act.

Like those that have come before them, the tax treaties contained in the bill are also designed to encourage cooperation between tax authorities in Canada and the treaty countries to prevent fiscal evasion. These treaties would prove to be an important tool in protecting Canada's tax base as they would allow for consultations and exchange of information between our revenue authorities and their counterparts in the seven countries. The tax authorities would be able to deal directly with each other to solve international transfer pricing issues, to reach satisfactory solutions to concerns raised by taxpayers, to complete audits, and to engage in other discussions aimed at improving tax administration.

I would also point out that the new treaty with Norway contains an assistance in collection article that would provide for the mutual assistance in the collection of taxes. Canada has similar arrangements already in place with the United States, the Netherlands and Germany.

In closing, let me summarize some of the benefits for taxpayers and businesses alike that would ensue with the passage of this bill.

Canada would be assured as to how Canadians would be taxed in the seven countries included in the bill. At the same time, these countries would be assured as to how their residents would be treated here.

In addition, the bill provides measures that would facilitate trade and investment, promote certainty and stability, and produce a better business climate between Canada and these countries.

I encourage all hon. members to pass the bill without delay.

• (1535)

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address this important bill and also to talk a bit about the inconsistencies we tend to see in the government's approach in the many different ways it deals with legislation. I plan to highlight some of that in the process of my discourse this afternoon, especially when I address the issue of the implementation strategy as it pertains now to the ratification of these tax treaties.

There is a growing concern, especially on this side of the House, that when it comes to dealing with international agreements there is really no rhyme nor reason as to how the government goes about implementing certain plans. During the debate on Kyoto, we on this

side of the House demonstrated that the government has gone about the process of ratifying an agreement without presenting to Canadians a plan of how that whole strategy of reducing greenhouse gases is going to affect them. It is actually moving ahead to ratify an international agreement without a plan.

In this case, as we discuss Bill S-2 today, we see that the government is taking a completely different approach. It has actually taken the time to work out and implement strategies with a number of countries that the tax treaties will pertain to. It has gone through the process of doing all the background work, how it is going to affect our country and the people paying taxes in the countries that we are signing these agreements with. Now the government is bringing it to the House to finalize and ratify it. That is a huge inconsistency when it comes to the approach it has had on Kyoto.

I am going to address those particular areas, which will cover the countries, how we have gone about the process of implementing a strategy and how we are dealing with the tax changes with those countries. Then I will talk about how we are in the process of ratifying it here in the House. It is going to be a little long and drawn out, but it is an important part of the process. Important details need to be addressed and I hope to do that this afternoon.

I will start by addressing what the bill in its entirety is attempting to do. Bill S-2 is an act to implement tax treaties with Kuwait, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates, Moldova, Norway, Belgium and Italy for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.

As was heard from the parliamentary secretary, clearly it is an advantage for Canadians to have tax treaties in place with many of these countries to avoid double taxation. It also avoids complications for Canadians who live abroad and collect some form of income in their home country or other countries, but are often faced with two tax bills, one from Canada and one from foreign countries as well. That can be quite a burden on many Canadians who are forced for whatever reason either to do business in other countries or to work outside Canada.

The bill is an act to ratify tax conventions agreed upon with the countries I mentioned, to avoid the double taxation between Canada and the respective nations and to establish a cooperative framework to prevent fiscal evasion. The Canadian Alliance has traditionally encouraged all measures to further equalize and liberalize foreign trade and investment. In this regard, Bill S-2 is a positive measure. Nonetheless, it was introduced in the Senate instead of the House of Commons. This was one of the big concerns we had with the bill.

As everyone knows, we have always had a concern with the other place in that it is unelected and unaccountable. We feel that any legislation introduced in the other place and then sent here does not have the authority of Canadians when it goes through Parliament. That is why on many occasions when bills have been introduced in the other place and are sent to the House, we have often questioned the motives of the government. We also question the legitimacy of that type of legislation. We wish the government would stop introducing legislation through the Senate.

Government Orders

In relation to Canadian Alliance policy, I want to address how we feel overall when it comes to limiting barriers to trade and economic growth with foreign countries.

We support securing access to international markets through the negotiation of trade agreements. Our trade agenda will focus on diversifying the products we sell abroad and the markets into which we sell those products. We will vigorously pursue the reduction of international trade barriers, tariffs and subsidies.

• (1540)

We will work with international organizations that have relevant expertise to ensure that Canadians' concerns about labour practices, environmental protection and human rights are also reflected.

The parliamentary secretary went into great detail on the implementation of Bill S-2. Tax conventions, such as the ones to be implemented with Bill S-2, seek an arrangement under which each government agrees to limit or modify the application of its domestic taxes in order to attempt to avoid double taxation. The tax treaties implemented by the bill reflect efforts to update and expand Canada's network of tax treaties so as to obtain results in conformity with current Canadian tax policy. These treaties are generally patterned on the model of double taxation convention prepared by the OECD. They are not to be double taxed on income coming from these countries.

I would like to expand on and highlight different parts during this afternoon's discussion. Parts 1 to 4 of this enactment implement tax treaties with Kuwait, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates and Moldova. Parts 5 to 7 of the enactment implement the most recent tax treaties with Norway, Belgium and Italy. Parts 8 to 10 of the enactment correct the English versions of tax treaties with Vietnam, Portugal and Senegal, which have already been enacted.

Many Canadians are often confused when it comes to tax policy. We see over and over again the government tends to modify its tax bills, to introduce different forms of user fees and regulations that tend to affect the tax code and complicate our system over and over again.

We on this side of the House have constantly argued that whenever we go through the process of looking at how we can simplify our tax treaties with other countries, we should be doing the same thing here at home. We should be reviewing how burdensome our tax system is on Canadians. We should be doing things to improve our tax system first, by an overall reduction of taxes for Canadians. That would leave more money in the hands of Canadians at the end of the day to invest in the economy or to spend in any way they see fit, whether it is to save for their retirement or to spend on their families.

That is something the government normally fails to do. It fails to continue to review its own complications in the tax policy and its own effect of the burden of high taxes on Canadians. This is the chance, when we are looking at other jurisdictions and trying to harmonize our tax systems to some extent with other jurisdictions. We should be critical of the tax regime here at home and seeing if it is competitive with other jurisdictions around the world, especially with some of the countries that we are setting up agreements with.

The parliamentary secretary talked about promoting certainty, stability and cooperation. There is no doubt that in entering into these tax agreements they are things we hope to achieve in the final goal. As I mentioned, if we want to have a stable tax environment, if we want to have a competitive environment with foreign countries we need to give Canadians the tools they need to compete in those other jurisdictions.

We are still one of the highest taxed nations in the G-8. Coupled with our debt and a number of other factors that are a drain on our economy, it is no surprise that we have challenges with a lower dollar in this country. We still have the brain drain factor; people are moving down to the U.S. There are continuous takeovers by American companies here in Canada. Overall, the economic situation has been on the decline when it comes to the way the government has been handling finances.

It is ironic that the parliamentary secretary talked about promoting certainty and stability. The government has not done anything to address how we could strengthen our own economy by reducing overall taxes, paying down debt and creating a more competitive environment here at home to improve our productivity in light of some of the jurisdictions that we signed the tax treaties with and with whom we compete.

That is something we must continue to encourage the government to do on a regular basis. We must encourage the government to think about how Canadians are affected here at home by the negative fiscal policy the government implements.

• (1545)

In light of Bill S-2, I want talk a little today about its relation to a big problem with the way the government has approached the whole Kyoto accord.

When I addressed Kyoto, I said clearly that there was no plan. Almost five years after signing the Kyoto protocol, in 1997, there is still no federal plan and no cost analysis. The provinces have made it clear that federal-provincial consultation has been inadequate and they are still not onside. The Liberals have failed to gain cooperation of all provinces and territories to develop a national emissions reduction plan.

In light of Kyoto, we have identified a lot of effects that could come from that. I know my colleague from Red Deer so eloquently spoke on so many different facets of the Kyoto accord. He especially talked about the concerns that we had at home on the effects of Kyoto on the economy. By signing an international agreement that binds Canadians to certain reductions, obviously this will affect industry, incomes and the economic stability of Canadians. There is no certainty as to the negative effect it will have on the economy, the environment and on a number of other factors, such as people's salaries and job security.

Government Orders

The point I was trying to make initially is that the dichotomy of the government, especially in its approach to this bill, is astounding because with the Kyoto accord there is a complete double standard. Look at Bill S-2 and the particular countries that it pertains to, like Kuwait, Mongolia, the UAE, Moldova, Norway, Belgium and Italy. Look at the background which has been worked out with these countries before coming to the point of ratification of these tax treaties in the House. A lot of work has been done and a lot of thought has been given to how these international tax treaties will affect Canada and those countries and whether those effects will be positive or negative. We have the figures, the facts and the effects they would have on Canadians if the strategy of these tax changes is implemented, and we can debate that.

However on the flip side we have Kyoto. We are talking about the ratification of a plan. We have not seen any details from the government. We have no impact study. We have no idea what the costs will be. Yet the government wants us to go ahead and ratify an accord on which we clearly do not have enough background information.

Why has the government approached the Kyoto accord in such a backward way with regard to the implementation and then ratification? It is not following the consistency that we have with a bill like Bill S-2.

Clearly we want to get all people onside. That is really to what it comes down. If we want to have successful legislation, if we want to have all Canadians on board to achieve our environmental goals, whether they be reducing emissions or cleaning up air quality, whatever the strategy might be, and if we want to have the most success with any form of a strategy, all stakeholders should be brought together. It is not at all a proper to go about using a divide and conquer type of strategy, especially when dealing with important legislation, legislation that will affect generations to come.

The government refuses to take the prudent steps to bring stakeholders together to rally around the environment. It refuses to engage Canadians with the proper facts, figures and effects the Kyoto accord will have on them. It refuses to bring Canadians to the floor to work and to get them behind the accord.

Instead huge concerns have been raised across the country. The opinions of Canadian on the accord have plummeted because the government has not come clean with the effects of the ratification on them and how it will be implemented. None of this has happened, and the government has not been straightforward with them.

I think of my own province of Alberta and of some concerns many Albertans have brought to my attention. Much of the industry voluntarily has been moving in the direction of trying to implement certain strategies to reduce emissions, if that is how it affects their production, to improve their production methods and to go green, as many of them say when it comes to natural resource production.

• (1550)

They have done that on their own because they know Canadians expect that from them. They expect investments in a greener way. They expect better air quality. They expect certain production methods to improve with technological investments. Many of them are making those efforts regardless of the Kyoto accord. They are

putting together their own implementation plan in achieving those goals within their own industries.

After I looked at the summary in Bill S-2, I looked at some of the tax conventions signed in the past between Canada and Norway. Let us look at clause 10, which addresses the whole issue of royalties and how royalties may be effective in each of the host countries and if we need to be aware of any negative effects. They are worked out so that Canadians know that, in signing this tax treaty, there will be no negative effects on their income or any tax royalties that may be collected in home countries like Norway and here in Canada.

Proposed paragraph (1)3 of article 12 of the Income Tax Conventions Implementation Act, 1998, states:

The term "royalties" as used in this Article means payments of any kind received as a consideration for the use of, or the right to use, any copyright of literary, artistic or scientific work (including payments of any kind in respect of motion picture films and works on film, tape or other means of reproduction for radio or television broadcasting), any patent, trade mark, design or model, plan, secret formula or process or other intangible property, or for the use of, or the right to use, industrial, commercial or scientific equipment, or for information concerning industrial, commercial or scientific experience.

That gives us an idea of the amount of thought that went into that proposed paragraph of the income tax convention which was signed initially in 1967. It considers the effects when it comes to copyright use of literary, artistic or scientific work and how it may be affected by a tax treaty signed between these two countries. The government and bureaucrats have gone as far as to identify these areas in the bill and how they could affect us negatively. Obviously we would take that into consideration before we entered into any sort of tax treaty with another country.

