



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 138 • NUMBER 065 • 2nd SESSION • 37th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, February 21, 2003

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 21, 2003

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

•(1005)
[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 81(14), to inform the House that the motion to be considered on Monday during consideration of supply is as follows:

That this House consider the reports of the Auditor General presented in 2002.

[Translation]

This motion, standing in the name of the hon. member for South Shore, is not votable. Copies of the motion are available at the table.

[English]

BILL C-23 AND BILL C-13

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before moving to the first item, there was an agreement made yesterday, and I am still operating under the assumption that it was made, that after the first speaker has spoken to Bill C-23 that the debate would be adjourned and we would move to Bill C-13. That was an all party agreement that was made yesterday and it is on the strength of that, that we are not calling Bill C-13 first. I understand some members may have a different opinion but if that is the case it would have to be negotiated outside.

For the record, we are moving on Bill C-23 provided that after the first speaker the debate be deemed adjourned and we move to Bill C-13.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the House leader is quite right. There was an arrangement among the House leaders yesterday but it has come to the attention of all parties that Bill C-13 is important to a number of members who are engaged in other parliamentary business. There are some discussions going on that will continue to abide by the spirit of that, and so I would ask that the question be deferred until the House leaders have an opportunity to discuss the minor amendment to that arrangement.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair is certainly not being asked to negotiate from the chair. However let me take things in the order they were presented to the chair.

The Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons rose and asked for consent as to whether there was agreement among the parties to deal with Bill C-23 with one spokesperson from the government and then move to another bill, which I believe is Bill C-13.

If understand it, the spirit of this would probably be to allow some opposition critics to retain their 40 minute slots when Bill C-23 is brought forward. However I am not here to negotiate. I am simply here to make the request for the unanimous consent.

•(1010)

Mrs. Carol Skelton: Mr. Speaker, I understand there were supposed to be two Liberal speakers this morning.

The Deputy Speaker: Let me simply put the proposition on the floor as I was requested to do by the Minister of State.

Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

SEX OFFENDER INFORMATION REGISTRATION ACT

Hon. Andy Mitchell (for the Solicitor General of Canada) moved that Bill C-23, An Act respecting the registration of information relating to sex offenders, to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Marlene Jennings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-23, a government bill that will create a new federal act respecting the registration of information relating to sex offenders and that will make crucial amendments to the Criminal Code.

[English]

Before speaking to the specific dispositions of Bill C-23, I would like to give a history lesson for the members of the House and for Canadians who are watching. I would like to take time to briefly describe the continuum of actions and measures that the government has undertaken since 1993 to better protect Canadians from sexual abusers.

Government Orders

Since forming the government in 1993, we have taken a series of measures to better protect Canadians from sexual abusers and we will continue to do so, as Bill C-23 is clear evidence.

As early as 1994 we conducted extensive consultations with individuals and organizations with special responsibility for the care and protection of our children. These included children's aid societies, school boards, big brothers and big sisters organizations, Volunteer Canada, our police services across the country, victims and many other groups. Those who were consulted asked for as a first priority, and we delivered, a made in Canada solution that targets abusers who seek positions of trust with children and other vulnerable groups.

The national screening system was first launched in the summer of 1994 by the Ministers of Justice, Health and the Solicitor General of Canada. This was followed up in August 2001 when the government passed legislation to give police access to criminal records of sex offenders who had received a pardon in order to undertake screening purposes.

For screening, the Canadian Police Information Centre, or CPIC, provides criminal records at no cost to local police forces who help child assisting agencies conduct criminal record background checks. Thousands of such screenings are carried out every year on behalf of volunteer organizations across the country.

It is worth noting that many other efforts have been undertaken by the Department of the Solicitor General and Justice Canada to protect Canadians from sex offenders. For instance, in 1997 we proclaimed Bill C-55, which strengthened the dangerous offender rules in part 24 of the Criminal Code, and also created a new sentencing provision called long term offender.

As a result of these changes, prosecutors in almost every province of this country are aggressively pursuing dangerous offender and long term offender options. In fact, the average number of successful dangerous offender applications per year has doubled since reforms were implemented in 1997.

As for the long term provisions contained in the 1997 legislative package, that targeted individuals who were clearly a threat but would not meet the threshold as a dangerous offender. This new designation recognizes that released sex offenders who receive supervision and treatment in the community experience dramatically low recidivism rates than an offender who was released at warrant expiry without conditions requiring supervision or treatment.

In addition to their custodial sentence, long term offenders can be sentenced up to 10 years of community supervision and conditions. As of July 2002, more than 150 long term supervision orders have been imposed by the courts. I think that goes a long way to showing how the government has taken seriously our responsibility and commitment to protecting our Canadians against sexual abusers and offenders.

In fact, in 1996 the national flagging system was developed in co-operation with our provincial partners, so that prosecutors are now able to identify offenders who should be considered for dangerous offender status in the future.

•(1015)

Protection orders under section 810 of the Criminal Code were also introduced to allow the court, on application by the crown, to order special conditions to restrict the movement and conduct of sexual offenders after their release and even when they are no longer under sentence.

With those measures we have imposed tougher controls on sex offenders. All of those actions underscore the commitment of the Solicitor General and the Government of Canada to ensure the protection, the safety and the security of our children and Canadians overall.

I hasten to add and to emphasize that all those measures have been developed in collaboration and with the support of our provincial and territorial partners. This is probably one of the areas where this government has made great strides in working in partnership and in collaboration with our provincial and territorial counterparts. It is in this same co-operative manner that consensus has been achieved among all jurisdictions on Bill C-23, the bill we have before us today, which will create a sex offender registry.

Finally, the former solicitor general, the hon. member for Cardigan, in the House in March 2001, stated emphatically that he supported a motion to establish a national sex offender registry, as did all other members present. They could do so because Canada already possessed one of the most effective criminal history registries in the world in our Canadian Police Information Centre, or CPIC.

•(1020)

[*Translation*]

I think that I have shown how our government's commitment to better protecting Canadians from sexual offenders has been translated so far into concrete action.

Now let us go back to the legislation at hand, Bill C-23, an act respecting the registration of information relating to sex offenders. As I was saying earlier, this bill will create a new federal act respecting the registration of information relating to sex offenders and will make crucial amendments to the Criminal Code. Its provisions will allow for the creation of a national sex offender registry for the use of all our provincial and territorial partners. As many members know, premiers had unanimously requested that the federal government help them establish an integrated registration system that their respective administrations will be able to use.

The existence of such a system would give more weight to their individual efforts and would guarantee a national approach. I must point out that the national sex offender registry that I am talking about here is in fact made up of three elements.

First, there is the legislation before us today. It had to emanate from the Parliament of Canada for the system to be truly national in scope and to be the same across the country. Then, there is a national database, which will be managed by the RCMP on behalf of all police forces in Canada.

Finally, there will be mechanisms for administration and use of the registry system, which will be the responsibility of the various police forces in their respective areas of responsibility.

Government Orders

What is of primary importance is that all these elements combined create a new and extremely useful tool for police investigation of sexual offences when the perpetrator is unknown. The police will be able to consult the registry quickly, screen it according to specific criteria, and locate possible suspects in the vicinity of the scene of the crime

I emphasize the rapidity of the process, because that is the very essence of the system. Police forces are aware that there is very little time for action when a child has been abducted. When a child has been abducted, and is going to be sexually assaulted and killed, the tragic outcome usually occurs within hours of the abduction.

Unless police forces can intervene promptly, this outcome cannot be prevented, even if the crime is eventually solved. This bill, the Sex Offender Information Registration Act, will make it possible for the police to determine very quickly whether any individuals convicted of sex crimes reside in the vicinity of the crime scene, identify them, and decide without delay whether they need to be investigated further or dropped from the list of suspects.

●(1025)

This is, briefly, how the system works. Persons found guilty of a sex crime as designated by the Criminal Code will be required to register with the police within 15 days after the court order is made, or after their release if they were in custody.

They will be required to remain in the registry for a minimum of 10 years, often for their entire lives. This means they will be required to report any change of address or name within 15 days, and to present themselves in person once a year to renew or update their information in the registry. Otherwise they will, under this bill, be found guilty of a criminal offence punishable by up to two years in prison in the case of the second offence, and fines of up to \$10,000.

When offenders first report to the police registry office, as required by this new bill, they will be required to provide certain information, such as their address, telephone number, date of birth and employer's name, as well as any distinguishing marks or tattoos. On subsequent visits they will be required to update all registry information concerning them.

The government is aware that this new tool, if it can save lives, is also a massive intrusion into the private life of those who have to be registered. The majority of them will be registered in the database long after having serving their sentence and most of them—according to our estimates, 65% after 30 years—will not be found guilty of a similar offence. Those who really try to get their lives back on track do not need to have their efforts annihilated by the stigma of being a registered sex offender.

That is why the legislation does not give the public access to the database. The information can only be consulted by authorized persons for specific purposes. There will be criminal sanctions for the misuse of the information. Public protection, which is the main purpose of the bill, will be ensured through the use of this information by the police.

On the issue of who should have access to the database, I would like to go over what other jurisdictions have experienced. In jurisdictions where the public had access to a similar database, there

has been abuse and misuse of the information, at times the public was alarmed by mistake and some people even acted like vigilantes.

In more than 20 U.S. states where the public has access to this information, the courts have ordered the database to be closed and protection measures to be taken to avoid any abuse. In some cases, they ordered the creation of commissions or tribunals to assess each and every individual record to determine if the registration of the offender was justified.

The federal government and its partners, namely the provinces and territories, have sought to avoid problems by implementing a judicial process, providing procedural guarantees and clearly limiting the number of authorized users and uses.

●(1030)

The guarantees contained in Bill C-23 were carefully designed in partnership with the provinces and territories. They will allow for the establishment of a system that is fair and just, while still efficient and effective. The guarantees will prevent any court challenges from weakening or shutting down the system because of unwarranted repercussions on the lives of those registered, including their rights and freedoms, all without compromising the effectiveness of the registry.

Persons whose sentences would normally include registration in the database will have the opportunity to defend themselves in court to prevent their registration. After the crown attorney requests it, defendants may argue that the registration of information pertaining to them would have, and I quote, a “grossly disproportionate” impact on them.

Furthermore, defendants will have the opportunity to make the same argument after being registered for five years, then again after 10 years and 20 years of being registered. They will have the opportunity to make an application for termination of the order that requires them to provide information, once they have been rehabilitated under the Criminal Records Act.

These guarantees will not only protect the rights of persons from being registered when they should not be, but they will also prevent the courts from using the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as a mechanism to shut down the whole registration system.

We already heard the hon. members of the opposition express their views in the various debates. They believe there should be no limits regarding who should be included in the system. In fact, they seem to feel that the legislation should apply retroactively to all criminals who have been convicted of a sexual offence, regardless of what they have done with their lives since then.

However, this goes against not only the charter, but also the most basic principles of justice that form the foundation of our democratic, social and parliamentary systems.

Government Orders

For previously convicted offenders who continue to pose a threat to the community, there are effective measures that this government has put in place over the past ten years, as I mentioned at the beginning of my comments.

A mechanism can be triggered to inform neighbours or the community of the presence of a high risk offender in their neighbourhood. The national screening system can be used for hiring persons who are to work in a position of trust with children.

The orders seeking to ensure the protection of the public under section 810 of the Criminal Code can be used to subject this type of offenders to certain conditions, including supervision.

Moreover, any sex offender who has already been convicted of a sexual offence will be treated like a repeat offender under the provisions of the bill, and he will be required to provide information for the rest of his life.

These are effective measures and will ensure that, in high risk cases, resources are not uselessly wasted on trying to locate former offenders who have long left the area where they were convicted or released. And these measures do not increase the risk that the registry will be rendered inoperative by the courts on charter related grounds.

While opposition members may be prepared to take this huge risk, our government and our provincial and territorial counterparts are not.

Allow me to quote an excerpt from the letter sent by one of our provincial counterparts, that is Alberta's Minister of Justice, the hon. David Hancock. Following the first reading of Bill C-23, he wrote the following:

The sex offender registry will be very useful to police in its efforts to try to apprehend people who commit criminal offences. The concerted efforts of federal, provincial and territorial ministers, deputy ministers and senior public officials are a very good example of all that can be accomplished when we cooperate.

This view is essentially shared by all our partners in this endeavour. Following a series of discussions during meetings of federal, provincial and territorial ministers, it was agreed, in Moncton, in February of last year, that we would do our best to reach a consensus on the establishment of a sex offender registry by the end of the year 2002.

Unfortunately, we did not succeed in doing that, but this is still early 2003 and we are close to succeeding in doing what all our counterparts wanted.

Over the 10 months that followed, we were able to reach a consensus, to develop and set up the necessary database, which will be operated by the RCMP, and to draft and introduce the legislation that is before us today, as a result of the consensus reached with our provincial and territorial counterparts. This is, in my opinion, an excellent example of the effectiveness our confederation is capable of.

Of course, not all jurisdictions achieved their individual objectives. However, their objectives would often have been incompatible, and even unacceptable, in the eyes of some of our partners.

So, in the interest of a genuine concerted effort, there had to be some give and take on both sides to come up with a model that would meet with general consent and, thus, be feasible.

This is the model before us today: a system that will be national in scope and in terms of its support, flexible enough to accommodate various applications within common parameters, and efficient when it comes to helping police and protecting children and, in fact, all Canadians.

• (1040)

We are moving quickly to put in place this legislative framework which already has the support of governments in all jurisdictions of Canada. I am convinced that the Solicitor General of Canada, the solicitors general and justice ministers at the provincial level, as well as all senior officials agree. This measure will have the support of government in all jurisdictions of Canada.

I am convinced that the hon. members of this House and the other place will also support Bill C-23, and I hope quickly pass it at all stages so that it can take effect as soon as possible.

To conclude, this bill is the result of a concerted effort by the federal government and all provincial and territorial governments, at all levels, be it that of ministers, deputy ministers, or senior officials, as well as police forces and communities. They have told this government, "We need a national registry including information on sexual offenders that will be made available to our police forces and managed by them to assist them in their work".

The government has taken very seriously its commitment and its responsibility and, as I said, we have worked with the other stakeholders. Bill C-23 is the result.

I can tell all the hon. members here that all levels of government want this bill to get through all the stages in both Houses and receive royal assent as quickly as possible so that the police will be able to use this tool as soon as possible.

I am asking for your cooperation and your support on behalf of the Solicitor General, the federal government and all the provincial and territorial governments. We have to put our shoulder to the wheel and work hard to ensure that this bill is passed as soon as possible. I assure you of my full cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me. I would be pleased to answer, to assist you and to discuss this with you. In conclusion, I urge you to vote in favour of this bill.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Paul Szabo: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As was discussed by the House leader this morning, there are discussions going on with the parties with regard to the disposition of the balance of the day. I am of the understanding that the intent is that one more speaker would rise, myself, and my being the second speaker would not prejudice the fact that the Canadian Alliance and the Bloc Québécois would continue to enjoy, with consent, their full 40 minute allotment as they normally would as the second and third to speak. My speaking would be to provide some input to the bill, only until question period. That is my understanding. If there are others who have some questions on this, it would be a good time to rise otherwise I will rise for debate.

• (1045)

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair needs some clarification. Is the hon. member for Mississauga South asking for consent on the matter that he raised?

Mr. Paul Szabo: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Mississauga South have the consent of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my thanks to you and all colleagues in the House for assisting with the disposition of important business of the House.

Presently we are dealing with Bill C-23, an act respecting the registration of information relating to sex offenders, to amend the Criminal Code and to make consequential amendments to other acts. It is a very important bill: "The enactment requires that certain information about sex offenders be registered in a national database. This database is part of the automated criminal conviction records retrieval system maintained by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It is intended to serve as a tool that will help police investigate crimes of a sexual nature by providing them with access to current and reliable information related to sex offenders".

The enactment also amends the Criminal Code "to enable the Crown to apply for an order to require an offender who is convicted of, or found not criminally responsible on account of a mental disorder for, certain offences to report regularly to the designated registration centre and provide information". It also creates a new Criminal Code offence "for failure to comply with the order, as well as an offence for providing false or misleading information. The enactment regulates access to, and the use and disclosure of the information contained in the database and includes an offence for contravention of those provisions".

We have spent time in this place discussing important matters related to children. Certainly Bill C-20, with regard to child pornography, and this bill are related in many regards. As hon. members know, this is an extremely important bill. It is a bill that deserves our utmost attention, as it deals with improving the safety of our children and other vulnerable Canadians. I am confident that this is an objective shared by all parliamentarians, both here and in the other place. Moreover, the bill responds to the resolution passed by the premiers in August 2001 calling for a national sex offender registration system.

Further, the minister told the House that his department would begin evaluating potential improvements to the CPIC system in the specific area of sex offences. CPIC is the Canadian Police Information Centre. That database includes substantial information which the law enforcement authorities use for assistance in the conduct of their work. CPIC did not routinely contain up to date information on sex offences. It is one of the reasons why this bill is being brought forward.

In a very short time, the minister fulfilled his commitment when he announced to provincial and territorial ministers on September 11, 2001, that a new database within the CPIC system was to be created under the sex offender category. Further, he announced that this database would be "address searchable", which is one of those Internet terms, and we are getting there, I think. It could be up and running within a year, funded completely by the federal government. I am pleased to note that the development of this new sex offender database has been completed and is now ready for implementation upon proclamation of Bill C-23.

At the same time, it was recognized that to create a truly national system, national legislation would be required. I know that many hon. members have risen in their places time and time again to bring a focus to the need for this national registry. There have been disagreements with regard to whether CPIC, even with the new category added, would be adequate to support law enforcement agencies in the discharge of their duties as they relate to sexual offenders and the offences by those persons.

• (1050)

In February 2002 all federal, provincial and territorial ministers agreed to work together to develop a legislative package that all could support. Ten months later, we have that legislation before us and a national consensus that it should be enacted as quickly as possible. I am confident that we will see that representatives from all parties and from all walks of life in this country will be supportive of the establishment of this registry.

During the 10 months of discussion, the Solicitor General and justice officials of all jurisdictions have worked together to fully explore the whole aspect of the registry, to determine what works and what does not and to agree on what is and what is not feasible. It is one thing to have a registry. It is quite another to have a registry that works and helps our law enforcement officers and agencies to do the job they are supposed to do on behalf of all Canadians.

If we are going to have a registry, we want to be certain that it will work and that it is efficient and affordable. We all know that Canadians expect us to be open, transparent, accountable and fiscally responsible with regard to legislation and actions taken on behalf of Canadians.

S. O. 31

We want to ensure that it respects and guarantees the protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that it is not in breach of federal or provincial privacy laws. I do not know how many times we have bumped our heads up against privacy issues in balancing the rights of individuals to privacy against the issue of the rights of others. We certainly saw that in Bill C-20 dealing with child pornography when we were talking about the rights of someone to possess child pornography on the basis that it was an expression of artistic merit, as opposed to the rights of the common good of Canadians and to societal values that the existence of child pornography means that children must have been abused. We can see this is a very important determination: to respect the provisions of the charter and at the same time ensure that the rights and the freedoms provided by the charter are not going to be violated in a manner which would not be consistent with Canadian values.

We are going to have this registry and we want one that the local police agencies also can administer in a consistent manner while at the same time allowing enough flexibility to respect diverse values and resources among provinces. Most important, we want an approach that will help police solve crimes and will not drive convicted sex offenders underground with changed identities and no hope for rehabilitation.

This has to be a very difficult challenge for any country to deal with. To the extent that we make laws, that we close in, tighten the ring and close the net, it makes people flee, it makes people go underground. It takes them out of an environment in which they can get the help and the rehabilitation they need. This is extremely important.

The sex offender information registration act would establish, as I have said, a national sex offender database containing information on convicted sex offenders. This database would be maintained by the RCMP and would contain information provided by local police across the country. This would be an integrated database, partnering with law enforcement right across the country. It makes a great deal of sense that it should operate in this way.

It is intended to assist police in investigating crimes of a sexual nature by providing them with rapid access to current vital information about convicted sex offenders. The new national registration system would enhance public protection by helping police identify possible suspects known to reside near an offence site and it would enable an officer to instantly obtain a list of sex offenders who are registered and living in the area where the offence occurred. It is no guarantee and there is certainly no certitude that a sex offender who may be in the proximity of another crime is responsible for that crime, but the evidence is clear, particularly as it regards recidivism on sex offences, that there is a much higher likelihood of past offenders to repeat. This would be another tool to complement the tools that our law enforcement agencies already have.

•(1055)

Re-registration would be required annually and within 15 days should convicted offenders change their address. Offenders would be required to provide the local police current information, such as addresses and telephone numbers, names and aliases, as well as identifying marks and tattoos. Penalties of up to two years in prison

and \$10,000 in fines would be levied for failing to comply with the registration order and for not giving truthful information.

Other notable features include the sentencing judge or Crown application imposing an order unless the offender is able to demonstrate that it would be grossly disproportionate to the interests of the administration of justice. There would be no public access and strict privacy controls would be placed on day-to-day access, even by law enforcement personnel.

Provinces would have specific regulatory abilities to tailor operational aspects to their particular needs. Again, the partnering and ensuring that all agencies, at all levels, have the tools that they need to do their job the best that they can.

Offenders would be required to register for periods of 10 years, 20 years or life, depending on the maximum penalty of the predicate offences for which they were originally convicted.

All registrants would be able to apply for a judicial review of their status at the halfway mark of the registration. Offenders who receive a pardon would be able to apply for judicial review of their registry status, based on the grossly disproportionate test. Young offenders would not be subject to a registration order unless sentenced as an adult, consistent with the current and pending young offenders legislation.

A number of prescribed non-sexual offence convictions would also be subject to a Crown application for a registration order where it can prove an intent to commit an offence.

In closing, no measure within the criminal justice system exists in a vacuum, sex offender registries included. The task of preventing recidivism by sex offenders needs an effective, multi-faceted approach. Bill C-23 provides us with an instrument which we can work with to ensure that happens.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's commitment to sustainable development in this week's budget is something both sides of the House should applaud.

To begin with, the budget provides \$2 billion to help implement our climate change plan. Future generations will benefit from this knowledge that we are making these commitments in order to pass on to them an environmental legacy that is sustainable and healthy, and provides a better foundation upon which they themselves can build.

The budget also provides another \$1 billion for environmental priorities, such as water and waste water systems on first nations reserves, the cleanup of federal contaminated sites, improving air quality, assessing and managing toxic substances, protecting species at risk, and creating 10 new national parks and 5 new national marine conservation areas.

But what is most significant is that all of these commitments and others have been done and presented within a balanced budget. Not only are we providing a sustainable and healthy environment for—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary East.

* * *

VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, thousands of Canadians across this country contribute silently to the well-being of their community. Our country is blessed with these individuals. I am lucky to have these dedicated Canadians living in my riding of Calgary East.

Today, I would like to acknowledge their contributions to strengthening the communities in my riding.