On the flip side I have to continue to use Kyoto as an example of the process the government has chosen. I do not know why it has not followed the consistency as identified with Bill S-2. It is asking us to ratify the accord. We still do not know the effects of that accord on any part of the economy.

Bill S-2 talks about the effects of literary, artistic and scientific work on tax treaties. At least we have the information before we engage in any sort of tax treaty with another country. We know the implementation strategy and the effects of it if we sign onto the tax treaty. We can now go ahead, deal with it and ratify it.

We do not have to go into it blindly and ratify it, like the Kyoto accord. We are being asked to ratify this without any form of implementation strategy whatsoever.

I want to cite another part of Bill S-2 just to make the point about knowing ahead of time the effects that any sort of tax treaty will have on Canada.

One country that Bill S-2 deals with is Kuwait. The Canada-Kuwait Tax Agreement Act was enacted initially in 2002. Ultimately in harmonizing some of our tax treaties now under Bill S-2, we deal specifically with different parts of tax treaties as they pertain to Kuwait. I will read a couple of sections so we can understand the type of thought that has gone into this tax agreement.

Government Orders

•(1555)

Section 4(1) states:

Subject to subsection (2), in the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of this Act or the Conventions and the provisions of any other law, the provisions of this Act and the Convention prevail to the extent of inconsistency.

(2) In the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of the Convention and the provisions of the *Income Tax Conventions Interpretation Act*, the provisions of that Act prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

There is constantly reference to any potential problems that may come up with any sort of tax agreement, ensuring that we know exactly how they will be dealt with if there is any conflict or any misinterpretation.

It is clear, within this document through the implementation plan of Bill S-2, that any sort of conflict which may come up will have a resolution method. We will know how to deal with that one on one. We will know that there is a process that we can go through to ensure that tax income of Canadians is protected from double taxation and other forms of problems when it comes to conflicts that could arise with many of these countries.

As I said, because I know we will be debating Kyoto very shortly in the House, none of that can be said for the Kyoto accord. None of that can be said in the sense of the sorts of effects that international agreements, which are currently signed, can have when they come into contact with the Kyoto accord.

We are talking about international tax treaties. However one of the interesting points and one of the biggest inconsistencies with the Kyoto accord is that we are being asked to ratify that accord but we do not have any background information.

We still do not have any information from the government on one of our questions. If we sign onto the Kyoto accord, how will that affect some of our other international agreements, including NAFTA. Ultimately there will be some huge legal ramifications under the obligations of Kyoto. Outside of having any sort of cost analysis, we still do not have any sort of analysis from the various legal departments of the government as to whether there will be conflicts within, say, the environment department, industry or international trade if we sign the Kyoto accord. There could prove to be a huge violations under agreements we currently have with other countries, whether it be trade issues, defence issues or in the case of Bill S-2, tax issues. It begs the question, how are we going about this?

Just before we revert to the Kyoto debate, we are debating a bill that has gone through serious scrutiny and a process of working out an implementation strategy. How it will affect Canadians in an important issue like revenue and their incomes has been worked out. Then we can moved to the point, once everything is clear, to ratify it. Canadians have had a chance to see how it will affect them. We have worked out mechanisms in the event of conflict to ensure there are certain procedures that can take place. Basically we are presenting all the items on the floor of the House. We are able to debate them, whether they are positive or negative, Canadians can say if they support it or not and we can go ahead and ratify in this place.

As we will see, when we revert to the debate on Kyoto, that none of that sort of thought has gone in to the accord. None of the information has been presented to the House or Canadians in a way which they deserve to be presented. Unfortunately we will be faced

with a vote in the House on the accord without the proper information that Canadians deserve to make the proper decisions on whether to engage in that sort of an agreement.

I would also like to address another country, like the United Arab Emirates, in which I think many people have an interest in the growing investment. If we look at part 3 of the bill, specifically the sections to be dealt with under Bill S-2 as it pertains to the UAE, we see the different provisions again.

•(1600)

There is a lot of effort being made to ensure that there is no the duplication and conflict within tax policy to ensure that Canadians are having the highest level of protection from double taxation. If we look at the different schedules outlined here they all deal with those particular issues to ensure that there would not be any effects of double taxation and that there is consistency. That is something I continue to raise, the lack of consistency when it comes to the government dealing with legislation. However, when we look at the implementation plan of Bill S-2 there is consideration given to consistency. Unfortunately, we are not seeing that across the way.

Part 1, subclause 4(1) states:

Subject to subsection (2), in the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of this Act or the Agreement and provisions of any other law, the provisions of this Act and the Agreement prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

Part 1, subclause 4(2) states:

In the event of any inconsistency between the provisions of the Agreement and the provisions of the *Income Tax Conventions Interpretation Act*, the provisions of that Act prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

Part 1, clause 5 states:

The Minister of National Revenue may make any regulations that are necessary for carrying out the Agreement or for giving effect to any of its provisions.

This is similar to the tax treaty that was signed with Kuwait and now with the United Arab Emirates. It is clearly spelled out that if there are any violations within our tax code, if there are any violations between other countries and Canada, that there is a proper recourse available to Canadians and to the government to ensure that the protection of income would be there and there would not be any double taxation issue to deal with. On that issue there is no mention at all in Kyoto about any of these issues and it is a big concern.

The last two countries that I will mention are Norway and Belgium. There are important changes being made in light of all the investment going into these countries or Canadians working in these countries. We can see some of the tax freebies that were implemented in the past, and that many of these international agreements that we enter into with other countries affect other agreements that are already in place. I will give an example from the Canada-Belgium tax convention. Part 6, subclause 8(1) states:

Schedule II to *An Act to implement conventions for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to income tax between Canada and France, Canada and Belgium and Canada and Israel* is replaced by the Schedule II set out in Schedule 6 to this act.

Government Orders

There is always mention of certainty and the ability for us to ensure there is no conflict. There are a number of other areas which list the protection of intangible property and the use of equipment. All the details are outlined. That is why, on this side of the House, we have given in the past our support to Bill S-2. We have said that, even though the bill was introduced in the Senate and that we have had some concerns with that, we support the effort to reduce the overall barriers to trade and to protect Canadians from double taxation, and to continue to work in a more global economy.

We know that tax treaties are a positive thing. The official opposition has continuously supported the government in its endeavour to sign those international tax agreements. It makes it difficult for Canadians to get behind a government that shows such a lack of consistency as it approaches other areas of international agreements, and the Kyoto accord is a perfect example.

In the ruling that was recently given before we entered into debate on Bill S-2 the Speaker ruled on a point of order raised by the Leader of the opposition as it pertained to the validity of introducing the Kyoto accord in the House, given the fact that maybe it had not gone through the proper procedure. The Speaker ruled that the executive had a right to enter into any international agreement and could ratify any international agreement without bringing it to the House. We are fortunate that we have the opportunity to have a vote on Kyoto, because the government could have gone ahead and ratified it without getting the consent of Canadians through this place.

• (1605)

The point being raised is that we must have the opportunity to have an open and honest debate. I have demonstrated with Bill S-2 the fact that there must be many considerations taken before signing any form of international tax treaty. We must do a lot of ground work. We must have a strategy for implementing those particular tax agreements. We must know how those agreements would affect Canadians. We would have to take into consideration a lot of the negative and positive effects that could come from signing international agreements.

We have not been able to do any of the things that we end up doing in this particular place when it comes to the Kyoto accord. Other than discussing some of the effects on the environment, the effects on Canadians in a general way, and how we can try to improve the environment through Kyoto, there is no real cost structure being presented by the government as to the negative effects on the economy, on the jobs of Canadians and their families.

That is something that makes it difficult for us. We do not have an implementation plan that we could discuss, as we are doing with Bill S-2, and to look at all the different aspects. It makes it difficult with the Kyoto accord for this side of the House to say that we will sign on with the government and that we will say yes to the accord when there is no implementation plan to ratify this particular accord.

That is something that Canadians have said over and over again. They would like to do more for the environment. I know we in the opposition would too, but we need to know what we are getting into before we give our consent.

It is important that I put on the record that we will be supporting Bill S-2. Notwithstanding the fact that the bill was introduced in the

Senate, which is unelected and lacks legitimacy to address legislation prior to the House of Commons, the Canadian Alliance will be supporting Bill S-2 as an initiative to expedite tax procedures for Canadians abroad, reduce tax evasion, and focus CCRA resources on collecting taxes from Canadians living in Canada.

It is something that we generally tend to support. We would have liked to have seen a little more thought being presented by the government when it comes to how we could make our tax jurisdiction here at home even more competitive in light of some of the countries that we are signing this tax treaty with.

We could always do more in this country to evaluate how we can be more competitive to improve our productivity. Canadians expect the government to review that on a constant basis and look at the many aspects of regulations. They expect to know how the regulations would affect the ability of Canadians to produce here at home, and how the government is addressing the concerns that many Canadians have about tax levels and debt.

This is something that I wish would have been addressed more seriously by the government, especially in light of how some of these tax treaties would affect our competitiveness among some of these countries who may be more competitive than us. We may in fact need to make some changes to those rights and reductions in overall taxes. A simplification of the tax system is also something most Canadians would like to see. Unfortunately, despite the fact that there has not been any real thought put into that process, we will be supporting the bill.

Finally, why is it that the government follows that form of inconsistency? Why could it not have brought all stakeholders together, especially on an accord as important as Kyoto? Why could it not have followed the same sort of procedure that it does with other forms of international treaties, like Bill S-2 which we are debating today? Why could it not have done the same sort of background work, the checks, the cost analysis, and the effects on the economy, which are all important parts of Bill S-2, with Kyoto so as to bring all those facts and figures to the House?

Canadians could then see what they are getting into by signing on to Kyoto before ratification is forced through the House, as it is being done now. It would give us a chance to debate the implementation plan and see in fact that there is an implementation strategy in place, and then promptly and properly go through the process of ratification as is being followed with Bill S-2?

It is a shame the government does not show that form of consistency. If it had maybe we would have had a consensus in the House. Maybe all sides of the House could have come together to support the Kyoto accord as an important international agreement as is Bill S-2. We would have had a long term goal with Canadians working toward meeting the targets that would have been outlined under an implementation strategy that is far too absent under Kyoto.

Government Orders

•(1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise on Bill S-2, to implement an agreement, conventions and protocols concluded between Canada and Kuwait, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates, Moldova, Norway, Belgium and Italy for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion and to amend the enacted text of three tax treaties.

First, I would like to point out that, in the title of the bill, there is an error in the French version, because Moldova is the name of the country in the language of the country, but in French, we say Moldavie or république de Moldavie. It seems to me that this could be corrected without us having to go through a lengthy procedure. I remind the House that, otherwise, we would have written Italia, instead of Italie and, in this sense, it seems to me that we must write it correctly in French. Perhaps in English it is indeed Moldova.

I also remind the House that Moldova became independent in 1991. It is interesting to see that the Canadian government is capable of making agreements with newly sovereign countries. I am convinced that this will be the case when Quebec decides to become a sovereign country.

Bill S-2 does not pose any problem with regard to its content and the Bloc Québécois will support it. However, the problem is what is not in the bill, particularly concerning the issue of tax havens, and this is not the first time that the Bloc Québécois has pointed this out. I know that, since 1994, my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot has constantly been mentioning this issue of tax havens.

Bill S-2 would have been a good opportunity to denounce tax conventions that are a problem. To give an example, tax conventions between Canada and Italy, and between Canada and Barbados were signed at the same time. In the case of Bill S-2, we are re-opening the agreement with Italia to improve it. In the case of Barbados, we could easily have done the same to put an end to this tax agreement, because Barbados is indeed a tax haven.