I wish to congratulate and thank the presidents, past presidents, executives, past executives, board members, past board members and thousands of volunteers of the following community associations: Abbeydale, Albert Park, Applewood, Dover/West Dover, Erinwoods, Forest Heights, Forest Lawn, Inglewood, Lynnwood Ridge, Marlborough, Marlborough Park, Mayland Heights, Ogden, Penbrooke Meadows, Radisson Heights and Southview

We all appreciate their contributions to Canada's well-being.

* * *

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the throne speech, the Government of Canada announced initiatives to improve the quality of life of aboriginals and Inuit in Canada.

The 2003 budget provides for significant investments, among other things, for the needs of aboriginals and Inuit in urban areas; for education, training and employment opportunities; for initiatives supporting aboriginal cultures and languages, and health care for first nations and Inuit; for the improvement, maintenance and monitoring of sewer and water systems on first nations reserves; for the first nations and Inuit police program; and for initiatives supporting the creation and operation of a new aboriginal cultures and languages centre that will be run by the aboriginal community.

These Government of Canada initiatives will enable aboriginals and Inuit to play a direct role in their community and to obtain a better quality of life.

Once again, the Government of Canada has delivered on its promises.

S. O. 31

THE BUDGET

Mr. Serge Marzil (Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in the House and congratulate the Government of Canada for its innovative budget for 2003.

Businesses fared well in this budget. One of the measures announced is improved access to venture capital, in the form of a \$190 million cash injection to support new or growing companies.

Also in the budget was a \$25 million a year investment in the National Research Council Industrial Research Assistance Program, \$20 million for Aboriginal Business Canada, \$20 million for Farm Credit Canada over the next two years and a 12% cut in employment insurance premiums.

I applaud these Government of Canada initiatives, which will help our businesses contribute to Canada's economic prosperity.

* * *

[*English*]

HOUSING

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Minister of Labour and Federal Coordinator on Homelessness, an outstanding citizen and one of the finest ministers. She is, simply put, a great leader.

As we know, the highly successful Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative was renewed for another three years. Under the leadership of our great Prime Minister, budget 2003 provides another \$1.1 billion to the government's affordable housing and homelessness initiatives. In addition, the budget also renews the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program and increases funding to our affordable housing initiative.

Simply put, not only have my constituents of Ottawa Centre benefited from all of these initiatives, but countless Canadians across the country have also.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Betty Hinton (Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have stood in the House on numerous occasions to speak out about the human rights violations in Iran.

The Iranian government continues to refuse to sign the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Canada and the European Union will hold consultations this March in Geneva. This will be a turning point in deciding Canada's involvement in this important human rights issue.

I will be hosting a meeting next week with the former UN representative on human rights in Iran, Mr. Maurice Copithorne, and the committee for defence of human rights in Iran. This is a time sensitive issue. We cannot continue to condone the violence and discrimination by keeping silent. Every day that passes is another day of suffering.

S. O. 31

I wish to invite all colleagues in the House to join me at the meeting on February 25, in Room 104 of the Justice Building at 1 p.m. I wish to raise their awareness and ensure their support.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2003 builds the society Canadians value by making investments in individuals, families and their communities.

These include: a 10 year infrastructure program that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has been seeking for a number of years; a down payment of \$1 billion plus an additional \$2 billion for the Strategic Infrastructure Program that will enable our towns and cities to better plan for long range development; \$1 billion to environmental priorities that directly affect our cities, including the clean up of federal contaminated sites; targeted investments in affordable housing and the homeless; a three year extension of the RRAP program with \$128 million per year; \$2 billion over five years to support actions such as environmental technology and partnerships in areas such as sustainable transportation; \$1.7 billion invested over three years to build on previous investments in innovation and skills development; \$46.6 million over two years to continue the integrated proceeds of crime initiative; and continued support to entrepreneurs and small business.

We will continue to work with our counterparts toward a sustainable future for all of our cities, towns and rural communities.

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•(1105)

[*Translation*]

ESTATES GENERAL ON THE REFORM OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, over the coming days in Quebec City, the estates general on the reform of democratic institutions will provide an opportunity for hundreds of citizens to examine the meaning of democracy.

Our institutions date back several hundred years, and for the first time in our history, we are embarking on a collective reflection that will set into motion a process of change in our institutions. The emphasis will be on fairer representation, with citizens being encouraged to take an active role in defining major socio-political challenges.

Democracy, as we know, is fragile and precious. In these turbulent times the world is experiencing, this message is clearer than ever.

The Bloc Québécois hopes that the estates general on the reform of democratic institutions will help us turn over a new leaf by collectively taking charge of the society we want to live in, a society that is open, generous, fair and respectful.

We would like to thank Claude Béland, the chair of the steering committee, and its members for their important contribution to launching a debate essential to the quality of our democracy.

PINK SALMON ACTION PLAN

Mr. Georges Farrah (Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced a Pink Salmon Action Plan. The purpose of this plan is to protect the pink salmon resource in the Broughton Archipelago, off the northern tip of British Columbia's Vancouver Island.

The 2002 decline in the pink salmon run is of concern to the department, and we plan to determine the factors that may have contributed to that decline. The department's approach supports the measures taken by the aquaculture industry and complements the British Columbia Government's Action Plan for the Broughton Archipelago announced earlier this month.

The Fisheries and Oceans broad pink salmon action plan reflects a number of the recommendations contained in the January 2003 Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council report.

The action plan has five components: a freshwater monitoring program, a marine monitoring program, an active salmon farm management approach, a long term research plan and a public consultation and dialogue process.

The department has made a firm commitment to determining the risks to which wild salmon are exposed, including the impact of sea lice.

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[*English*]

SCOUTS AND GUIDES WEEK

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick (Prince Albert, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, international scouting calls tomorrow "Thinking Day". It was established in 1926 by girl guides and boy scouts to think about the goals for the youth of Canada and the world. It is also the birthday of Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of scouting.

I believe it is important that "Thinking Day" reflect the positive values of scouting. Scouting promotes personal character, love of learning, self-reliance and pride in country. Scouting gives our youth the opportunity to build strong bodies and minds, and respect for our traditions.

That is truly something to think about as we salute our girl guides and boy scouts of Canada today.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the birthday of the renowned abolitionist Frederick Douglass falls on February 14. This is one reason that we observe the month of February as Black History Month.

I had the honour of welcoming Frederick Douglass II last year when he came to celebrate with the community of Windsor the establishment of the underground railway monument on Windsor's riverfront. This symbol is a celebration of the vital underground railway connection that exists in Windsor and Essex County.

On Saturday I will have the honour to share with members of our local black community the 90th birthday of Mother Sylvia Harrison. Born in 1913, mother of 15 children, Mother Harrison was the first lady of Bishop Arthur Thomas Harrison. She assisted the homeless, seniors and those in need.

Black History Month provides us with a time to learn about the experiences of blacks in Canadian society, including Mother Harrison.

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[Translation]

LA MAISON DE LAUBERIVIÈRE

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on February 14, 1983, la Maison de Lauberivière began operations in Quebec City, feeding 23 homeless people. Thirteen men had already spent the night there. Since then, this organization has provided thousands of men and women with warmth, comfort and a meal.

Lauberivière is a combination soup kitchen, shelter, detox centre and social reintegration service, and has become an indispensable resource and referral point for our community.

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, I wish to pay tribute to the many volunteers and workers whose commitment and devotion have helped improve the lives of their fellow citizens.

I congratulate you and thank you all for your generosity.

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INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Laval East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is International Mother Language Day. UNESCO proclaimed this special day in November 1999.

The purpose of this day is to celebrate linguistic diversity and to raise our awareness of the wealth of languages. There are over 6,000 languages spoken in the world. Languages are a means of communication, but they also express our culture and identity. As the Director-General of UNESCO said, "They are the mirror of the souls of the societies in which they are born and they reflect the history of their contacts".

To mark this important day, I invite Canadians to reflect on the importance, history and wealth of their own mother tongue and on the meaning it has in our life.

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•(1110)

[English]

CANADA WINTER GAMES

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to the athletes today participating at the

S. O. 31

Canada Winter Games which will begin tomorrow in Bathurst and Campbellton, New Brunswick.

We can be proud of each one of them and of this extraordinary event which brings together athletes from 16 sports over a two week period, a true testimony of the dedication and hard work of Canadian youth.

I would also like to extend congratulations and express gratitude to the coaches, staff and volunteers who will accompany these athletes. They will continue to expend considerable effort ensuring optimal conditions for each of our athletes to perform at their personal best.

Each of these young athletes got their start in their home communities with local clubs and teams. I would like to pay tribute to the thousands of coaches, officials, event organizers, support staff, volunteers and parents who have supported the athletes throughout the years, and particularly in preparation for their Canada Winter Games.

We are very proud of all—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food claims everybody supports his misguided agricultural policy framework and his totally inadequate business risk management program.

I have a news flash for the minister. He is living in a dream world. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Grain Growers of Canada, the Keystone Agriculture Producers and every farmer to whom I have spoken are saying just the opposite. They are not buying what the minister is selling and they certainly do not trust the department of top heavy bureaucrats to understand the real world of agriculture.

Why is the minister so determined to bully and intimidate farmers into accepting his plan? Does he not realize that if he shoves the agriculture policy framework down farmers throats, it is destined to fail? Yet, the minister has made it clear that he is hell-bent to see the agriculture policy framework come into effect with or without farmers' support.

I have a little advice for the minister. He should stop listening to his own big city bureaucrats and start listening to farmers.

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HEALTH CARE

Mr. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, constituents from my riding of Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale have expressed concerns to me with regard to health care. They want a universally accessible, publicly funded health care system that is there when they need it, not when they can afford it.

Oral Questions

I am pleased that our government has listened. With the health accord signed by the premiers and the Prime Minister earlier this month and the important investments announced in Tuesday's budget, we have committed in cash alone \$34.8 billion over five years to support health care and health care reform. This is in addition to the equalization program and tax point transfers.

The result from these investments in health care will ensure that our system is more responsive, more available and remains more accessible to those who need it, when they need it for generations to come.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the 20 year odyssey to replace the Sea King helicopters may finally be entering its last tortured phase. Next month a government request will allow the aerospace industry to put forward its best proposals. Unfortunately the Prime Minister has renewed his effort to ensure Canadian taxpayers and our naval flyers will only be political pawns.

Since 1993 the Prime Minister has made the Sea King replacement a political issue rather than a best value, cost effective, procurement process. He has condemned the replacement program to delay unnecessary expense and danger for our air crews.

In defiance of Treasury Board practices, public works guidelines, public accounts committee recommendations and the normal business method of every well run company, these Liberals are attempting to buy the cheapest helicopter rather than the best value aircraft that would serve Canada for years to come.

I urge the government to come clean on the purchase, admit that best value and not lowest initial price must be the method used to choose our next maritime helicopter. This cannot continue to be a political game. Real lives and billions of dollars are at stake.

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[*Translation*]

THE BUDGET

Ms. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the 2003 budget contains significant financial help for families, including an increase in the national child tax benefit, new investments to improve access to quality child care, a new tax credit for low-income families caring for disabled children, and new tax relief for persons with disabilities, Canadians with specific medical needs, and those who provide care for them.

The budget also sets out new employment insurance benefits for natural caregivers who take six weeks of leave from work to provide care for a seriously ill or dying member of the family.

The Government of Canada is proud of these progressive measures to support families.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

●(1115)

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday in the House the Minister of Finance brought down a budget with \$25 billion in new spending. Now only two days later, he says that what Canada really needs is a tax cut in order to compete with the United States.

If that is what the Minister of Finance really believes, why did he not have the courage to implement all tax cuts from previous budgets this year?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, again I would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance on an outstanding budget.

The member mentions tax cuts. There is a \$100 billion tax cut over five years, and we are in the third year of that. The minister also announced that the capital tax would be eliminated over five years, again, support for small business. At the same time we were able to make strategic investments in health care, for child poverty and at the same time, no deficit.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the minister is all over the board on fiscal issues. One day he is bringing in a \$25 billion budget of new spending. The next day he is promoting the virtue of tax cuts.