There is a rationale for not wanting to force businesses or individuals that already pay taxes in another jurisdiction to pay taxes on the same income in Canada. If it is logical to have these kinds of tax treaties, it is because those countries, like the ones mentioned earlier, have tax rates that are normal for a responsible state that has to collect a certain amount of money to provide services to its people.

In the case of Barbados, it seems to me that we are not dealing with a country that has normal tax rates. Here are a few examples. In Barbados, the tax rate is 1% when profits exceed \$15 million US. It goes up to 2.5% for profits under \$5 million US.

We can see that not only is the tax rate totally ridiculous, but the approach used is completely opposite to the one that we have developed in Canada and in Quebec, where we have progressive tax systems. In this case, small businesses, or relatively small businesses, are paying the most tax. When I say that they are paying the most tax, again it is relative; we are talking here about a 2.5% tax rate, compared to slightly less than 30% in Canada.

Barbados has no capital gains tax, no payroll deductions, and no monitoring or control with regard to trade. Therefore, it is clear that, in the case of Barbados, there is no double taxation and that, in these circumstances, a tax treaty makes no sense. A tax treaty to avoid double taxation implies that both jurisdictions have an appropriate tax rate, one that is normal for a responsible state, as I was saying earlier.

On February 27, 2001, the Auditor General even said that “one of the biggest threats to the tax base lies” in our openness to countries some Canadian taxpayers and corporations use as tax havens. This should be a concern to all of us. When a Canadian corporation decides to avoid paying taxes by opening a branch in a tax haven, it is the taxes of those who choose to take their responsibilities in Quebec and in Canada that go up.

•(1615)

I think it would have been important to use the bill before us to put an end to our tax treaty with Barbados. This is not an immaterial or insubstantial issue. The Auditor General referred to it in her 2001 report, as I mentioned earlier. What caught my attention is that Canada's direct investments abroad totalled \$257 billion in 1999 figures.

Some \$134 billion were invested in the United States and \$29.2 billion in the U.K. That is understandable. But I was quite surprised to see that the third country where Canadians invest the most is Barbados, with \$16.8 billion.

I just cannot believe that those investments of \$16.8 billion have all contributed to the economy of Barbados. For the most part, these direct investments were done to avoid paying taxes in Canada with the consent of the Canadian government, because, as we know, it is not illegal. This has to stop.

Let me give more examples showing how important this system has become. Out of our total investments abroad of \$257 billion, \$27.9 billion were invested in Barbados, the Bahamas and Bermuda, three countries the OECD considers tax havens. This represented 10% of all Canadian investments abroad in 1999. This is more than all Canadian investments in Asia, Latin America and Africa. This is far from insignificant. It is therefore imperative that the Canadian government take the bull by the horns and terminate these tax treaties with tax havens.

At this time, the total amount of money invested in tax havens—there are 40 or so in the world—is estimated at \$5,000 billion, one fifth of which is considered laundered money.

Government Orders

By being extremely permissive in tax treaty matters and allowing tax havens to be considered legitimate jurisdictions as far as taxation goes, the Canadian government is dodging its responsibility to control money laundering. I repeat that one fifth of the money invested in tax havens is laundered money.

What is cause for concern is the fact that the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade promotes tax havens. In a July 16, 1999 document, we can see that one of the conferences scheduled by CanadExport was to demystify tax havens. The items covered were: the origin of tax havens; their use as a financial strategy; the criteria for choosing a good tax haven—as if there could be such a thing as a good tax haven; tax havens and the Canadian tax system; and finally, the steps to follow in order to use them properly.

It is clear that not only did the government duck its obligation to put an end to tax treaties with tax havens, Barbados in particular, but it also promoted tax havens through some of its agencies. On the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Web site, one can order a booklet entitled “Barbados: A Guide for Canadian Exporters”.

It is very worrisome to see that Canada promotes tax havens. I raised the issue a bit earlier; we all know that much of the money placed in these tax havens constitutes not only tax avoidance but money laundering as well, and is probably used by terrorist groups around the world.

There is a blatant contradiction here with what the government officially said about measures that were taken after September 11, 2001.

• (1620)

As I was mentioning earlier, it is interesting to see that, since 1994, not only has my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, when he was the finance critic, asked that the Canadian government review its relations with tax havens, but the OECD has also asked members—we know that Canada is a member—to consider denouncing tax agreements that may have been concluded with tax havens.

Bill S-2 would therefore have been a good opportunity to raise this issue, particularly because the tax agreement with Italy was signed at the same time as the agreement with Barbados and Italy is one of the countries with which we have reviewed our provisions in Bill S-2.

Until now, the federal government has not listened to the OECD, to the Bloc Québécois or all the groups in society, including ATTAC-Québec, which are asking the government to assume its responsibilities concerning this laxness toward tax havens. Since the finance minister's businesses were using tax havens—we have identified more than a dozen numbered companies that are operating in Barbados, in Bermuda or in the Bahamas and that are owned by Canada Steamship Lines—we thought that, being judge and jury, the finance minister was uncomfortable raising an issue that, I remind the House, is not illegal, but may have some illegitimacy. When the person responsible for the finances of a state such as Canada encourages his own businesses to operate in tax havens, we are justified in asking some questions.

However, now that we have a new finance minister, it seems to me that we should be able, especially since the former finance minister

wants to be the next Prime Minister of Canada, to have a debate not only for the good of Canadian and Quebec taxpayers, but also for the good of politicians. It might raise questions when the public sees this lax attitude towards tax havens and businesses that use them and realizes that some of our most prominent politicians also take advantage of these tax havens.

Therefore, I think that in the next few weeks, maybe in the budget that will be coming in February or in March, the government should propose a number of ways to deal with this issue.

We have made suggestions and we are making them again today. We think that, in the free trade area of the Americas negotiations, we should seek the addition of a clause prohibiting harmful tax practices, as defined by the OECD. We know that a number of jurisdictions across the Americas have harmful tax practices.

The Bloc Québécois is also demanding that Canada withdraw as soon as possible from its tax treaty with Barbados, as recommended by the OECD. We are also asking that the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency strengthen its international service to discourage tax avoidance through the use of tax havens. We have also been asking since 1996 that an overall reform of the Canadian tax system be undertaken to eliminate tax loopholes as well as certain abusive practices that are used at the expense of the average taxpayer. Taxes that are not paid by large businesses and by those individuals who are rich enough to use these schemes are paid by middle and low income people in our society.

Lastly, I would like to make two suggestions or recommendations concerning tax havens. I think the income earned by Canadian corporations in tax havens should be taxed at the rate in effect here in Canada. Again, I will use Barbados as an example. The tax rate there is 1%, compared to about 29% here. The income of the corporations and branches in operation in that country should be taxed here to make up the difference. In other words, a tax rate of around 28% should be applied. We should also prevent agencies and departments and the government as a whole from providing funding or any form of assistance to corporations which have decided to shirk their fiscal responsibilities. This would be consistent with the official position of the Canadian government.

As I said earlier, the problem with Bill S-2 is not really what is in it but rather what has been left out.

Having said that, as I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, the Bloc Québécois will be voting in favour of this bill.

• (1625)

[*English*]

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words on Bill S-2. I am making these comments on behalf of the member for Kings—Hants, who is the official critic in this area but cannot be in the chamber at the moment.

Government Orders

As we are all aware, the bill lets Canada ratify income tax treaties with Kuwait, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates and Moldova. Canada did not previously have tax treaties with any of these states. It also ratifies treaties with Norway, Belgium and Italy and corrects errors in the English version of the treaties with Vietnam, Portugal and Senegal. These treaties set out a framework for taxes on investment income flowing between Canada and other countries. They provide mechanisms to avoid double taxation and prevent tax evasion.

Over the past several years, Canada has negotiated tax treaties with about 80 countries. These agreements deal with problems that arise when residents of one nation earn income in another country. They are based on the model double taxation convention prepared by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

A key problem that these treaties address is that of double taxation. That can occur when the same person or business pays comparable taxes in two or more states on the same taxable income for the same period of time. For example, double taxation would occur if a resident of Italy were taxed in both Canada and Italy on dividend income received from a Canadian company. Preventing double taxation helps facilitate investment.

To prevent double taxation, each treaty limits the application of each country's respective tax law and ensures that taxes paid in one country are recognized in the other country as well. Limits on withholding taxes in the country where the income is earned are established. An exemption is provided for certain income that would otherwise be taxed in the country where it is earned.

The treaties outline the maximum withholding taxes that may be charged on different forms of income, such as dividends, royalties and interest. These will vary by country. When the income is then received in Canada, double taxation is prevented by subtracting the tax already paid from what would otherwise be payable on that income.

The treaties also provide for measures to prevent double taxation of income earned in Canada by residents of the countries concerned.

Another problem addressed by tax treaties is that of tax evasion, whereby income earned abroad is not reported in Canada. To prevent tax evasion, the treaties provide for the exchange of information.

A further area that needs addressing is one that transcends fiscal, taxation and investment issues, and that is the very important area of human rights. Canada must ensure that the countries we have tax treaties with recognize the importance of human rights. Also, it must be more than a perfunctory recognition. It must be a real and cognizant recognition. If some of these countries have a checkered history of human rights, then the government should undertake all steps to ensure that the human rights record of the foreign signatory is improved.

That issue was studied recently by the foreign affairs and international trade department and it indeed has reported back on it. The specific issue is this: Should Canada enter into double taxation agreements with countries possessing poor human rights records? The response from the department is as follows:

The protections that a Double Taxation Agreement...can provide for Canadian businesses (e.g., transparency, rule of law, and greater predictability/stability) are

consistent with Canada's policy of encouraging governance, democratic and human rights reforms wherever necessary. The increased trade and investment that may result from such agreements can lead to economic development (an important factor related to the promotion of human rights) and provide additional vehicles for promoting Canadian beliefs and values—central among which are the promotion and protection of human rights. We encourage and fully support ongoing Canadian private sector efforts to work with stakeholders such as local communities, NGOs and labour unions to develop and implement innovative environmentally and socially responsible business practices.

●(1630)

For these reasons we would have no concern in finalizing DTAs with the following countries: Belgium, Norway, Italy and the United Arab Emirates. In doing that we would make these comments.

The UAE has acceded only to the convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and the convention on the rights of the child. Canada is not aware of excessive human rights violations in the UAE. Canadian concerns include the general lack of transparency in judicial proceedings and the fact that there are no elections or legal political parties in the UAE.

Mongolia is a party to all six major human rights instruments. Canada is not aware of excessive human rights violations in Mongolia. We are, however, concerned about the weaknesses of the penal system and reported discrimination against women.

Moldova has acceded to all six major human rights instruments. Human rights are generally respected in Moldova, and the concerns that Canada notes have to do with the problematic administration of governance and justice. Complaints arise, of course, about the mistreatment of ethnic Albanians on the grounds that they harbour separatists and terrorists, but the government and the governing system understand the need for reform and seem to be making progress.

Kuwait has acceded to all six major human rights instruments. Canada is not aware of any excessive human rights violations in Kuwait. Canada remains concerned, though, about the denial of political rights for women.

Just because the various countries do not have any egregious human rights violations does not mean that the human rights records of the various countries could not be improved. For instance, in regard to Kuwait, how can the government talk about Kuwait's humanitarian record as no longer egregious if it still denies political rights for women, who make up about one-half of the population? In Canada would this not be seen as egregious human rights violations?

Government Orders

Furthermore, what is the difference between gender and race with respect to human rights? What if the same violations were being made in Kuwait or some other country that we have a tax treaty with and one-half of the population was denied political rights and they were black? Case in point, we do not have a treaty with Cuba. I assume this is for many reasons, but one could surmise that one of the reasons is that Cuba does not have a great human rights record.

My point in all of this is that the government must be satisfied that the human rights records of these countries are on a par with Canada's or must at least be seen to be improving. After all, these countries want investment from Canada. In return, it is high time that any of these human rights violations be rectified. This is one of the positive effects emanating from globalization.

Our concerns notwithstanding, we support the bill.

• (1635)

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I was not going to speak on Bill S-2 today, but in listening to the riveting debate taking place in the chamber in the last hour, I have been motivated to get up and say a few words about this very important bill.

This bill emanating from the Senate is about a treaty with different countries on a very important financial matter, that is, taxation.

First I would like to say a few words about this concept of double taxation. It is incredible to me that we are willing to enter into agreements with other countries to avoid double taxation when double taxation is rampant for our own citizens within our own country.

I could give many examples. The best one, I suppose, is the one of my private member's bill, which I hope will come forward one of these days. In nine years I have never yet been picked in the lottery draw on private members' business, but with the rules being changed hopefully I will get an opportunity to debate it now. It is a double taxation bill because it deals with the fact that every one of us has to pay income tax on money that we earn in order to have money to pay our property taxes. We have to pay taxes on money that we earn solely for the purpose of paying taxes. That is double taxation. I hope I can get a chance sometime soon to have that private member's bill brought forward so that within this country we can avoid the kind of double taxation which Bill S-2 addresses with respect to our citizens who have businesses abroad or some of our citizens who live in other countries who still have business interests back home here.

Another example of double taxation, and really it is triple taxation, is that when we buy fuel we first have to pay income tax on the money we earn so that we have some money in our pocket when we pull up to the service station. Lo and behold, about one-half of the cost of fuel these days is taxation in one form or another if the income tax that the energy companies pay is included. Really, it is a 100% rate of taxation. I pay 30¢ for the actual fuel and the rest of the bill, 30¢, is for taxation at various levels. It is a 100% rate of taxation on gasoline, but when I pay it I am paying it with money on which I have already paid taxes. That is also a form of double taxation.

I could go on. There are many examples of this. Every time I buy something I pay the GST. It does not matter what it is. In Ontario, when I escape from the wonderful province of Alberta, I end up

paying not only the federal tax but also the provincial tax, even on a simple thing like a \$7 meal at McDonald's. Although I should not admit that I sometimes eat at McDonald's because it gives away my diet plan, I do eat there occasionally. The other day I think it came to about \$7 with a tax bill of approximately \$2 on it. It was incredible. I still think I got ripped off, but more by the taxman than by the young lady who served me a Big Mac. That is double taxation. That is a very expensive Big Mac, and please do not tell my wife because she thinks I am still on my diet program. That was my one occasion this week when I sort of dropped the ball.

Double taxation is to be avoided on principle, so I support Bill S-2 because it states that people who have business interests in other countries do not have to pay taxes in both countries. There is an agreement made to pay in only one.

One of my colleagues just pointed out to me that when we buy fuel we pay GST on the excise tax. I remember very early on, way back in 1994 in his first budget, that the hon. member now seeking the leadership of his party, and to become the next prime minister, got up and said they were going to increase the taxes on fuel by 1.5¢. I remember saying then that it was not 1.5¢ but actually more. It was really an increase of 1.605¢. When we add the GST to it, there is a tax on a tax. We actually pay GST on the excise tax that we pay when we buy gasoline: absurdity of absurdities. Of course we need to get rid of double taxation. I would like to see us make a treaty with ourselves so that our citizens do not have to pay double taxes. I am looking forward to that.

• (1640)

The other thing that I want to address very briefly is of course this idea of treaty making. Some of my colleagues, especially the member for Edmonton—Strathcona, drew some attention to this. I too think it is totally outrageous.

I scanned Bill S-2 before I got up to speak. I find it interesting that in Bill S-2 there is a whole section for each country with which we are entering into an agreement. It is put out in detail. It is the actual wording of the treaty. I expect we will pass Bill S-2, because I am sure the Liberals will vote for it, I am going to vote for it and I imagine most of my colleagues will. It will most surely pass on the strength of the Canadian Alliance vote in the House today.

It will pass, but what we have is the actual passing of actual wording of treaties right there in the bill. That is what is being passed in the House. We must compare that to what we have been seized with in the last couple of days, this Kyoto affair. What we have there is a simple motion that says "let us ask the government to sign a blank cheque". There are no details in it. It is just a motion that says we ought to ratify Kyoto.

Why can we not get this lame duck government to bring into the chamber an actual treaty and let us debate it and let us vote on it? Instead, what the government is saying is to give it the authority and it will ratify the treaty and will not bother telling the House any of the details, the costs, the implementation plan or anything, none of that; it is just "let us ratify it".

Government Orders

I trust my wife a lot. She writes cheques occasionally on our account, but I never ever let her even write a cheque without reporting back to me immediately and usually in advance how much it is for and who it is to. I need to know that.

The Prime Minister and the government are asking us to sign a blank cheque. Then, of course, in the debate a couple of days ago and in some of the challenges, the parliamentary secretary had the audacity to get up and say that it does not really matter if it is not passed by the House, because the government has the right to ratify it anyway.

What kind of a democracy is that? I do not think it is a very good democracy and I would like to see that improved.

With respect to Bill S-2, my comment is simply this. Let us apply at least the same standards to Kyoto that we are applying to Bill S-2. Let us have the treaty. Let us have the voting. Let us have an actual authoritative Parliament ratify the treaty instead of this garbage that we are having to put up with from the other side on the Kyoto treaty.

Mr. Speaker, I will restrain myself. I know I have more time, but I am going to just say that this is enough for this particular occasion.

• (1645)

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

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 Vancouver East, Chinese Canadians; and the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest, Health.

* * *

[*Translation*]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

The House resumed consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this debate on the motion which reads:

That this House call upon the government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

I think everyone knows that the Bloc has been asking for months now that we ratify the Kyoto protocol.

I want to congratulate the member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie who was very persistent when the government seemed to waver about this ratification. He worked relentlessly and formed a coalition; more than 70 groups joined in, even large Quebec labour confederations. We owe it largely to him if we are now debating in the House this motion on the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. All

this lobbying pushed the Prime Minister into promising, at the Earth Summit, that this protocol would be ratified before the end of the year.

When we look at the facts, we realize that Kyoto is the first step that could lead us to a solution to a very serious problem that jeopardizes our planet and the future of our children. If nothing is done, the current warming trend will only get worse. If nothing is done, 50 years from now, the concentration of CO₂ in the air will have doubled and we will be faced with the effects of climate changes, of which we have already had a taste, like respiratory problems, the recurrence of diseases thought to have been eradicated and serious environmental changes. We know that polar bears are already being affected by the melting of the ice cap. If we do not do anything about this, not only are we doomed, but we show an incredible lack of responsibility.

Kyoto will not solve all of our problems. The target is relatively modest, as we know. We are only talking about the industrialized countries lowering their greenhouse gas emissions 6% below 1990 levels.

When we look at the facts and at the known and foreseeable impact our failure to act could have, I think that any responsible person would support the ratification of this treaty, knowing that it is only a first step and that other measures will have to be taken in a few years to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We must reverse the current trend towards global warming and this is even more important for Canada, which is a large source of greenhouse gases.

I know that, sometimes, some members opposite do not like us giving Quebec as an example, but one thing is certain: in Quebec, greenhouse gases have only increased by 2.3% between 1990 and 2000, as opposed to 19.6% in Canada. If we exclude Quebec, Canada's production of greenhouse gases is about the worse. From year to year, Australia can compete with us on this bad record. So, it is essential that Canada act quickly. We know that the United States plays an extremely important role, being the source of about 40% of greenhouse gases, but, per capita, Canada is one of the worst sources of greenhouse gases.

So, between 1990 and 2000, greenhouse gases in Quebec had increased by 2.3% as opposed to 19.6% in Canada. In the case of Quebec, we see that it is possible to find solutions that are both economically viable and geared toward an effort concerning the environment and sustainable development.

If our greenhouse gases have only increased by 2.3% in 10 years, this has happened despite the fact that our use of fossil fuels has increased by 7%, that our gross domestic product has increased by 26% and that the population has increased by 6%. So there is no contradiction between reaching the goals established by Kyoto and ensuring economic development, as well as responding to the needs of the public.

Government Orders

•(1650)

With the efforts that have made by Quebec—to which I shall return later—we are now at 12 tonnes per person, as far as greenhouse gas emissions are concerned—about the European level—compared to the figure for Canada, which is 23.6 tonnes. As I said, this is one of the worst results of the OECD.

When we look at the efforts made by Quebec, they suggest a direction that the rest of Canada could follow. This Parliament absolutely must call upon the government to ratify Kyoto. Canada is one of the key figures in its implementation. I also think that, on the political level, and let us not kid ourselves about this, ratification by Canada, Europe and Japan will put pressure on the U.S., because it will be totally isolated among the developed countries.

I know it is not always easy to convince. This can be seen with Iraq and the International Criminal Court. Ratification by Canada will, however, add to the pressure on the States to also ratify Kyoto.

As hon. members are aware, Quebec made some energy choices in the early 1970s. These are what have allowed us to achieve the results we have today. That was a major debate, and I have referred to it already in another debate. When Robert Bourassa came up with the idea of using the water from James Bay to generate hydroelectricity, an extremely important debate ensued. Some argued that nuclear energy was the way of the future, as far as clean energy was concerned. We now have a hydroelectricity infrastructure that gives us good results as far as greenhouse gas emissions are concerned. And we did it without any federal assistance, unlike the western petroleum industry.

Let us be clear. The Bloc Québécois is in favour of ratifying the protocol, but not in favour of the Minister of the Environment's plan, because they want us to foot the bill for the third time. We paid once to develop oil in the west, with the Borden line. We had to pay more for our oil and gas than we would have on the international market.

At that time, we bought our oil from Venezuela. It cost only a few dollars a barrel. However, to make the production of western oil and gas cost effective, we were forced to have a single price across the country. As I said earlier, the government invested a lot of money in oil and gas projects in western Canada as well as in the Hibernia project. In fact, \$66 billion were invested in oil and gas projects. No investment was made in hydroelectricity. Almost nothing was invested in renewable energies, whereas \$10 billion went to the development of nuclear energy, which has become totally obsolete.

We developed our own hydroelectric production, which is compatible with Kyoto targets. First, we were forced to pay more for our oil. Then, through our taxes and through these \$66 billion, we had to pay for part of the infrastructures needed for the development of the western oil and gas industry. Now the government wants us to pay because the action plan that is on the table uses 2010 as base year.

Considerable conversion efforts were made by Quebec, by Quebeckers as well as by industry, including the pulp and paper industry and to a lesser extent the steel industry and the metallurgy industry. All these efforts would not count in the action plan that has been proposed to us. We believe that this approach is totally unfair and that it will be detrimental to Quebec. Instead of recognizing the

efforts and investments made by Quebec, as it should, the action plan will penalize Quebec and benefit those that have polluted and are still polluting our atmosphere with their greenhouse gas emissions.

We must be clear here. I said it and all my colleagues said it. The fact that we support this motion does not mean that we support the action plan tabled by the minister. Finally, it seems important also to mention that the National Assembly of Quebec adopted, unanimously, a motion regarding the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. I will read it into the record. It is relatively short.

...The National Assembly asks:

That the allocation formula take into account the reductions achieved since 1990 and those that will be achieved by 2008.

That the manufacturing sector be treated equitably and not be included in the energy sector with regard to allocation of emission rights in order to balance the efforts that are asked of all the major economic activity sectors.

That the allocation formula involving the energy sector discriminate in favour of the energy sources that emit less carbon.

That the Government of Canada initiate with the Government of Québec the negotiation of a bilateral agreement on the financing—particularly of targeted measures—and the implementation of the greenhouse gas reduction strategy.