Why does the Minister of Finance not just admit that the real reason for all that spending is to buy the Prime Minister a \$25 billion legacy and to launch his own leadership campaign?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has been able to provide substantial tax cuts and strategic investment in health care, which I believe we heard from Canadians time after time was their number one issue.

I would also to remind the member that the debt to GDP ratio is 44.5%. Five years ago it was 71.5%. Economic growth is at 3.2% this year and is forecast to be 3.5% next year. There is a surplus this year of \$4 billion, forecast to be \$5 billion next year. What is the problem over there?

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I will tell him the problem. On Tuesday the finance minister brought down the biggest spending budget since Pierre Trudeau. Less than 48 hours later he is saying that Canada desperately needs tax relief.

It seems to me that either the Prime Minister has the powers of the amazing Kreskin or the finance minister was hit on the head with a rock on the way to Toronto. I am not sure which it is.

Why did the finance minister wait until after the budget to start talking about much needed tax relief?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Houdini act is on the other side. That is the party that says to raise expenditures one day and lower taxes the next. The government is doing both in a fiscally responsible manner.

If the member remembers, which I do not think he does, there is a one time expenditure of \$5.1 billion for health care. We are reducing taxes by \$100 billion. We are eliminating the capital tax. This is what Canadians want. They want the investments and they want the tax cuts, and the government is delivering on both.

* * *

• (1120)

TAXATION

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are being hit with huge gas price increases every day at the pumps. The wholesale price of gasoline is set on the international markets, but the tax on that gasoline is set by those people over there, taxes that account for 42% of the price of gasoline.

In 1975 they promised that they would spend that fuel excise tax on infrastructure. Why do the Liberals not honour their commitment of a quarter century ago and dedicate most of that tax to repairing Canada's crumbling highways?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that in March 2000 it was this government that proposed to suspend the GST on gasoline and we invited all the provinces to do the same on the PST. Only one province bothered to respond to the government's suggestion.

I would again suggest that they talk to their premiers because the issue of gas pricing is a provincial responsibility.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, they are the ones who have the fuel excise tax, so they are the ones who can do something about that.

Unlike ordinary Canadians, perhaps the Minister of Finance does not have to drive over our crumbling highways and our faulty bridges. If he is not going to spend those billions of dollars on transport infrastructure, why does he not just give the taxpayers a break at the pumps? Or is it the fact that he is really gouging people at the pumps to pay for the spending spree that we saw on Tuesday?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that it was members on this side of the House led by the member for Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge who led the fight on the issue of gasoline pricing and competition. I would point out to him that his party, the johnny come lately party, has now discovered this.

We suggested suspending the GST and the provinces said they would not suspend the PST. Only one province had the interest to respond.

Again, we are making strategic investments in the area of roads through the strategic infrastructure fund, the municipal infrastructure

fund. I would suggest to the member if he is concerned about pricing—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Repentigny.

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[Translation]

IRAQ

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, speaking of Iraq, the Prime Minister stated:

The situation cannot continue indefinitely; therefore, we believe a deadline should be set.

As for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, he said that Canada was talking about a reasonable timeframe, and not a deadline. Clearly, Canada's position remains ambiguous.

Could the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell us which is Canada's official position, his or the Prime Minister's?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position is still the Prime Minister's position, and I have always followed his lead in this process by supporting the UN process, the inspectors and the ongoing inspection. We are continuing our work, which is to discuss with our counterparts, at his level and mine, to enhance clarity in support of Dr. Blix's process. I am confident that the Security Council will find a way to achieve that within the next few days.

Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is what we are seeking here, greater clarity. The Minister of Foreign Affairs himself recognizes that setting a deadline, as suggested by the Prime Minister, can be tantamount to setting a date for war.

I would like the minister to tell us what the international community is to make of Canada's position. Which is it: the Prime Minister's message or his message, when he expressed concern about a deadline heralding the beginning of war?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the process Canada is engaged in has two objectives. First, to indicate to Saddam Hussein that this cannot go on indefinitely and that he absolutely must comply with his obligations under resolution 1441. Second, to encourage all other members of the international community to remain within the UN system, which acts in the interests of security and in the interests of the international community. That is our process, that is our message. It has never changed, and we will continue our work in that area.

Ms. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, setting a deadline is tantamount to setting a date for war. With its ambiguous choice, Canada, far from helping the inspection process, is helping justify a logic of war, instead of a logic of peace.

How can the Minister of Foreign Affairs reconcile this approach, which would lead to war, with the march during which thousands of people urged Canada to make a firm commitment to peace?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that the hon. member and all the members of this House fully understand that there is a high risk of a war if Saddam Hussein feels that he does not have to comply with resolution 1441.

Oral Questions

The process to which Canada is committed is twofold. First, we want to tell Saddam Hussein that he absolutely must comply with his international obligations. Second, we want to give the inspectors a chance to complete their mission, so as to avoid a war. The only way to avoid a war is to take these two aspects into consideration.

Ms. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Foreign Affairs realize that, by trying to get the two sides closer by suggesting a deadline, Canada is actually actively promoting war?

• (1125)

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are actively promoting the inspection process. I think that Mr. Blix will soon report, in March, on the timeframe that he needs to complete his mission.

This is a way to deliver a clear message that may avoid a war for the international community. We are continuing our work to support the process being implemented by Mr. Blix.

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[English]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the finance minister keeps telling us how much he has done for municipalities, but he knows very well he has failed to do his job. The \$1 billion over 10 years for new municipal infrastructure falls short of what is needed.

The minister also knows very well this downloading will mean increased residential property taxes, the privatization of vital public services like the delivery of drinking water and more user fees for Canadians.

Can he tell us why he thinks Canadians ought to pay higher property taxes, pay for-profit operators for drinking water and pay increased user fees on public services?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all before the New Democratic Party even discovered the national infrastructure program, it was this government in 1993 that brought it in. It lay dormant under the fifth party, under the Tories, for 10 years.

As far as the government is concerned, the Minister of Finance has indicated a 10 year program which is what municipalities have been asking for. He said that this is a down payment. I understand the down payment first and foremost is to work with our partners, the provinces and the cities. That is what we are doing.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was that type of complacency that created situations like Walkerton.

The Prime Minister's task force on urban issues concluded its report by asking the government to have courage and vision to work on our cities. What happened? Can the parliamentary secretary explain why the chair, the member for York West, is questioning the decisions and the shortchanging? Who is right?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all as far as Walkerton is concerned, that was because of the privatization and the cutbacks by the province of Ontario's ministry of the environment. If members

are going to raise that issue, they should at least get the facts straight over there.

Second, as far as supporting cities are concerned, the government needs to take no lessons from any of the opposition parties. None of them supported infrastructure. None of them supported supporting cities. Now it is fashionable. Now they are getting on board. The train has left the station and we are well ahead.

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon—Souris, PC): Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that municipalities are very disappointed with the federal government's infrastructure water torture, a drip here, a drip there. The \$3 billion was announced but only \$100 million in this budget year and \$150 million in the next.

Unlike the federal Department of Finance, municipalities like to plan ahead. Will the finance minister please tell the House how the remaining \$2.75 billion will be allocated?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, there was a drought and that drought was the Conservative Party when it was in office as far as cities were concerned. We are working in partnership with the provinces, territories and cities in terms of supporting infrastructure in this country.

I am amazed, as a former member of the FCM board over there, that the member would say that when he knows the great struggles we had in the 1990s and it came to fruition when this government came to power.

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BADGER FLOOD

Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC): Mr. Speaker, residents of Badger are facing an economic crisis. This economic crisis is caused by the closing of family businesses. Also there are large and small businesses that are in dire need.

Will the Government of Canada implement a special financial relief plan? Will the minister, if he can find time, visit Badger to see firsthand the impact upon the community?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely conscious of the very difficult situation in Badger. Just this morning I received a letter from the minister and I responded to that letter within two hours. The process is now underway to provide financial assistance under the law.

In addition, the armoury nearby is providing assistance to the Red Cross and to other first responders. We have taken these two actions and we are closely monitoring the situation.

*Oral Questions***IRAQ**

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this week our ambassador to the United Nations said that any Iraqi cooperation with weapons inspectors has come about “only in response to the deliberate and useful buildup of U.S. and U.K. military forces in the region”. He also called, as we know, for another deadline for Iraqi compliance with resolution 1441.

Given that Canada has done nothing to contribute to this useful buildup of forces, when will the foreign affairs minister get off of the fence and spell out exactly what consequences Canada will support if Iraq blows past this latest deadline without complying?

• (1130)

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have always strongly supported the objectives set out in resolution 1441. We have strongly supported that and the United States knows that and often has expressed gratitude for Canada's position.

Canada's position has also been that we believe strongly in working through this process through strengthening the UN process because in the long run, that will be for the benefit of the United States. It will be for the benefit of Canadians and it will be for the benefit of the world.

That is the process we are engaged in. We will continue in that role as that is the most constructive role that Canada can play.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the term “best value” in government procurement has always meant that taxpayers receive the best value over the full life cycle of the project. Great concept.

The Liberal government has threatened to go ahead with lowest cost tendering on our maritime helicopter replacement. To cover up a political mistake committed by the Prime Minister in 1993, the Liberals will continue to risk future value by chasing this cheap alternative. The Liberals finally admitted their mistake of trying to split the maritime helicopter contract. Will they now tender on best value, not just cheapest initial price?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have taken a very useful step with respect to the maritime helicopters. Some weeks ago I made the decision to re-bundle the contracts, which means that instead of having two contracts we now will have a single contract for the helicopter. There is an industry consensus and virtual unanimity that this is positive in the sense that we will get the helicopters faster. Not only that, but it clearly lowers the risk and is likely to reduce the costs. We are on track to get the right helicopter at the best price as fast as possible.

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[Translation]

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of the Environment said he is open to a bilateral agreement between Quebec and the federal government on implementation of the Kyoto protocol.

Can the Minister of the Environment deliver on the rhetoric today by announcing the appointment of a federal negotiator, as the Quebec government requested yesterday?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, it is true that we are in favour of an agreement with the provinces. I quote the Prime Minister who said in the House on November 27, “as regards Kyoto, we are prepared to sign bilateral agreements with each of the provinces if they want to”.

I can add that, earlier this week on February 17, the deputy ministers of the federal departments of the Environment and Natural Resources began to meet with their provincial counterparts.

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on several occasions, the Minister of the Environment has said and I quote, “we hope to have a bilateral agreement between the Province of Quebec and the federal government”.

Will the minister admit that the first step to agreement with Quebec is to appoint its negotiator today, without further delay?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. speaker, I can assure the hon. member that my deputy minister and the deputy minister of Natural Resources are the two federal negotiators on all such matters with the provinces.

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[English]

TRADE

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Carleton, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, \$1.9 billion a day in commercial trade with the United States will soon be subject to a requirement for 24 hours advance notice before crossing the border. This is going to harm time dependent industries such as the auto industry, which is the heart of my province's economy. The auto sector says quite reasonably that this will be a huge problem and is seeking an exemption, but we do not seem to see any interest in searching for exemptions by the government.

When can we expect to see an exemption for the auto sector?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this issue has been raised a number of times in the House. The member opposite simply does not seem to understand that this is a proposal.

Most of the auto sector, I would tell him, is part of the free and secure trade procedures which have been established under a 30 point process. It is designed to give secure and rapid access both to Canada and the United States because that is in the interests of both countries.

We are working at the present time to increase our cooperation with the Americans, but the proposal he has mentioned has not in fact been—

Oral Questions

●(1135)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, south of the border there is a sense that Canada is a fair-weather friend. The Liberal government is doing serious damage to Canada-U.S. trade when the Prime Minister goes down to Chicago and lectures the Americans on their foreign policy. The end result is Canadians will pay the price on issues like 24 hour advance notice. The unguarded border becomes more and more guarded every day.

Why did the Prime Minister not give any thought to the 24 hour advance notice when he gave his little lecture in Chicago?

Hon. Elinor Caplan (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the member's preamble she forgot to mention that the Prime Minister received a standing ovation from the audience in Chicago. It is because of members like her who are part of the blame Canada club that Americans have the wrong impression of the important partnership and good relationship Canada has with the United States. If she really wanted to be helpful, she might start talking about the facts.

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[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, among the many leaks orchestrated by the Minister of Finance before he brought down his budget, his promise to review management of the EI fund fizzled.

In announcing consultations to set the premium rate, the minister is only repeating his predecessor's broken promise from September 2000.

This time, will these consultations lead to something other than the government funnelling off \$45 billion from the EI fund at the expense of workers and employers?

[English]

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to again indicate that the minister has announced that premiums for next year will be \$1.98, down from \$2.10, for the tenth consecutive year in a row.

I also would point out to the member, yes, there will be consultations. The minister has indicated very clearly where he would like to see this go. It is very important. The EI is coming down and it is coming down in the direction that we want to see and that Canadians want to see.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is all well and good for the parliamentary secretary to say that the government has cut the premiums, but over the next year, the minister will again take \$3 billion from the pockets of workers and employers.

When will the minister and the government stop dipping into the EI fund, establish a premium rate that corresponds to needs and

create an independent EI fund that is managed by employers and workers?

[English]

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance announced that there will be a process put in place. The minister has made his intentions very clear.

This member, I hope, will be part of the process and part of the solution, instead of continually getting up and criticizing the fact that we are obviously moving in the right direction, continually going down for 10 years, which I cannot say was the previous government's approach. It was continually going up.

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SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, U.S. car buyers have filed an antitrust class action lawsuit against Canadian and U.S. automakers, alleging collusion to raise prices only in the U.S.

U.S. consumers have expressed similar concerns that the Canada-U.S. softwood discussions will lead to agreement to increase softwood lumber prices only in the U.S.

What is the Minister of Trade doing during the current talks in Washington to ensure that Canadian forest stakeholders and his own department are not involved in violations of U.S. antitrust law?

Hon. Pierre Pettigrew (Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, clearly this is a very important dimension to the discussions that are taking place right now.

The chief executive officers of our softwood lumber industry are in Washington because, as a government, we want to work closely with them and consult with them.

What we are trying to do in the present negotiations with Mr. Aldonas is identify a resolution to the present dispute. This will be done by correcting and improving our forestry management practices and eliminating the countervailing and antidumping duties that is being applied to our softwood lumber in the United States right now.

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●(1140)

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Reed Elley (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, last November the House unanimously agreed to a supply day motion that called for the Minister of Finance to act on the disability tax credit

I have heard from the disability community that they are sick and tired of coming to Ottawa with hat in hand for over 10 years to beg the government to create a level playing field for Canadians with disabilities and getting virtually nothing.

The minister promised wide consultation before he initiated new DTC regulations. That has not been done and he is bringing them in through the back door.

When will he get it right, complete the full consultation process and do what he promised Canadians who are disabled he would do?

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister has responded in a positive manner. It is not as restrictive as what was originally proposed. The government has set aside \$25 million for 2003-04, in addition to \$80 million for 2004-05 in terms of tax assistance for persons with disabilities.

We are in the business of providing assistance for people with disabilities, and the member knows that.

* * *

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Ajax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we saw, with the release of the 2001 census, that each region of Canada is at risk of facing serious massive shortages in skilled labour by the year 2011. Increasingly, Canadian employers are relying on highly skilled, sincerely motivated immigrants to help address the very serious shortages.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration tell the House what moneys were allocated in budget 2003 and to what initiatives they would apply?

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the department, along with HRDC, will receive \$41.4 million over the next two years. This money will be invested in the following projects: \$6.6 million over two years to launch a fast track system which would provide skilled workers with permanent job offers in Canada; \$3.8 million to attract social workers across communities in Canada; \$8 million to facilitate the study of processing permits for foreign students; and \$10 million to deliver labour market language training for new workers.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government's hypocrisy is breathtaking when it comes to addressing so-called hypothetical questions.

Asked what Canada will do if Bush succeeds in bullying the UN into mandating war against Iraq, the Prime Minister says "count Canada in", but asked what Canada will do if Bush launches an attack on Iraq without a UN mandate, the Prime Minister dismisses the question as hypothetical. He simply will not answer.

Why the double standard?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an approach that is seeking to get the best possible results through the United Nations system and to keep the United States operating within the Security Council, which it has done up to date, with the encouragement of Canada, Great Britain, other allies of the United States, and even countries as disparate as Russia and France.

We all have an interest in making sure that the Security Council system works and the inspection system works. That is the objective

of Canada, that has been our consistent objective and we will stay there.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, double standards never get good results.

After 1.2 million Iraqi deaths, the gulf war goes on killing 12 years later. Iraqi citizens, especially children, remain highly vulnerable. International humanitarian agencies predict a horrendous human catastrophe if Bush unleashes the military assault that he has in mind, assaults on civilians and assaults on infrastructure.

Why has Canada not concentrated its efforts on ramping up humanitarian preparation in Iraq, instead of ramping up military preparedness for a war that the government says it does not want?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons we have been consistently working for peace is precisely because we do recognize the dangers that war will bring to the very troubled country of Iraq.

We also recognize that the long term stability of that region requires the disarmament of Saddam Hussein, which is why we have had a balanced policy regarding both of these.

My colleague, the Minister for International Cooperation, has been active with her colleagues to make sure that the United Nations and other international agencies will be there in the case of humanitarian need. Canada will be responsible for its humanitarian requirements. It always has been in the past and will be in the future.

* * *

HERITAGE CANADA

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, the *Empress of Ireland* artifacts committee is attempting to save over 400 artifacts and 500 archival pieces which came from that ship when it sank in the St. Lawrence on May 29, 1914. If a deal is not struck before the March 1, 2003 deadline, these artifacts will be sold to an American purchaser in the United States.

Will the minister give her assurance that these precious artifacts will not be lost to Canada?

● (1145)

[Translation]

Ms. Carole-Marie Allard (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will take note of the question and get a response for my hon. colleague as soon as possible, by the next oral question period.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when I asked the Minister of Justice when he planned to table his action plan on the gun registry, he refused to answer. We now know that he has scheduled a press conference for 1 p.m. today, supposedly to transfer the failed registry to the office of the Solicitor General.

Oral Questions

Will the new minister actually deal with the registry's problems, or can we expect more Liberal window dressing?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is the second time in only a few weeks that we have had an instance on the floor of the House where members have been given a document under embargo and before the embargo has expired it is being raised in question period.

This is despicable. The hon. member should know that this is wrong. It goes against all our rules which we are all called upon to respect.

Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we know the government's billion dollar failed firearm registry has done nothing to curb crime or improve public safety in Canada. A majority of Canadians, 53% according to a recent poll, agree with the Canadian Alliance position and are calling on the government to scrap the failed registry. The registry is not even supported by most frontline police officers.

Why will the minister not cut his losses, scrap the registry today and instead direct the money toward more police officers on the street?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House know that when we are talking about gun control we are talking about public safety.

The member referred to some polls. We have some polls as well and those polls show strong support from the Canadian population on the question of gun control and therefore public safety.

When the hon. members are saying that they would like to scrap the gun control program that we have, which part of it: the licensing stage, which has been a success; or the registration stage, which has been a success?

We are talking about six million firearms that have been registered. The screening process in order to have access to the registration—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Surrey North.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the budget has virtually nothing for justice or law enforcement. Marijuana grow ops, which fuel organized crime, are epidemic in British Columbia and Ontario. Police cannot even keep up. Provinces do not have the resources to meet the demands imposed by Ottawa in the new Youth Criminal Justice Act. There is nothing in the budget.

Canadians were stunned last month when police revealed the magnitude of the child pornography problem. Again, there is nothing in the budget.

There is nothing for illicit drugs, nothing for youth justice and nothing for sexually exploited kids. Why?

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am just amazed by that

question. If the hon. member would look at the bills that we have in front of the House, he would understand that with regard to the question of the protection of our children this is our top priority.

We have Bill C-20 in the House. If the opposition members would stop playing cheap politics they would support the government to make sure that we proceed with that bill as soon as we can to give police forces the additional tools to better protect our children.

* * *

[Translation]

DISABILITY TAX CREDIT

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, during my recent tour of Quebec, meeting with mobility impaired individuals, I became aware of how urgent their needs are. The funds available to assist them are inadequate to say the least, and will remain so, judging by the latest federal budget.

How can the Minister of Finance justify the fact that these additional funds for the disabled are being made available only after unacceptable restrictions to the disability tax credit, which clearly run counter to the motion adopted unanimously in this House on November 20, 2002?

[English]

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has a tremendous record when it comes to working with the disabled community: over \$1.9 billion in assistance in total, close to \$4 billion in terms of programs.

I suggest that the hon. member should take a look at what the government has been doing. Instead of criticizing the government, she should be congratulating us on the work that has been going on.

● (1150)

[Translation]

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, only a week ago, we tabled in this House a petition signed by over 6,000 people calling for this government to cease its restrictions on access to the DTC.

Since the House has spoken out unanimously against any restrictions on assistance to the disabled, particularly the Minister of Finance's bill of August 30, 2002, how can the minister use his budget as an opportunity to go against both this motion and the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development on this subject?

[English]

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, the opposite is true. We have widened the provisions for people in terms of assistance for dietary needs, but there has to be some balance. Individuals will not be eligible for the DTC solely because they are having difficulty finding specific food requirements within their specific area.

The fact is that we have widened it. We have listened to the House and the minister has responded effectively by also listening to the groups involved.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Operation Snowball has identified over 2,000 suspected child pornographers in Canada. Police clearly state that they do not have adequate resources to enforce the law in these cases. They have clearly stated that.

For all the talk of children in the minister's budget, not once did the minister mention any funding for fighting child pornography.

Will the Minister of Justice commit to reallocating money from his bungled firearms registry to an active child pornography task force?

Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice spoke earlier about the legislative areas that we as a government have worked on to increase the penalties for child pornography. I have mentioned to this member twice before in the House about the RCMP and the Ontario Provincial Police joint steering committee we have set up to look at and intensify our efforts in child pornography, and he should keep in mind that in last week's budget we enhanced spending for policing and taking on organized crime.

We are doing our bit. It is just too bad he will not listen to what we are doing.

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, all talk, no action: The Liberal government's billion dollar firearms registry targets law-abiding Canadians while over 2,000 suspected child pornographers are free to roam our streets.

The government's plans for reallocation have not produced one dollar from one wasteful program, so I ask the minister again: Will he reallocate wasteful spending in the firearms registration program to the useful investment in the fight on child pornography?

Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we have tabled legislation in the House on a sex offender registry. I would hope that members opposite will support that. We have strengthened child pornography provisions. We have created a new category of sexual exploitation. We have increased the maximum sentences. We have facilitated the testimony of child victims and witnesses. We are introducing new offences for voyeurism.

I think we are moving ahead. There is more we can do and the steering committee will certainly work toward that objective.

* * *

INDUSTRY

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, recently the Minister of Industry as well as the Minister of Human Resources Development held a conference on innovation.