•(1655)

So, after expressing its support earlier this year—I think the National Assembly supported the ratification of Kyoto in May—this motion was passed on October 24, 2002 to remind everyone that it is not because we agree with the ratification that we are going to buy just any action plan. We prefer a bilateral approach between the federal government and Quebec where previous investments by Quebec would be taken into consideration.

I want to point out not only that we consider the action plan to be unfair, but also that the way the environment minister is presenting the Kyoto protocol is extremely negative. We have to understand that with or without Kyoto, we do not have any choice. I went over some figures earlier. Our economic development should be increasingly in sync with a healthy environment. This is not an economic negative, quite the opposite. The Kyoto protocol and our whole approach to sustainable development give us an incredible opportunity to develop new niches. It is true for Quebec and it is also true for Canada.

Therefore, we must be very proactive regarding this issue. We must not just talk about job losses, we must also look at what this will create. In order to achieve this result, the government must pledge to make investments with the provinces, so that we can be successful.

Government Orders

The Bloc Québécois presented, among other things, a proposal whereby for each dollar given to industries that use hydrocarbons during the transition process toward the implementation of the Kyoto protocol, one dollar would be paid to industries for renewable energies. We presented a report on wind energy, which can create many jobs.

This is not merely a project to meet our needs for electricity or for energy. We already have electricity. But with these projects, we will be able to meet future needs and export our knowledge and know-how all over the world, and particularly to developing countries, which have a huge need for energy and which, right now, often rely on sources of energy that are extremely polluting, including coal-fired plants. As regards such coal-fired plants, I should point out that Ontario and Alberta are not setting good examples.

So, the Canadian government must not only promote the Kyoto protocol, it must also act as a leader in the repositioning of our economy, it must insist on the benefits that could flow from understanding the global situation, and it must look further ahead than the next six months as regards the implementation of the Kyoto protocol.

As I mentioned, there is a huge economic potential relating to environmental protection. Quebec and Canada must be leaders in this regard. There is a principle of equity that is totally non-existent in the action plan, namely the polluter pay principle. It seems to me that if there is one principle or premise on which there is a worldwide consensus regarding the environment, it is the polluter pay principle, which consists in ensuring that those who pollute are the ones who pay. As I said earlier, this is not how the action plan of the Minister of the Environment has been set up. For us, it is a matter of equity vis-à-vis Québeckers, but it is also a matter of respecting a universally recognized equity principle.

The federal government obviously must not be allowed to use the ratification and implementation of the Kyoto protocol, namely its action plan, to once again paternalistically pass itself off as having the solutions to everything. Today, when we see the Romanow report and the government's response, it is a bit worrisome. This is not the federal government's only centralization initiative.

● (1700)

In the case of implementing the Kyoto protocol, I believe that there must be an agreement right now that the federal government will respect provincial jurisdictions with respect to the environment, natural resources and economic development. I believe this will be the key to success.

I will conclude by saying that the Bloc Québécois hopes this House will support unanimously, if possible, the ratification of the Kyoto protocol. We must continue the debate on the action plan. Our position on ratification of the protocol must certainly not be seen as support for the action plan tabled.

The Government of Quebec made some recommendations which were well received by other provinces. I urge the Minister of the Environment to listen to provinces proposing solutions to problems raised by provinces, by Canadians and by Québeckers.

That being said, I think that the way has been laid. The Kyoto protocol is only a first step. We must learn to live with the need to

respect the environment, not in a negative but in a positive way. This is a new opportunity to develop not only technologies but also industrial niches. I think that it is with this in mind that we should promote the ratification of the Kyoto protocol.

I am very happy that the Prime Minister suggested that the House debate and ratify the protocol. I remind the House that the Bloc Québécois would like to see a debate and a vote in the House on any major international treaty, before its ratification.

We spoke about this in connection with the Free Trade Area of the Americas. We are also speaking about it in connection with free trade agreements currently being negotiated, in particular with Latin American countries. We believe it is extremely important that Parliament be allowed to debate international treaties—the major ones, of course—and vote on them before the government ratifies them.

I think that the Kyoto protocol offers a good example which, hopefully, will be followed by the government during the coming months.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, discussions have taken place between all parties, as well as with the member for Ottawa—Vanier, concerning the order of reference of Bill C-202 listed as Item No. 24 on the order of precedence in today's Order Paper.

In this regard, I move:

That Bill C-202 be referred to the Standing Committee on Official Languages as opposed to a legislative committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the deputy whip have the unanimous consent of the House to move this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

KYOTO PROTOCOL

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the speech by my colleague from Joliette. First I must say that I appreciated the fact that he made a clear distinction between the ratification and the implementation of the agreement. I would like to ask him a question that deals, among other things, with the federal implementation plan.

He did point out to us that the base year used in the federal plan was 2010, and not 1990 as provided for in the Kyoto protocol. When we look at the increase in emissions by industry, we can see that, between 1990 and 2010, the projected increase is 131% for the fossil fuel industry and 3% for the manufacturing industry.

Government Orders

Can the member explain to us how Quebec will be penalized with this federal plan? Marginal costs associated with the efforts that will have to be made will be clearly greater for the manufacturing industry, which is the backbone of Quebec's economy, than for the fossil fuel industry.

If we take tar sands, for example, we can see that the projected increase in emissions is 310%. Can the member explain to us why the marginal cost will be higher for the Quebec manufacturing industry, compared to the fossil fuel industry, which happens to be in western Canada?

• (1705)

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie for his question. This looks a little like when we have a fundraising campaign. Members of this House appreciate that this is not a fundraising campaign. It is easy to go and get the first dollars. It is very difficult to get the last ones.

Quebec having grabbed the bull by the horns several years ago and the Quebec industry and several areas having made this choice, we went and got the first savings in terms of greenhouse gases, that is those that were the easiest to get. For example, when we shift from coal energy to electric energy or to dual energy, we get extremely significant returns on our investment.

As time goes by, returns coming from the reduction of greenhouse gases will require more fundamental changes. In essence, and I was mentioning this earlier, what the Kyoto protocol and the inevitable constraint of the respect for the environment require is a renegotiation of a kind of social contract, with regard to our lifestyle.

Since Quebec has already been investing in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for several years, the results that were the easiest to reach have already been reached. If we use the year 2010, the effort we will have to make will be greater than the effort of the extremely polluting provinces. I am not impugning motives or giving a lecture, in this regard.

For example, a number of years ago, we chose thermal energy, including coal from Pennsylvania, which is low grade coal. At the time, this was not a concern. The thermal plant produces a lot of pollution. When we close it, we will have a very significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, at relatively low costs.

In this regard, Quebec will then be penalized—and, then again, the distinction must be clearly made between the principle of the ratification of the protocol and the action plan—to the point that, in the report tabled by the government on the impact of the jobs not created as a result of the action plan tabled by the Minister of Environment, we see that Alberta, which is responsible for 31% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, will only have a burden of 10% in terms of jobs not created.

One can see also that this is all very static, because it ignores the fact that, where industry is concerned, new niches will be developed, which will create new jobs. If nothing changes, however, while being responsible for 31% of greenhouse gases, Alberta's share of the burden of jobs not created will be only 10%.

By comparison, Quebec, which is responsible for 12.7% of greenhouse gases, will have to shoulder 30% of the burden of jobs

not created, because much more difficult and expensive choices will have to be made now to achieve reduction targets. That is why this action plan is totally unfair and inequitable. It denies the polluter pays principle.

As I indicated, we do not want this plan. There should be negotiations between the Government of Quebec and the federal government on the basis of principles selected by the National Assembly. That having been said, as I mentioned right at the outset—and my hon. colleague from Rosemont—Petite-Patrie mentioned it again later—we are in favour of ratifying the Kyoto protocol, while being opposed to the action plan tabled by the Minister of the Environment.

• (1710)

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am a bit surprised that the hon. member did not talk about the economic costs associated with the ratification of Kyoto not only for western Canada but to our whole economy.

Does he not worry that the ratification of Kyoto will hurt economic growth in Canada?

Also, could he elaborate on the fact that no other country from the western hemisphere will be ratifying this treaty?

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Speaker, of course, there will be changes to the industrial structure. When we had the debate on the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement, we also pointed out that there would be changes to the industrial structure. I was among those who supported opening up our borders, but realized that we would need assistance programs for retraining and industrial conversion.

We must approach the Kyoto protocol the same way. Just like free trade, it is here to stay. It is part of the natural evolution of our planet. We must respect nature; if we do not, at some point, we will not have any economy left.

I believe we must deal with this debate just like we dealt with the one on the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement. The question is not to determine if we are against opening up our borders or against the Kyoto protocol. The question is to see how we are going to convert our industries and retrain our workers. It is clearly the government's responsibility.

However, I think that the impact has been exaggerated. A study was conducted in Quebec by an environmentalist who is also an economist. He believes that the price of gas will go up by about 1 cent per litre. When one considers that, in the Montreal area, the price of gas can vary from 69 cents one day to nearly 80 cents the next day, a 1 cent per litre increase will have no impact whatsoever on the economy.

We must see the bigger picture. Maybe a few jobs will be lost, but I do not think that number will be significant. There will be a lot of changes to be made in our way of doing things, but there will also be some job creation associated with the implementation of a smart plan—not the one that has been proposed to us—for reaching our Kyoto targets.

Government Orders

It is abundantly clear that the United States is the only country that is directly targeted among industrialized nations. There is a modulation associated with the results in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, depending on the level of development of each country.

For Latin America, it is not the same at all.

[*English*]

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the hon. member from the Bloc who just spoke that Canada comprises about 2% of the world's population. Kyoto is about limiting greenhouse gas emissions, the primary one of which is carbon dioxide.

With one-half of 1% of the population and 2% of emissions worldwide of carbon dioxide coming from our country, does he really believe that the economic risk and the economic loss is worth what will be nothing but an infinitesimal change to the total amount of carbon dioxide emitted in the world?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paquette: Mr. Speaker, I think that the level of our emissions compared to the rest of the planet is not the issue. What is important is how we take our responsibilities, as Canadians and as Quebeckers, with regard to a universally recognized problem.

I will remind members that Canada, if we exclude Quebec, is the worst polluter per capita in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. Australia may be worse than we are some years. However, last year, Canada was again the worst polluter per capita in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, we have a great responsibility to succeed in meeting our Kyoto targets, which call for a reduction of our greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels.

• (1715)

[*English*]

Mrs. Karen Redman: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In view of the great interest in this debate, I would ask for unanimous consent that the House continue to sit after the ordinary time of adjournment until 10 p.m. in order to consider government order Government Business No. 9.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Parkdale—High Park to wholeheartedly support the motion proposed by the Minister of the Environment which reads:

That this House call upon the government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Etobicoke North.

This is the second time that I have risen in the House since September 30 to support the Kyoto protocol. On October 24 I rose to speak to the official opposition's motion on Kyoto. I shared with the House at that time a summary of the consultations that I had had with

constituents in my riding about the importance of the Government of Canada ratifying Kyoto as soon as possible.

As I stated on that date, and I wish to confirm again today, the immediate ratification of Kyoto has overwhelming support in my riding. Of the numerous consultations, papers, e-mails, letters and telephone calls that I received, I have to say that only one person was against the immediate ratification of Kyoto and only person, I would say, was against it completely.

Today I would like to share with members of the House some of the comments and letters that I received from my constituents. They are not people from the oil and gas industry, but are ordinary Canadians. I received comments from people in various parts of my riding, but I will start with Sarah Harris in Parkdale:

Please support the Prime Minister in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.... My family and I truly feel that Canada should implement the Kyoto Protocol. Of course, there will be costs, but there will be greater costs if we do nothing, like the U.S. is doing. Please, please support the Protocol.