My question is for the Minister of Industry. Would he tell the House when we can expect to see some results in terms of the implementation of the recommendations from that conference?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Marcell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday's budget clearly shows

Oral Questions

the government's desire and intent to follow up on the recommendations of the National Summit on Innovation and Learning.

The government has already announced that it intends to invest close to \$2 billion in programs aimed directly at implementing the recommendations of that summit.

The minister's recent budget contains responses to a number of those recommendations, those on the business environment in particular. I could provide a list of them that would be fairly—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Yellowhead.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Rob Merrifield (Yellowhead, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, Health Canada exists to protect the health and safety of Canadians, but the national standards for the safety of tissue and organ transplants are still not in place.

Regulations are estimated to be at least two years away, so my question is very simple. If the transplants are taking place, why are the standards not in place?

• (1155)

Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue that my colleague raises, so let me take him through the situation that presently exists. Health Canada has worked for some time with the Canadian Standards Association, provinces and other stakeholders to set standards aimed at ensuring the safety of cells, tissues and organs for transplantation.

In January, Health Canada issued a directive communicating these standards to establishments across Canada. Next March, these standards will have the force of law as regulations. In the meantime, Health Canada will exercise its authority under the Food and Drugs Act to prohibit distribution of such products where evidence shows that they are not—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Cariboo—Chilcotin.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, even before it is proclaimed law, the species at risk legislation is throwing guide outfitters out of work in my riding. Healthy, thriving northern caribou herds in the Itcha Igachuz Mountains of western B.C. have been lumped in with the red listed mountain caribou over 500 kilometres in distance, and there is no cross-migration.

Oral Questions

The federal government promised to respond this week to British Columbia's request to exempt from the red list those northern caribou, a request made last October. I ask the minister, has this request for an exemption been given to the government of B.C.?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the management of mountain caribou in British Columbia, and particularly the south mountain herd, is the responsibility of the provincial government. This will not change when the species at risk act is proclaimed.

Quite properly, the provincial government has taken advice and has established a recovery team. It is launching the process for a recovery plan for this species. I think it is taking prudent steps, but as the hon. member has indicated, there are concerns. If there are such concerns, they should be addressed to the provincial government, which has representation on the—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

* * *

[Translation]

MICROBREWERIES

Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, microbreweries in Quebec and Canada are facing unfair competition from large Canadian breweries and small foreign breweries, which, unlike our microbreweries, benefit from a reduction in their national excise tax.

During the prebudget consultations, the Standing Committee on Finance unanimously recommended that this excise tax be reduced.

Could the Minister of Finance explain why, despite the injustices suffered by microbreweries, and after 38 of them have had to shut down, no such measure was included in his budget?

[English]

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government continues to look at all forms of taxation. Whether it is personal income taxes or corporate taxes, we are continuing to reduce them.

We have heard representations and in fact we value those representations. We will look again at those comments that have been made, but I suggest to the member that he knows full well we have been in dealings with the microbreweries, and we will continue to do so.

* * *

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC): Mr. Speaker, HRD Canada is cracking down on graduates who owe money on their student loans by confiscating their income tax refunds. In many cases these graduates are single parents working at minimum wage or working part time, perhaps subsidized by social assistance, people who require every cent they can get to feed and house their families.

Is the minister aware and supportive of this cruel attack on debt ridden graduates by her department?

[Translation]

Ms. Diane St-Jacques (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. The government is aware that costs relating to education have increased student debt for many students.

This is why, in the 2003 budget, we committed in excess of \$60 million, over a two year period, to improve the Canada Student Loans Program and make more money available to help post-secondary students manage their debt.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this week the Chinese minister in charge of religious affairs visited Canada. Canadians continue to be concerned with human rights violations in China. Falun Gong practitioners are still being prosecuted there. Recently a Buddhist Tibetan monk was executed.

I wish to ask the government if it took this opportunity to tell the Chinese that Canada views these human rights violations with serious concern and that they must be stopped.

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the hon. member that we speak out regularly about the human rights situation, both in Tibet and in China. We have registered protests concerning the execution and the recent sentences involving Tibetans in China, and we will continue.

We have two positions with the Chinese government. We remonstrate with them, we point out where we believe they are strongly in the wrong, and we also try to work with them to upgrade their human rights record by bringing them Canadian expertise in the courts and the human rights record in China.

● (1200)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the use of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons marks the darkest moments of human civilization. Abolition of these weapons must be the highest priority, whether they are in Iraq or the U.S. That is why volunteer citizens are heading to the U.S., to stop their stockpile and use by any nation.

U.S. war planners have refused to rule out the possible use of nuclear weapons on Iraq. Will the Prime Minister make it clear that the government is opposed to the use of these weapons by any nation, including the U.S., and that these weapons must be abolished?

Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has always made it clear that we are opposed to the use of nuclear weapons or any weapons of mass destruction. We have constructively worked through the international community at the disarmament commission in Geneva which I attended last year.

Routine Proceedings

We have consistently been working with all the powers, both to reduce the number of and to eliminate nuclear weapons, consistent with the non-proliferation treaty, and ultimately all weapons of mass destruction. The government is committed to this. It is an important part of our foreign policy and I want to assure the House that we will take all steps we possibly can to do that.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, since January 30, 353 refugee claimants have been temporarily sent back to the United States while waiting for their meeting with Immigration Canada. Of the 94 files reviewed, 34 claimants did not show up for their interview, and some of them are on the list of people detained by U.S. immigration authorities.

In light of this situation, how much longer will the minister wait to reinstate the directive requiring U.S. authorities to ensure that asylum seekers in custody will indeed be able to attend their interview with Immigration Canada?

[*English*]

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will take this question under advisement and will get back to the member as soon as I can. However, we have an agreement with the United States, which we are ready to implement, but the U.S. asked us to delay it until mid-June.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During question period the government House leader stood in the House and accused me of divulging embargoed information from the Minister of Justice. That is categorically untrue. If he would care to check the record, the press release first ran at 10:36 Ottawa time and it was on the CP wire at 11:07 Ottawa time.

It is exactly those types of actions and shenanigans that give this place and individual members of Parliament a bad reputation. I demand an apology and I want it right now.

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will check into what the hon. member has just stated and act accordingly at the appropriate time.

The fact still remains that earlier this morning at approximately 10 a.m., coordinated by my office, a copy of an embargoed statement, which will be made in a few minutes from now, was distributed to all political parties, the subject of which was the question posed by the hon. member only a few moments ago.

If the content of the minister's statement had been released to the media before, and perhaps that is what the hon. member is saying now, I will check into that. As far as I knew the only thing that had been circulated to the media was notification that there would be a

press conference after the minister's statement was made in the House of Commons. However, I will verify that.

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to question period as well and the point that was raised was that there would be a news conference held by the minister at 1:30. That was something that was brought up in an interview that the House leader and I attended this morning at 10 o'clock, so I do not think there was any breach whatsoever.

The Deputy Speaker: Respectfully, to the three members who rose on this point of order, it is not a point of order. I would submit to the House that there is a difference of opinion. Given the undertaking from the minister I will leave that matter to be resolved among the parties. However, at this point in time it is not a point of order.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1205)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 25 petitions.

* * *

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report to you and the House on the positive steps that I am taking concerning the Canadian firearms program.

[*Translation*]

On December 3, the Auditor General of Canada tabled her report on the Canadian Firearms Program. I have accepted her recommendations and I am therefore announcing today additional improvements to the program.

[*English*]

Let me be clear, the Auditor General did not question the policy behind this program. Indeed, the government has never wavered from its commitment to public safety through gun control. The program is producing results such as encouraging the safe use of firearms, supplying vital information to police, and helping keep guns out of the wrong hands.

Today, more than 1.9 million firearm owners have obtained licences and have registered more than 6 million guns. The measures that I am announcing today focus on improving the administration of the program.

The plan is based on the work done by independent consultants. Based on their advice, one of our aims is to reduce the annual gross cost of the program to approximately \$67 million by 2008-09. The forecasted savings are based on a number of important milestones, one of which is the passage of Bill C-10A and the adoption of the necessary regulations.

Routine Proceedings

As forecasted by our independent consultants, expenditures will increase slightly in 2003-04 and 2004-05. In these transition years, the gun control program will require changes to its infrastructure and business processes. This investment will result in faster and more significant savings in all subsequent years.

[Translation]

I am also announcing that we will be moving the national weapons enforcement support team to the national police services administered by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. This will help align enforcement operations.

[English]

Further to another recommendation contained in the Hession report I will be working with the Solicitor General to develop a plan for the transfer of the Canadian firearms centre to his portfolio with a target date of April 1, 2003. We will ensure that the fundamentals are in place to ensure an orderly transition so that Canadians can soon experience further service improvements to this essential public safety program.

[Translation]

Our work these past weeks has resulted in the development of specific actions to achieve our objectives. The government's plan includes the four following actions, to be implemented in the next 12 months.

First, reducing costs and improving management, by streamlining headquarter functions, consolidating processing sites, establishing national work performance measurements, and limiting computer system changes to projects that do improve the efficiency of the program.

Second, improving service to the public, by extending free Internet registration and making it more easily accessible and reliable; ensuring clients can easily access 1-800 telephone information services; processing properly completed registration applications within 30 days of receipt; and implementing a targeted outreach program to help firearm owners fulfill licensing and registration requirements.

Third, holding consultations in spring 2003 to seek input from stakeholders, including parliamentarians and the public, on how to improve the design and delivery of the gun control program, and creating a program advisory committee.

Fourth, strengthening accountability and transparency, by reporting to Parliament full program costs across government, and tabling an annual report to Parliament that provides full financial and performance information on the gun control program.

•(1210)

[English]

In December I committed to keep the House informed on the developments in the gun control program. Today, I am fulfilling my commitment.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, the justice minister's announcement today of an action plan to fix the gun registry is very much like sending the

deckhands of the *Titanic* out with rolls of duct tape to fix the gaping gash in the side of the ship, except the duct tape is made of gold.

The minister's action plan means that in a very few years, Parliament would be debating a \$2 billion boondoggle. This is because he failed to address the real problems in the legislation and in the registry itself.

The minister proudly proclaims that even with everything he announced today, the gun registry will still cost \$67 million a year. The minister's admission means that his great action plan will save \$5 million a year from the \$72 million a year that Mr. Hession's report estimated the gun registry would cost without streamlining. But does anyone believe the justice minister's estimates?

Let us take any one year and look at how much he forecasted to spend in the main estimates, and then look at how much he actually spent. The Auditor General uncovered the fact that the justice minister made inappropriate use of the supplementary estimates. The Auditor General said:

Between 1995-96 and 2001-02, the Department obtained only about 30% of \$750 million in funds for the Program through the main appropriations method; in comparison, it obtained 90% of funding for all of its other programs through the main appropriations.

This means that the justice department's estimates were consequently wrong and understated by 70%. This would be a good rule of thumb for Parliament and the public to use when they are trying to figure out how much the gun registry would really cost to fully implement and how much it would cost to maintain each and every year after that.

How can the justice minister claim that he is being transparent when he has been keeping Parliament in the dark for the last 11 weeks? He was more open with the media this week when he admitted his cash management program consisted of not paying his bills. His action plan and cost estimates are fatally flawed because he refuses to acknowledge that he has to correct eight years of operational mistakes by his bureaucrats.

I have made a list of the most critical mistakes that he has failed to correct.

More than five million firearms are registered in the system but still must be verified by the RCMP. Up to four million records in the RCMP's firearms interest police (FIP) database must be corrected. Some 78% of the registration certificates have entries that have been left blank or marked unknown and they must be corrected. Hundreds of thousands of gun owners still do not have a firearms licence and they cannot register their firearms without a licence. None of these issues have been addressed.