This is from Peggy Nash who lives in the High Park area:

I am a constituent in the High Park area. I strongly support the ratification of the Kyoto Accord and I am writing to urge your government to ratify this Accord as soon as possible.

This is from Rosalie Board and Craig Jackson:

I am one of your constituents.... I urge you to convince the Prime Minister to quickly ratify the Kyoto Accord.

As we have seen over the past few months, our planet is very sick and is only getting sicker. We must join with the rest of the world to preserve our environment and to stop the untold suffering that will be caused by global warming.

Please do the right thing.

This is from Curtis Strilchuk:

I am writing as one of your constituents and as a concerned Canadian citizen who has become dismayed at the amount and degree of negative opinion surrounding the ratification of the Kyoto Accord.

I want to vigorously affirm my support for this government's efforts in ratifying the agreement. I believe it is an essential step toward the preservation of this planet for future generations; a responsibility we should collectively bear with deepest reverence and humility.

Please communicate my support to your colleagues in the government. I stand wholeheartedly alongside you in this issue.

While there were many e-mails with that tone which were short, there were others which actually analyzed what had happened in the last few years. I would like to share the letter from Shiraz Moola, who lives in the High Park area:

It is important that Ottawa and the provinces now move forward with an action plan to achieve the Kyoto target, in a way that will encourage the long term reductions of the emissions causing global warming.

For five years, the federal government has consulted the provinces, industry, municipalities, academics, environmental groups and others about a broad range of programs to improve energy efficiency, promote renewable energy and reduce emissions in every sector of the Canadian economy. Now it is time to develop these programs through an effective plan that will also create new jobs, encourage innovative businesses, reduce air pollution, and cut energy costs.

Do not be swayed by the oil lobby or those provinces seeking more delay. Any short term profit loss is far outweighed by the costs of not taking serious action. Global warming and environmental degradation has a tremendous impact on all aspects of our economy as well as our health.

Last but not least I would like to share an e-mail from a good friend of mine, Chris Winter:

Government Orders

Both in my capacity as Executive Director for the Conservation Council of Ontario, and as board member of GreenSaver (which specializes in home energy conservation), I am appalled at the unnecessary delay in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol and in implementing energy conservation measures that should have been in place years ago.

● (1720)

We are the second worst country in the world with respect to per capita energy consumption (behind Australia). According to Statistics Canada data (Human Activity and the Environment 2000), Canada's consumption of primary energy rose 120% over the thirty year period from 1967 to 1997 (from 4,500 petajoules to 10,000 petajoules). Our hesitation to act is inexcusable.

I recall that, in 1995, the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers had agreed to stabilize CO₂ emissions at 1990 levels by 2000 (the National Action Plan on Climate Change. It was even written into the business plan for the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. This commitment disappeared with Kyoto and has been replaced with five more years of delay.

I submit that what we are hearing from those random letters is the true feeling of the average Canadian. I would submit that these views are the majority.

Interestingly enough, an article appeared in last weekend's *Globe and Mail* entitled "Kyoto support dips as ratification nears". This article reported on a poll undertaken by the Environics international group. It showed that support for the Kyoto protocol had softened by 11 points since May to 60%. At the same time, that poll found that the majority of Canadians, in fact two-thirds of Canadians, do not trust either the Alberta government or the oil and gas industry to develop an alternative plan to fight climate change. A majority of Canadians do support our immediate ratification.

We have to remember that climate change is a global problem and as such requires global solutions. As my hon. colleague from the official opposition said, while Canada is only responsible for approximately 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions, we feel the full effect of the whole world's greenhouse gas emissions, as do other countries around the world. We are feeling the effect of global warming right now. It is essential that we begin to take action now if we are to minimize the extent of those effects and avoid the potentially disastrous effects that our scientists predict will occur with unmitigated warning.

In that context, I want to share with members a frightening article that I read in last Sunday's *New York Times* entitled "As Andean glaciers shrink, water worries grow". The article was about the disappearance of the glaciers in the Andes. In a phenomenon that scientists are calling a calamity in the making, the glaciers of the central Andes are vanishing because of global warming.

The article went on to say that the disappearance of the glaciers is nearly unavoidable and could lead to water shortages in places like Bolivia and Peru. Those countries depend on glaciers, rain and the snow that falls in the mountains for water for drinking, irrigating fields and generating electricity.

Disappearing glaciers are not just a problem in Bolivia. Shrinking glaciers are actually a worldwide phenomenon. Great slices of snow and ice disappear every year from the Austrian alps, from Glacier National Park in Montana and the glaciers in the Rockies in Alberta.

The vast majority of the glaciers in the tropics are disappearing because of where they are located. They are smaller to begin with and are located in a region that is more sensitive to climate change.

The article said that changes are already being noted by the people who live in the mountains and already fear for the future of agriculture in the mountains.

The climatic changes being experienced in the Andes have been disastrous throughout the region. Mountain glaciers have been vanishing at a particularly rapid pace.

● (1725)

The article notes that according to the Byrd Polar Research Center at Ohio State University, Andean glaciers have retreated by as much as 25% in the last 30 years.

The article also notes, interestingly enough, that the government officials in Bolivia have not planned for the effects of continued global warming. They are using up the reserves of water but they have not done anything about the infrastructure that will be necessary to ensure those reserves are there.

An hon. member: Just like Alberta.

Ms. Sarmite Bulte: Just like Alberta, Mr. Speaker.

We cannot wait for an action because the costs of an action would far outweigh any immediate economic costs that we would all have to share in Canada.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member of Parliament would listen to her constituents, but I wonder whether she would concede that it might be possible that the constituents are basing their letters on information which is not accurate. I am just asking whether it is possible that this could be.

The reason I say this is that in what we have observed, a lot of people think that Kyoto has to do with the reduction of pollution, whereas in fact it has to do with the decrease of carbon dioxide emissions primarily. Carbon dioxide comprises about .03% of the earth's atmosphere. Consequently, a small increase in the amount of carbon dioxide is a large percentage increase. Therefore the issue can be greatly overstated.

Also, with respect to its effect on global warming, when people think that the science is in on this, that just is not true. There are as many scientists on the other side of the issue as there are those who claim that carbon dioxide is the cause.

Is it possible that a large number of people in her constituency, and mine, who support ratifying Kyoto, if there are some, may possibly be misinformed?

Ms. Sarmite Bulte: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member speaks about carbon dioxide, that is but one of many greenhouse gas emissions.

One thing we also have to remember is that greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, actually retain heat. There is a link between smog and air pollution and the amount of greenhouse gases in the air.

Private Members' Business

Actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions would help Canada achieve its clean air goals. These include reducing emissions of our particulate matter, nitrogen oxide and sulphur oxide, from emitters like thermoelectricity plants, refineries, and pulp and paper mills; reducing traffic congestion in our cities; and reducing emissions from homes and buildings.

Certainly, if anything, this summer with the doubling of the number of days that were over 30°C, the city of Toronto is evidence of problems that we have with the number of greenhouse gases in the air with the CO₂ being there.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[English]

HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS ACT

The House resumed from November 25 consideration of the motion that Bill C-260, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act (fire-safe cigarettes) be now read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Inky Mark (Dauphin—Swan River, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure to rise and speak to Bill C-260, a private member's bill entitled, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act. I thank the hon. member for Scarborough East for bringing this important matter before the House of Commons in the form of a private member's bill.

Let me state from the outset that the bill deals with property damage caused by careless smoking, but more important, it deals with saving lives. In 1992 careless smoking in Canada accounted for 68 fatalities, 385 injuries, \$37 million in damages and 3,199 fires.

On average, Canadians consume approximately 56 billion cigarettes annually and the damage caused by them is substantial. The solution to this may be found in what is known as flammability standards. When I read over the legislation the first thought that came to mind was that the bill was not trying to get Canadians to stop smoking, but that smoking was an addiction that required help. Rather, what the bill says is that if people do smoke, we will make it safer for them as well as for those around them.

Essentially what the bill would do is compel the Minister of Health to report to Parliament and explain why the Hazardous Products Act should or should not be amended to include cigarettes under the category of flammability standards.

Clearly this is an issue that affects the entire country regardless of age or region. Further, I am sure members would no doubt agree that saving lives of smokers and non-smokers alike is of significant public interest to all of us here in the Chamber this afternoon.

One lit cigarette left unattended can have dire consequences and devastating impacts. Dangerous smoking may seem to many to be a non-issue, however, it is a very important one which Canadians from coast to coast must be encouraged to take seriously. Over the years

cigarette fires have caused a large number of fatalities. The terrible tragedies is that most of the deaths could have been prevented if smokers had just taken a few simple precautions.

The thing that Canadians must be aware of is that it can happen to anyone, young or old, at any time. If one is smoking late at night or after a drink, it is only natural that one's reactions tend to be slower and, as such, that is the time when extra care must be taken while smoking.

A smouldering cigarette is the biggest cause of fatal fires, causing one-third of all deaths from fires in the home. These fires are more likely to start during the night and some of the most common places for them to start are sofas, beds and carpets. A cigarette burns at up to 780° centigrade, so I would remind all Canadians to ensure that when they put out a cigarette that it is really put out.

There is good news in all of this because cigarette-related fires can be prevented by taking a few simple precautions. Some of these include: avoid smoking in bed; avoid leaving lit cigarettes unattended; always use a proper ashtray and make sure it cannot be knocked over; take special care when you are tired or you have been drinking; keep matches and lighters away from children; and install and maintain a smoke alarm.

Although these personal safety precautions can be taken, more can and must be done. It is for this reason that I applaud my colleague for bringing this private member's bill forward. Cigarettes should be included in the Hazardous Products Act and flammability standards should be applied to them. It is worth noting that currently in the United States, the Massachusetts legislature has before it a unique opportunity to move Massachusetts out front in its effort to save lives from being lost to cigarettes.

Smoking materials are the leading cause of fatal fires in the United States. Recent statistics from the National Fire Protection Association show that there were 900 fire deaths, 2,500 injuries and \$410 million in property damage caused by smoking materials in one year in the United States.

• (1735)

In Massachusetts in the 1990s there were 178 deaths, 763 fire injuries and \$75 million in property damage caused by such fires. During the same period these fires caused 677 firefighter injuries in Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts legislature has before it the Moakley bill, a state version of the federal legislation first introduced in congress by Joe Moakley in 1979. It would require that all cigarettes sold in Massachusetts have strict fire safety standards. When left burning unattended they would extinguish themselves or burn at temperatures that do not ignite furniture or mattresses, thereby lessening the chance of fire. This is a very good idea and a very worthwhile piece of legislation. Lessons can be learned from the Massachusetts approach and I think that those who are interested in this topic should take time to read over the Moakley bill.

Also New York State recently passed a similar bill unanimously stating that all cigarettes sold in the state would have to meet flammability standards by July 2003. It remains my solemn opinion that this is certainly the right thing to do.

The following facts are statistics from Great Britain. Smoking could be more dangerous than we think. Every three days someone dies because of a cigarette fire. The highest injury rate in smoking material fires is among young people between the ages of 25 and 34. Men are more likely to be killed or injured in cigarette fires; six out of 10 of those killed are men and over half of those injured are men. Six out of ten smokers say cigarettes are one of the top causes of house fires but every year fewer and fewer people are taking steps to prevent these fires. Only four out of ten smokers say that they check their ashtrays before going to bed each night. Nearly half of all households have a smoker living in them. These households are nearly one and a half times more likely to have a fire than non-smoking homes. Despite the dangers of falling asleep or setting bedding on fire, 17% of smokers confessed to lighting up in bed; 18 to 34 year olds are even more likely to smoke in bed.

I think my remarks today will reflect the importance of implementing cigarette safety standards here in Canada. The choices are simple: life or death.

We have a golden opportunity here to support this private member's bill. I hope the Minister of Health and the entire government will take notice of the widespread support for the bill and work hard toward implementing appropriate standards for cigarettes in this country as a result.