Routine Proceedings

More than 300,000 owners of registered handguns do not have a firearms licence authorizing them to own one, and they cannot re-register their guns without a licence. Up to 10 million guns still have to be registered or re-registered in the system, and six million guns are registered without the names and addresses of the owners on them. The provinces have registered 18.6 million cars and they have the names and addresses of the owners on them. Police will not even be able to tell where the registered guns are stored.

These are just a few of the problems that the minister does not address. The justice minister thinks that moving the gun registry bureaucrats to the Solicitor General's department, as he announced this morning, would improve things. He should give his head a shake and fire a few bureaucrats instead of promoting them.

Does anyone know what they are doing over there? For example, on Monday of this week, if the government had its way, it would have used closure to ram Bill C-10A through the House.

•(1215)

The bill would have created a commissioner of firearms reporting to the justice minister and move the RCMP registry of firearms under the direct control of the minister.

Four days later he is now proposing to move all of these positions to another department, four days after we were going to pass the legislation. This means that in a very short order Parliament will be debating another gun registry bill. This was not one of Mr. Hession's 16 recommendations, by the way.

Still we are left not knowing how much it really will cost to fully implement and how much it will cost to maintain the program year after year. The minister will not even tell Parliament or the public what it cost to run the program for the last 11 weeks. Does he even know? I do not know. And for what benefit?

The minister tells us that it will improve public safety while in the meantime police chiefs tell the Canadian people the truth. In December, Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino was asked about the escalation of firearms crime in the city. He said, "A law registering firearms has neither deterred these crimes nor helped solve any of them".

In January, the president of the 66 member Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police said the gun registry laws are, "unenforceable until the mess is sorted out".

It is clear that the unenforceable mess, to which Chief Thomas Kaye was referring, will not be fixed by the amendments in Bill C-10A.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, after eight years the justice minister is still trying to convince the public and the provinces that the gun registry is gun control and that this is a wise way to spend public and police funds. It is neither, and only the Liberals do not seem to get it. The government is out of control and we should be putting more police on the street.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the statement by the Minister of Justice has left us somewhat puzzled about the government's leadership in what has come to be known as the gun control boondoggle.

The minister made three statements in as many months on the same issue. Each one contained nothing but platitudes, without ever condemning the fact that hundreds of millions of dollars have disappeared into this black hole. This speaks volumes about the Liberal government's incompetence and lack of transparency.

Worse still, the Minister of Justice is now basing his actions on the recommendations contained in the report commissioned by a former deputy minister. It is as though he were trying to duck the issue, to distract our attention from the fact that he is the one who is responsible for this waste of almost \$1 billion.

The Liberal government, and the Minister of Justice in particular, are abdicating their responsibilities. Their strategy is based on passing Bill C-10A, which has been amended in the Senate, and has yet to be adopted by the House, which in itself negates the powers and privileges of our House. The whole situation is a hypothetical one.

Furthermore, the minister, who had to quickly backtrack on pouring a further \$72 million into this infamous program to prevent his majority government from being brought down, today announced that he was planning on asking for additional funds yet again.

He justifies this by citing major changes to the management of Canada's firearms registration program, by moving it under the responsibility of the Solicitor General. This is an undeniable admission of his department's incompetence, and the incompetence of his predecessor in particular, who is now the Minister of Industry.

The real problem, the one that affects the crux of this government initiative, lies in the Liberals' lack of vision and especially in their chronic and typical lack of transparency. A program that was supposed to have been carefully thought out was totally out of control for years before anyone learned about the scope of the disaster.

This veritable boondoggle has given gun control opponents plenty of ammunition. They are now basing their reasoning to abolish the program on the need to stop the waste of tax dollars.

Those opposed to gun control are trying to influence public opinion with arguments that do not take into consideration the positive results of the program, in terms of preventing and solving serious crimes.

For the Bloc Québécois, the need for such a program remains critical. We believe that it would be quite inappropriate and irresponsible to eliminate it. The Bloc Québécois will ensure that all aspects of the program currently managed by Quebec will continue to be so managed.

Routine Proceedings

However, this argument for the Canadian Firearms Centre should not be interpreted as support for the Liberal government, but rather as an appeal for the accountability of managers and, above all, the protection of society as a whole.

The Bloc Québécois has always been very open and accountable in the debate on protecting society and the maturity with which major social issues are addressed.

The minister is talking about accountability, a term the Liberals have bandied about for several weeks now. This process should start at the highest levels of government, beginning with the Ministers of Industry and Health, both of whom also held the Justice portfolio.

In closing, remember that it is not only the administrative ability of the ministers, who have both been Minister of Justice at one time, that must be called into question. Beyond that, we must identify those responsible for this sad situation, starting with the hon. member for LaSalle—Émard, who kept the purse strings closed when he was Minister of Finance and who did not have the courage to sound the alarm.

The Minister of Justice's intentions, stated without the slightest regret, justify our mistrust. More than ever, the Bloc Québécois will keep a watchful eye on this arrogant and incompetent government.

• (1220)

[English]

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see that the minister has appeared in the House I think on three occasions on the firearm program. It is a clear indication that the government is struggling to put a brave new face on this program. We listened with interest today about yet another plan which tries to convince Canadians that everything is fine with this program, that it will work and that there will be no problems.

The government likes to refer to this program as the gun control program. It does not like to use registry. Maybe we should rename it the damage control program because clearly that is what it has now become.

Clearly questions arise from the minister's statement, where we now have a whole new action plan and a transfer to the Solicitor General's office. By shuffling the deck or shuffling the responsibility to a new department, what assurance do we have that the fundamental concerns and recommendations of the Auditor General will be met?

There are two issues here. One is that the government has not yet been able to demonstrate clearly the link between the registry, the administration and the management of that registry to its overall objective of gun control and, as it says, that is public safety, which is an honourable goal and is something we all support. At the very best, there is scepticism about whether it has been able to demonstrate that link. Of course the worst case scenario is that there is outright opposition to the registry on whether it fulfils those objectives of public safety and gun control.

While there are those who clearly oppose the registry, as long as it exists, there is a second issue. How is it being managed, how is it being administered and how is it being accounted for? That is at the very heart of the Auditor General's recommendations.

One of the basic problems that got us into this terrible mess in the first place is the complete lack of absence of controls, through the House, to review all estimates. In the past a department would be grilled. At committee, members of the House could go through line by line for more than just a couple of hours and bring the government to account on any particular item. That has now all been lost. If that were in place, I do not think we would be in this situation today.

The government has made the decision over the years to basically bypass Parliament, to bypass the mechanisms of checks and balances that allow us to do our job in holding the government to account.

We have this action plan that talks about accountability and transparency, improving service and reducing costs. We need to have the mechanisms in place, mechanisms that are more than a program advisory committee or an annual report to Parliament. We need a full accounting of those estimates. That is what it will take for this place to determine whether the objectives of this program are being met. The onus is on the government to do that. It has not yet demonstrated that nor has it made the clear link between the benefits of this registry and what it will accomplish or has accomplished, and the overall objective of public safety.

• (1225)

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, the minister started off by talking about positive steps and additional improvements when he should have been talking about further regression and additional costs.

I want every member to remember this day. I want every member to pay close attention to what the government is about to do. I want Canadians to remember that their member of Parliament had the choice.

The blatant disregard for public opinion on this file goes against everything the government has stood for in the past 10 years. For a government that prides itself in following public opinion polls, it has really missed the mark on this one. How many times can we stand in the House and explain to the minister that this registry—and I say registry, it is not gun control, it is a gun registry that we are speaking about—is not about gun safety.

What will it take to get the Liberals to understand that forcing legitimate gun owners to register their long guns, guns used for hunting and shooting, has nothing to do with gun safety? Even Toronto police chief Julian Santino recognized that fact when he said, "The registry is ineffective and a misdirection of public money".

Once again we call on the minister or anyone on that side of the House to stand up and tell Canadians how the program saves lives. They cannot because it does not.

Why does the government not do a value for dollar audit? The results would prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the registry does not work. The government cannot even get the administration of it right.

*Routine Proceedings***INCOME TAX ACT**

I will concede the fact that 1.9 million firearm owners have obtained licences and have registered their guns, if the minister will concede that 1.9 million Canadians have registered their cars but that will not stop accidents either. They do it because they are law-abiding citizens and there is a law which says they have to. I fail to see how registration by law-abiding citizens prevents crime.

The Auditor General said that the government intentionally misled Parliament by funnelling money for the failed project through the backdoor in the supplementary estimates. The government continues to whitewash this project in the hopes that its backbenchers will come around and vote in favour of more government waste.

Not one person I have spoken to is against gun safety. Not one person I have spoken to is against preventing criminals from obtaining firearms. Not one person I have spoken to is opposed to gun control. We originally voted for gun control; in fact, we were the first to introduce the idea. Not one person I have spoken to believes that the registry works.

Just over an hour ago the government House leader stood in the foyer along with us and told Canadians that the implementation of Bill C-10A will save taxpayers money. The first thing the government is looking for is an extra \$15 to buy off the shelf software to correct the old software which is so complicated nobody thinks it can work anyway.

We talk about saving money. This program was supposed to cost \$2 million. It is over \$1 billion and we have been told that five or six years down the road it will only cost \$67 million a year to maintain. We are talking about the administration. We are not talking about the enforcement or other costs. We are again deceiving the Canadian public.

The only smart thing the justice minister did today is what Liberals always do when they run into trouble. He sloughed it off on somebody else. The young innocent Solicitor General now has the problem on his hands.

We have a bill coming to the House. We will see how many Liberals will have the intestinal fortitude to stand and defeat it as they have been asked to do and how many will stay at home as most of them do when we get into a crunch on a situation like this one.

* * *

●(1230)

*[Translation]***NATIONAL SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY ACT**

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-399, An Act to establish a national registry of sex offenders and to amend the Criminal Code (sex offences against persons under the age of fourteen years).

She said: Mr. Speaker, following the tabling of petitions signed by 40,000 residents of Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay, I am introducing this bill, which deals with pedophilia and provides much harsher sentencing for sex offenders, psychological support for victims and their families, as well as creating a sex offender registry to facilitate police supervision of such offenders.

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

Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-400, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (public transportation costs).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to introduce my bill to allow individuals who use public transportation to deduct from their taxes some of the costs of travelling by bus, subway or commuter train.

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

* * *

*[English]***CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT**

Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-401, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to establish a Board of Management to oversee operations of the Correctional Service of Canada.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill which is designed to reform our corrections system. The bill would enhance the accountability of Correctional Service of Canada. The legislation establishes a seven member board of management which would be responsible for the operations of the corrections system. Two members of the board would represent the interests of victims.

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

* * *

●(1235)

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-402, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to establish an Office of Victims Ombudsman of Canada.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill which would create an office of victims ombudsman. This independent body would investigate victims' complaints on the conduct and policies of Correctional Service of Canada and the National Parole Board. In other words, the bill is about victims' rights and how to guarantee they are respected.

Routine Proceedings

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

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-403, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to provide for judicial discretion to assign a security classification of maximum to high-risk violent offenders.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill. The intent of the bill is to enhance public safety. The bill would give a sentencing judge the authority to assign a binding security classification of maximum to high-risk violent offenders.

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

* * *

CORRECTIONS AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE ACT

Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-404, an act to amend the Corrections and Conditional Release Act to provide for the disclosure of certain information about offenders.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill. The legislation is about transparency and about providing information to victims and the public on how justice is implemented in Canada. The legislation would make the security classification of offenders public information and would also greatly enhance the access of victims to information about offenders, such as advance notice of prisoner transfers.

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

* * *

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois has been calling for a public inquiry into the sponsorship program but so far, the government has refused this request and ordered a few internal investigations and minor changes to the program rather than be transparent and do what Canadians are asking for.