Mrs. Karen Redman (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to respond, on behalf of the Minister of Health, to the proposals contained in Bill C-260, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act, which was tabled as a private member's bill by the hon. member for Scarborough East.

Let me start by thanking the hon. member for his hard work and thoughtful efforts in the preparation of the legislation. I am encouraged to see that members of the House are taking action to help protect the health of Canadians.

The purpose of the bill is to help reduce the number of fires ignited by carelessly handled or discarded cigarettes, thus reducing death and injury caused by these fires.

The Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs has reported that from 1995 to 1999 there were at least 14,030 fires where smokers' materials were the source of ignition. These fires caused 356 fatalities, injured 1,615 people and resulted in over \$223 million

Private Members' Business

worth of property damage. We need to address this issue, especially when one considers that innocent bystanders, such as firefighters and children, are very often the victims of these fires.

In fact, our government has had public health strategies in place for years to protect and educate citizens about the dangers associated with fires, including those that are ignited by cigarettes.

For example, the enforcement of the hazardous products (mattresses) regulation by Health Canada ensures that mattresses that are available in Canada meet certain flammability standards, particularly with regard to ignition by cigarettes.

Similarly, through a voluntary collaboration between Health Canada and the upholstered furniture industry, we strive to ensure upholstered furniture is less prone to cigarette ignition.

These measures, coupled with public education campaigns, have decreased the number of deaths associated with cigarette ignited fires in mattresses and in furniture.

However there is merit in finding new ways to prevent such harm to Canadians and their property. Regulating the ignition propensity of cigarettes is a natural next step forward in this campaign to protect the Canadian public against fire.

Our American colleagues are currently pursuing similar action. Proposed legislation on fire safe cigarettes is currently before the United States congress. If adopted, the bill will require that all cigarettes sold in the United States meet a prescribed fire safety standard. In fact, the State of New York has already passed a bill requiring fire safety standards to be established for cigarettes, and by July 1, 2003 all cigarettes sold in New York State will have to meet these standards.

Bill C-260 aims to reduce the number of fire related deaths in Canada, over 20% of which are the result of unattended or carelessly discarded lit cigarettes. As I have indicated, we agree that this matter is worthy of investigation.

However I do have some concern in the way the bill proposes to do this. In particular, the intent of the Hazardous Products Act is to prohibit the sale and importation of hazardous or potentially hazardous products, or to make such products reasonably safe for their intended use by regulating their sale, advertising, importation and directions for use or manufacture.

There is no known way to make cigarettes safe for their intended use. In other words, the only safe cigarette is an unlit cigarette.

Setting a performance standard under the Hazardous Products Act for safe cigarette flammability criteria would contradict the intent of this act and could also detract from the departmental message that tobacco is harmful to health.

Private Members' Business

Tobacco products are far beyond being a public hazard. Smoking is an addiction that kills. Each year tobacco takes its toll on individuals and on Canada's health care system by contributing to more than 45,000 premature deaths. This is five times more than the number of premature deaths caused by murder, alcohol, car accidents and suicides combined. Of these deaths, more than 1,000 were non-smokers who died of the effects of secondhand smoke. That is why our government has taken decisive action in the form of the Tobacco Act.

• (1740)

This brings me to another main concern I have about Bill C-260. The current integrated approach to tobacco control works well in Canada. With direction provided by the Tobacco Act Health Canada's tobacco control program has accomplished a great deal to date in helping to curb and to reduce tobacco use among Canadians. That is why we have become a world leader on tobacco control.

Among the programs' noteworthy accomplishments is the development and the implementation of the federal tobacco control strategy, known as FTCS. This strategy includes \$560 million in funding over five years to control and curb tobacco use in Canada. The FTCS embodies our belief that the most effective way to prevent and reduce tobacco use in Canada is by adopting a comprehensive, integrated and sustained approach carried out in collaboration with all partners and directed at Canadians of all ages.

It paved the way for the development of the ministerial advisory council and opened the door to improve collaboration with the provinces on tobacco related issues. The FTCS includes a long term objective: an exploration of how to mandate changes to tobacco products and reduce hazards to health.

Sections 61 and 62 of the Tobacco Act are consequential amendments to the Hazardous Products Act, specifically inserted to exclude the advertising, sale or importation of a tobacco product from jurisdictions of the Hazardous Products Act. For this reason it is the view of the Government of Canada that regulation of the so-called fire safe cigarettes, or more appropriately referred to as low ignition propensity cigarettes, should fall under the Tobacco Act.

I wish to thank the hon. member for Scarborough East for bringing this bill forward. His private member's bill raises many valid points about the need for measures to protect Canadians from fire hazards caused by carelessly handled or discarded cigarettes and cigars.

The question at hand is how best to proceed. Though I have expressed some concerns about accomplishing this under the Hazardous Products Act I recognize the importance of the objectives he is trying to reach. I would endorse the subject matter being sent to committee for further examination to determine the best way to achieve these worthwhile objectives.

• (1745)

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to enter this debate tonight.

I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Scarborough East for the work he has done to introduce Bill C-260, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act, and for reintroducing his bill when earlier

efforts met the fate of other private members' bills, the political dead end.

Bill C-260 asks the Minister of Health to provide Parliament with reasons why the Hazardous Products Act should not be amended to include cigarettes in the flammability standards. Indeed, there are a lot of similar whys we might wish to ask the minister, such as why the Health Protection Branch has a lot of simple amino acids or minerals that promote health on a restricted list, that is, not to be sold by health food outlets, something simple like chromium picolinate, a simple mineral compound. Chromium is necessary to produce a glucose tolerance factor. Anyone with a blood sugar problem, high or low, should be taking a chromium supplement.

My hon. colleague, the member for Yellowhead, speaking on the bill during the first hour of debate rightly mentioned that the bill does not create a new bureaucracy, nor does it raise taxes for Canadians. We certainly appreciate that on this side of the House. The bill is about the safety of Canadians and making a dangerous product safer. Like my colleagues I hope that the members of the House will do the right thing and support the bill, and not relegate it to the political dustbin like so many other bills that have been brought forward by individual members.

We have heard a lot of distressing statistics related to fires caused by cigarettes. Indeed, in this hour of debate these statistics have been brought forward. These fires bring about deaths, injuries and significant material losses, losses of homes, furniture, forests and wildlife. Cigarette fires are responsible for one out of every five fire fatalities. Cigarette fires kill 100 Canadians every year with another 300 injured. The material damage caused by cigarette fires in 1999 was \$36.5 million.

These are tragic numbers that could be reduced by requiring tobacco companies to make fire safe cigarettes. Why should cigarette paper include chemical additives that keep them burning without active participation, namely puffer power or pucker power? That is a valid question indeed.

In 1997 the Minister of Health said safe tobacco regulations were a priority. The reality is that neither the minister then nor the minister now has done anything to fulfill that commitment. Perhaps the previous minister was preoccupied with the issue of medical marijuana. He is well known for establishing a rock garden and that seemed to occupy a fair bit of his attention.

I would like to digress to this issue because it seems strange to me that the government could neglect a safety issue that Bill C-260 brings up, and yet proceed with so-called medical marijuana or be seen to be promoting marijuana smoking when there are some real safety concerns associated with marijuana smoking.

Private Members' Business

Researchers at the British Lung Foundation determined that smoking three marijuana cigarettes caused the same damage to the lining of the airways as 20 tobacco cigarettes and that tar from marijuana contained 50% more carcinogens than tobacco. I was at the CMA conference a year ago August in Quebec City. It happened to be the time when the then health minister was introducing strong measures to wrestle the tobacco companies to the ground over the use of the words light and mild. At the same time the irony was not lost on the medical doctors present who, during the question period, asked the then minister whether they were to assume the responsibility for the consequences of smoking marijuana, consequences that are not fully understood today or appreciated, particularly for long term use.

Three recent studies published in the *British Medical Journal* linked marijuana use with mental illness. Issues such as the lack of mental acuity raises important questions, such as operating heavy equipment or driving a car. What level is an impaired level for someone using marijuana? A joint today may have 10 to 35 times the TCP levels compared to the same product that some in the room may have experimented with in 1970.

• (1750)

One study found that smoking marijuana every day increased the risk of depression by five times and that smoking marijuana once a week doubled the risk.

A second study of 50,000 Swedish conscripts over 27 years found that marijuana increased the risk of schizophrenia by 30%.

A third study found that the earlier teenagers started smoking marijuana, the greater the risk of schizophrenia.

Tragically, this past week a teenager in British Columbia committed suicide after being found with marijuana in his possession and being grounded by his coach. We of course have sympathy for his parents and family in this tragic case but we must register some incredulity when the Senate committee advocated legalizing marijuana, not decriminalizing it but actually legalizing it, which would include people as young as 16 years of age. I understand that in most jurisdictions even to buy cigarettes people need to be 18 or 19 years old. We might wonder what some of the senators have been smoking.

While it seems that the government is rather unconcerned with safety issues around marijuana, it could and should show that it is concerned with the issue of cigarette safety, which of course is the subject of the debate tonight.

By requiring tobacco companies to make fire safe cigarettes, the government could help to prevent fatalities, injuries and material damage caused by cigarette fires. It could require tobacco companies to make cigarettes with lower paper porosity, smaller circumference, shorter filters, reducing or eliminating paper burn additives, and lower tobacco density. This would be a simple regulation to implement under the Hazardous Products Act, by including cigarettes in its flammability standards.

If the government does not want to take this simple step, then Bill C-260 should be passed to compel the Minister of Health to explain to Parliament why.

It is indeed a valid suggestion and we certainly support the intent of the bill. We congratulate the hon. member for Scarborough East for bringing the bill forward.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, once again I cannot resist the temptation to speak.

When I saw this topic, fire safe cigarettes, it reminded me of the years when I was a truck driver. One individual practised the ingestion of nicotine without fire, and his nickname was Snuffy. I will never forget Snuffy because he happened to dispose of his habit in many unsavoury ways. I remember getting into a truck one day and the side of the window was blotched and then gravity had pulled it down. I realized that he had been in the truck and did not realize that the window was in fact closed. On another occasion, I was wheeling one of those big 20 inch tires down to the shop and all of a sudden my hand felt a little different. I realized that I had driven over some. That was the first thing that came to my mind when I saw this non-fire cigarette or nicotine usage.

However, on the serious side, I had an uncle who died very tragically in a fire. When we think of fires being caused by smokers, it is usually innocent people who are affected, for example family members, often children, or other neighbours in an apartment building. Their property is lost and sometimes their lives are lost.

I have a friend who works in the nursing section of a burn unit. Nothing is sadder than to see people who have been seriously burned. It is a tremendously challenging situation.

We really cannot be against this bill because it would increase the safety of people while they are using a hazardous product. In fact, we know that cigarettes are very hazardous. It is interesting when we think of the statistics of how people die. In this case, we are told in our briefing notes that about 100 people die in Canada every year because of fires started by careless smoking.

We should also add to that list the 100 people per day in Canada who lose their lives because of smoke related illnesses. That is a statistic that totally boggles the mind. We have in excess of 30,000 people per year in Canada who lose their lives due to lung cancer and heart disease precipitated by the use of tobacco.

For us to continue to even tolerate the use of this substance in our society really boggles the mind. However, being a person who believes in individual freedom and individual choices, I guess I would continue to defend the right of a person to take a bunch of weeds, wrap them up in a piece of paper, light a match to it and suck on it. If they really want to do that, I would defend their right to do it. I have had friends tell me that I cannot take that away from them because they really enjoy it. Well, so be it.

At any rate, I would like to simply say that it is my intention to support the bill as well because it at least goes in the right direction to reduce one of the hazards associated with cigarette smoking.

• (1755)

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Adjournment Debate

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Deputy Speaker: I wonder if I might ask for the cooperation of a member who might want to make the suggestion that we see the clock at 6:30 p.m. so we could proceed.

Mr. Ken Epp: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to ask that you request that we see the clock as 6:30 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

CHINESE CANADIANS

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kuan is a constituent in East Vancouver who is 95 years old. On October 28 of this year he stood up very slowly and, using a thick black brush, he wrote out in calligraphy, "The government has no need to drag its feet in repaying the head tax".

Mr. Kuan is the only surviving payer of the head tax in Vancouver and he is one of three surviving head tax payers in all of Canada. He could not attend the rally in Ottawa that was held the next day, October 29, because he was too elderly to visit the city, but he did say in an interview, "Why doesn't the government understand?" He said that he wanted an apology but that an apology alone would not do. He wants the government to both apologize and pay compensation, and he wants the compensation to be over \$500. He wants it to be over \$500 because \$500 is what he paid in 1923 in coming to this country. It was the equivalent of two years' wages for him to work in Canada. He went into debt. He had to borrow and he worked very hard to repay that \$500.

The head tax of \$50 was introduced in 1885 with the passage of the Chinese immigration act. The tax was increased to \$100 in 1900 and to \$500 in 1903. It was a tax imposed only on Chinese immigrants. It was the equivalent of two years' wages for a Chinese Canadian worker at that time. In 1923, the Chinese exclusion act was also passed. The purpose of that act was to prohibit Chinese migration to Canada. Between 1923 and 1947, when the act was repealed, Canada allowed only seven Chinese people into the country. As a result of the head tax, the government at the time collected approximately \$23 million from about 81,000 Chinese immigrants. The present value of that today would be over \$1 billion.

The policies at the time were directed at members of one group, were clearly discriminatory and were clearly intended to make entry into Canada difficult if not impossible. The racial discrimination embedded in these statutes was actively practised and its effect on individuals, families and on the Chinese Canadian community has been profound and enduring.

In 1992, the B.C. legislature passed a unanimous resolution calling on the federal government to provide redress for the Chinese exclusion act and the head tax. As I have mentioned, on October 29 there was a demonstration here in Ottawa where I and the leader of the New Democratic Party, and indeed the former member of Parliament for Vancouver East, Margaret Mitchell, who first raised this in the House in 1982, were all in attendance.

I want to ask the government again today why it has not responded to this issue. When I have raised the question in the House and when I have presented petitions we have heard that the government policy with respect to redress does not include financial compensation, yet that did happen in terms of redress for the Japanese Canadian community.

Today I want to say loud and clear to the government that its response to this very important issue in terms of the discrimination that was practised has been completely unsatisfactory. I would ask it to consider again the need to provide an apology and redress to Chinese Canadians.

• (1800)

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada understands the strong feelings underlying the request put forth by the Chinese-Canadian community for restitution for historical incidents.

In the past, Canada enforced some immigration practices that were at odds with our shared commitment to human justice. As Canadians we wish that those episodes had never occurred, but sadly history cannot be rewritten.

As the Hon. Sheila Finestone stated in the House of Commons in 1994, "We honour the contribution of all those communities whose members, often in the face of hardship, persevered in the building of our land".

We all share in the responsibility to learn from the past. The Government of Canada believes that our common obligation lies in preventing such situations from ever occurring again.

Canada in 2002 is a very different Canada. Tremendous steps have been taken toward making our country a better place. The government has established constitutional guarantees and has taken other effective measures to prevent any repetition of the kind of experiences encountered by the early immigrants to the country. These include: the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960, the Canadian Human Rights Act in 1977, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, passed in 1988.

Adjournment Debate

The Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 was repealed in 1947. In the same way the Government of Canada recognizes the importance of understanding and presenting our complete history in a way that is inclusive of all Canadians.

We have worked and will continue working with Chinese Canadians and other ethnocultural communities to document their history and experiences through a wide range of commemorative projects, including films, books and exhibits that enable them to tell their stories to other Canadians.

While commemoration of our past is an important element in defining who we are as Canadians, government policy on restitution for historical incidents was announced in the House of Commons on December 14, 1994.

A core element of that policy is that federal resources will be used to create a more equitable society now and a better future for generations to come. Federal commitment in this area has been demonstrated by establishment of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in October 1996. This organization is devoted to fostering racial harmony, promoting cross-cultural understanding and helping eliminate racism through national leadership, public education and research in these areas.

Our efforts must be directed to moving forward in areas where abuse and discrimination can be prevented. To this end, the government will continue to take concrete measures to strengthen the fabric of Canadian life by combating racism, prejudice and discrimination.

We share the vision of a Canada where the diverse backgrounds of citizens are recognized and appreciated. We are unified in the pursuit of a just and compassionate society.

• (1805)

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, the government representative has said that history cannot be rewritten, but the fact is that there is nothing to prevent the government from issuing an official apology to the Chinese Canadian community. There is nothing to prevent the government from reviewing and considering the issue of compensation. There is nothing to prevent the government from looking at, for example, a community-driven anti-racism fund or an educational trust that would provide some level of redress for this horrible injustice that was done.

I want to pay tribute to people like Sid Tan and Victor Wong from the Vancouver Association of Chinese-Canadians and the Chinese Canadian National Council. They have continued to advocate to bring this issue forward. I know they believe in it, and they will continue to work until the government not just recognizes but is willing to take some action to ensure that this issue is properly resolved and dealt with.

I introduced a motion in March 2001 and again I called on the government to issue an official apology, to look at the issue of compensation, and I would ask the minister's representative, what is preventing the government from taking that course of action?

Ms. Sarmite Bulte: Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, we believe the best approach is to continue to put our efforts and resources toward building, in close collaboration with communities, a more equitable society today and a better future for generations to come.

Immigrants and refugees have come to Canada from every part of the world, often bringing with them little more than hope and dreams of building a better life for themselves and for their children. History records that many experienced hardships, yet they endured, settling the land, building communities and forging links across the vast land.

Respecting our history involves recognizing the fact that people from every corner of the globe have contributed to building Canada.

HEALTH

Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC): Mr. Speaker, last week I asked a question of the Minister of Health regarding the hepatitis C compensation package. The reason I raised the question in the House is that it is about five years after the Krever inquiry, where Krever said that all victims of hepatitis C should be compensated.

The government made a unilateral deliberate decision only to compensate those victims between 1986 and 1990. We on this side of the House, and in fact some members on that side of the House, felt that was wrong at the time.

That question came forward from me last week because in that five year interval between the Krever inquiry and today, the RCMP has laid criminal charges against the Red Cross, Health Canada officials and officials in the corporate sector.

We do not know what the outcome of those trials will be. In fact they could be proven innocent. We are not trying to prejudge what might happen in a criminal trial, but we do know this as we stand here tonight.

There is a very casual and sometimes cavalier attitude by some of the officials. At the very minimum it is sloppy behaviour by those people. We know that because of that sloppy behaviour, people died and people got sick. We know that because of that type of behaviour by officials who have been charged, lives were lost and families have been destroyed.

The question again is, why would the Government of Canada compensate some of those victims but not others? I pointed out to the minister that day in the House that out of the compensation fund of approximately \$1.2 billion—the minister says \$1.4 billion, so let us take the minister's word, \$1.4 billion—the first group of people to be paid were the lawyers. They received \$55 million before any of the victims received a nickel.

As we stand here, only 2,000 people have been approved for compensation in that artificial timeframe of 1986 to 1990. For months on end, the government, and health ministers going back to 1997, claimed in the House that it could not afford to pay those people outside that artificial date the government had set up arbitrarily.

Now we know there are only 5,000 people outside that timeframe who should be compensated. The fact of the matter is that the interest on that fund is sustaining the fund. The government has not drawn down enough from that fund to jeopardize it.

There is a very strong and compelling argument why all victims should be compensated.

Adjournment Debate

I challenge the minister to bring the actuaries to a committee of the whole and report to the House what that fund is capable of doing.

Our belief is it can sustain itself over that period of time and all victims can in fact be compensated as they should be.

• (1810)

Ms. Sarmite Bulte (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has been much discussion about the rationale used by Canada's government in deciding on a collaborative approach to hepatitis C assistance. It would be useful to review some of the events of the past to better understand why those years were so significant.

Although an antibody test for hepatitis C was not developed and put into use in the Canadian blood system until 1990, surrogate testing was used in the United States from 1986 to 1990. Since implementation of a specific blood test for hepatitis C in 1990, the Canadian blood system is considered as safe as it can be.

The 1986 to 1990 timeframe is significant and was the rationale for Canada's government to use in offering assistance.

In total, the government has committed approximately \$1.4 billion for compensating and assisting people infected with hepatitis C through the blood system. Of this amount, the government already paid \$875 million to fulfill our financial obligations to victims under the 1986 to 1990 hepatitis C settlement agreement.

Through this agreement, which was approved by the courts, we have managed to save probably 10 years of litigation. An independent administrator has been named by the courts, a claims process has been put in place, and cheques to claimants are being issued.

As of March 2002, the latest date that figures were reported, the administrator has received and reviewed more than 7,300 claims and more than 5,400 individuals have received over \$220 million in compensation benefits. While as of June 2002 there was approximately \$900 million in the fund, this is not a surplus. These funds belong to the beneficiaries of the trust. Payment out of this fund may continue for up to 70 years.

In addition, for individuals infected before 1986 and after 1990, the federal government has committed approximately \$525 million to provide care. Care is what people need when they are sick.

We have consulted with people across Canada. We have listened and responded by dedicating \$15 million for hepatitis C prevention and research, and for establishing community based support programs. We are also spending \$125 million for enhanced safety and surveillance of the blood supply.

Another important component of our contribution is an agreement with the provinces and territories to pay half the costs, up to \$50 million, to identify and notify all individuals who have been infected with hepatitis C through the blood system so that they can receive the care and treatment that they need. Many of these people are not aware that they are infected and they are not being treated.

As well, we have offered a \$300 million transfer to the provinces and territories, of which over \$100 million has been transferred to date. This money will ensure that all those who contracted hepatitis C through the blood system will have reasonable and ongoing access to the medical goods and services needed for appropriate treatment and will not incur out of pocket expenses for appropriate hepatitis C care, such as drugs, immunization and nursing care.

Our plan is sensible. It provides the care that people living with hepatitis C need, and it is compassionate.

• (1815)

Mr. Greg Thompson: Mr. Speaker, the plan is neither sensible nor compassionate. The parliamentary secretary has thrown out so many numbers and figures tonight that her own team of lawyers would have trouble understanding exactly what the government has done.

This we know. There is almost \$1 billion left in the fund. Many of those have been compensated with lump sums. Many of the victims have actually died. The fact of the matter is there is more than enough money in that fund to compensate all victims, regardless of when they became infected. That is the bottom line. Why the government would not recognize that is beyond my comprehension.

I would like the government to simply go back to the actuaries, bring them to a committee of the House and step through those numbers. They are telling me that the fund would sustain itself if the people who were left outside that package were brought in.

If the government wants to be compassionate and fair, everyone should be included in that package. It should not have excluded that group of people. It is not fair. It is not compassionate.

Ms. Sarmite Bulte: Mr. Speaker, I repeat that the \$900 million in the fund is not a surplus. These funds will be used to make payments over time, a period of up to 70 years. People are beneficiaries of that trust fund. It is a trust fund. It is not excess funds that are available.

One of the things the hon. member should know is that the settlement agreement which was arrived at is an arm's length agreement. It is operated by an independent, court appointed administrator who is responsible for those claims. As I said, as of March 2002, the latest date for which we have figures, approximately \$220 million had been paid to claimants.

We have consulted with Canadians. People want and need the care. That is why we have put in place a compassionate plan that provides the care that people living with hepatitis C actually need.

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.17 p.m.)

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