More than 300 people in Quebec signed a petition calling for a public inquiry in order to shed light on the allegations of wrongdoing that weigh on the government and its leaders.

The Bloc Québécois has taken the initiative of this petition to obtain explanations for the close ties between the Liberal Party, its ministers and some ad agencies.

We hope that the political financing bill will prevent these things from happening again in the future.

[*English*]

CANADIAN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COLLEGE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Renfrew—

Nipissing—Pembroke who live in Arnprior, Braeside, Pakenham, Renfrew and Burnstown, I am presenting a petition requesting that Parliament recognize that the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College is essential to Canadians for training in emergency situations. They point out that the facility should stay in Arnprior and that the government should upgrade the facility in order to provide the necessary training to Canadians.

● (1240)

FALUN GONG

Ms. Val Meredith (South Surrey—White Rock—Langley, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from 130 constituents who are concerned about human rights in China. They are calling upon Parliament to initiate a resolution to condemn China's persecution of Falun Gong at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and request China to do three things: one, to immediately stop the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners; two, to unconditionally release all Falun Gong practitioners imprisoned for their religious beliefs, including 15 family members of Canadians currently detained; and three, to allow unrestricted access into China to the United Nations rapporteur on torture to carry out independent third party investigations on the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition from my constituents calling upon Parliament to protect the rights of Canadians to be free to share their religious beliefs without fear of persecution. The petitioners feel that the addition of sexual orientation as an explicitly protected category under sections 318 and 319 of the Criminal Code of Canada could lead to individuals being unable to exercise their religious freedom as protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by 30 individuals from my riding. The petitioners are asking Parliament to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect their children from any material promoting child pornography and to make it clear that any such exploitation of children will be met with swift punishment.

CANADA POST

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by approximately 40 individuals from my riding. They are asking Parliament to repeal section 13(5) of the Canada Post Corporation Act which prohibits rural route mail couriers from having collective bargaining rights.

*Private Members' Business***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Jason Kenney: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand that most of the MPs principally responsible for Bill C-13 and particularly the Group No. 2 amendments could not be here today. Consequently there have been deliberations among the parties as a result of which I believe you would find, Mr. Speaker, if you were to seek it, unanimous consent that the House move directly to private members' business.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Calgary Southeast have the consent of the House for his proposal?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the House give its consent to see the clock as being at 1:30 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, after consultation among all parties in the House, I believe you would find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, should debate on Bill C-280 be concluded today, all questions deemed necessary to dispose of second reading of the bill be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, February 25, 2003, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie have consent to put the 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)

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Colleagues, let me follow on the agreements that have been concurred in thus far and inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, government orders has been extended by 26 minutes. Accordingly, we will see the clock as being 1:56 p.m.

Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1245)

The Deputy Speaker: On the matter of private members' business let me also share with the House that I have received notice from the hon. member for Manicouagan that he is unable to move his motion during private members' hour on Monday, February 24.

[*Translation*]

Since it was not possible to arrange an exchange of positions in the order of precedence, I am directing the clerk to drop that item of business to the bottom of the order of precedence.

Private members' hour will thus be cancelled and government orders will begin at 11 a.m.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from December 4, 2002, consideration of the motion that Bill C-280, an act to amend the Criminal Code (selling wildlife), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and speak to Bill C-280, an act to amend the Criminal Code (selling wildlife), put forward by my colleague from South Surrey—White Rock—Langley. This is my second time speaking on the bill because I view the bill to be of the highest importance and I would like to commend my colleague for bringing forward this private member's initiative to address this issue.

Her major concern has been the selling of wildlife, especially bears, which impacts Canada in regard to the parts of bears that are illegally sold all over the world. I was reading a publication by an investigative network of the Humane Society of the United States and the Humane Society International about the global underground trade in bear parts. It gives a pretty terrible picture of what is happening in Canada and around the world in the illegal trade of bear parts, which are traded for medicinal purposes.

The headline of this document is "Forest to Pharmacy: Canada's Underground Trade in Bear Parts". It outlines in detail the laws of other countries to stem this terrible tragedy that takes place in our forests and with wildlife across the world. Based on this book, this trade is not specifically restricted only to North America. It takes place all over the world, but because we have a large bear population this has a major impact in Canada as well. As recently as about a week ago, a documentary on television indicated that there is poaching and killing of grizzly bears in Alberta. Forestry roads allow access to the bears and so also give access to those who are illegally trading in bear parts.

In my last speech, I talked about having grown up in a country that has wildlife as one of its natural resources and where poaching plays a major role. Around the world there have been attempts to stop this trade when animals become endangered. We have seen some successful programs, especially in Africa in dealing with the elephants, and with other animals, for example, the tigers in Asia.

Private Members' Business

Now we have to look at this and see what is happening with the bears and this illegal trading. In my point of view, we need to take two levels of approach. One level of approach is what my colleague is doing in trying to strengthen the laws so that our conservation officers have the tools and the mechanism to fight this illegal trading in bear parts. It is commendable that my colleague has brought forward the bill and it is to be hoped that the government sees why my colleague brought it forward, because there is a heavy, heavy concern.

I think that Canadians in general do not seem to recognize or to know that there is a vast illegal trade in bear parts going on around the world. If they did, they would rise up in anger. They would demand that the government take some action. That is why this has been brought in front of the House of Commons to be debated: so that government can take some action on the legislative front to give our officers the tools they need to bring to justice those who are breaking these rules and engaging in this horrible crime where bears are killed, killed only for their gall bladders and for their paws, because there is a perception that it gives some kind of vitality to life.

• (1250)

For our part, we need to work hard to ensure that laws are there. On the other side, too, we need to get on to the educational front. I am glad that the humane society and the animal welfare people are bringing this issue to Canadians.

Also, the other aspect is for the government to work more closely with other governments, and in this particular instance, the governments in Asia where these parts are in demand. Asia has a market for them, and as other previous experiences in wildlife management have shown, if there is a market for these parts it is difficult to stop the poaching and the killing. The only successful programs are those which have gone to the root cause, the market. In this case, we have to do the same thing. I think we need to talk with governments in countries where markets are thriving. We need to go on an educational spree in that part of the world and we need to let them know that they are not taking the right approach, that this is killing wildlife. We need to ask them what benefits they are deriving out of this.

A two-way approach needs to be worked out. If we go on an educational spree, people will start to look at this issue and the market will start to decline. If the market declines and it is no longer profitable to kill a bear for its parts, for example, then we will have done a tremendous justice.

That is not to set aside the fact that we are trying to bring in a bill in this Parliament dealing with this issue. I am happy to note that the bill is a votable bill, so that all members of Parliament who look at this will recognize why this legislative assembly needs to give tools to our officers to stop this trade. Again, as I say, it does not mean that at the end of the day we do not try to stop the market. With the combination of these two approaches, the bill and the education, we will have done justice to our future generations by protecting our wildlife species.

With that, I again congratulate my colleague from South Surrey—White Rock—Langley for bringing forward the bill. I hope that when it comes to the House for a vote it will receive the unanimous approval of all members of Parliament and we will act on this.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to acknowledge the hard work of the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley and thank her for bringing this very important issue to the attention of Parliament.

While we are not here to debate the importance of dealing with poaching, the issue is whether the bill in its present form is the most appropriate mechanism for addressing poaching. In my view it is not. The bill takes existing offences and essentially duplicates them in the Criminal Code.

Bill C-280 does not have the appearance and elements of a true criminal law scheme. The scheme in Bill C-280 proposes what is essentially a regulatory scheme and drops it into the Criminal Code. The Criminal Code is not an appropriate statute for this kind of law. This is especially so where there is a range of existing federal and provincial laws that directly and indirectly regulate the same subject matter.

Even in the absence of all these other relevant inapplicable laws, the measures in the bill would be best dealt with by regulation rather than by amending the Criminal Code.

The bill expressly provides that the offence provisions in respect to wildlife that is not a threatened or endangered species do not apply to persons who act in accordance with a licence issued pursuant to a federal or provincial statute or regulation. This is usually associated with regulations. The essence is that if we have authorization we can do something but we are in violation of the law if we do it without authorization. This is often what regulations look like, but the Criminal Code does not work the same way. The application of a criminal offence provision does not normally rely upon whether a licence to conduct a prohibited activity has been issued by federal or provincial authority.

Another feature of the Criminal Code offences is that they almost always apply to everyone. It is extremely rare for the Criminal Code to specify exemptions for criminal liability in respect of particular offences. The exemptions set out in sections 204 to 207 inclusive of the Criminal Code relating to the gaming offences and part of the code are notable exceptions to the usual rules against exemptions. We can see the contradiction between the two. On one hand we want to deal with one specific problem, but by doing it through the code, we are brushing everybody with the same brush and making that exemption become quite problematic.

Nonetheless, it is extremely rare to specify exemptions that depend upon the exercise of discretion by a member of the executive branch of government. However, subclause 447.8 of Bill C-280 would grant discretion to the Minister of the Environment to issue an order exempting “any person or class of persons” from “application of all or any” of the offence provisions in respect to threatened or endangered species. In my view this feature is highly unusual and highly unheard of.

It is also rare in a Criminal Code context to have a member of the executive confer with an advisory body in order to determine whether the subject matter of the offence, in this case wildlife, falls within a particular category. I note that subclause 447.7(1) and (2) respectively would give the Minister of the Environment the discretion to determine whether a species of wildlife is an—

•(1255)

Mr. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is nice to see you in the Chair. I thought I would give you a little practice standing up and sitting down in working as the Speaker. I want to congratulate you on that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gerry Ritz): That is actually not a point of order. We will continue on with debate.

Mr. Mac Harb: Mr. Speaker, if the member thought he was going to derail my train of thought, he has failed to do so. However I commend the member for standing and making notice of the Chair.

I want to move on to say that subclauses 447.7(1) and 447.7(2) respectively give the Minister of the Environment the discretion to determine whether a species of wildlife is an endangered or threatened species. Before making a designation of this nature, however, the Minister of the Environment must consult with the committee on the status of endangered wildlife in Canada. Again, this kind of provision is entirely in keeping with a regulatory scheme that has a broad public welfare goal, such as preserving wildlife, as is the case with the intent of my colleague.

In order to achieve that goal, it is necessary to have a flexible formula for determining species at risk. As I noted a little earlier, this scheme is moving away from the usual formula in the Criminal Code of a prohibited, morally reprehensible conduct that is sanctioned by a penalty.

Further, I would suggest that the maximum penalty for offences in relation to threatened or endangered species would be four and eight years respectively. These maximum terms are unknown in the Criminal Code. There is no precedent for this kind of maximum penalty. This is another example of the inconsistency of these provisions with other provisions in the Criminal Code when it comes to penalties.

In closing I would like to reiterate that there is a distinction between the objectives of legislation and the mechanics of the legislation itself to achieve an objective.

As I said earlier, the intent, as my colleague is trying to establish here, is to protect endangered species. It is a good intent but the way he is getting around it is not the most appropriate or efficient way, because it cannot be dealt with through the Criminal Code. The Criminal Code would not make it workable. Rather, it should be done, as it is now being done, through the regulatory process.

There is another important point that I wanted to bring to the attention of my colleagues. At the provincial level there are a number of mechanisms where provincial governments, through their regulatory processes as well as through legislation, can deal with some of those issues that exist within their jurisdictions.

I did not want to touch on the fact that we would be duplicating and infringing on provincial jurisdiction, but I will leave that for some of my colleagues who might be speaking to this issue later on.

•(1300)

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I take part today in this debate on Bill C-280 put forward by my hon. colleague from South

Private Members' Business

Surrey—White Rock—Langley. The purpose of this bill is to criminalize the selling of wildlife.

Every effort must be made to prevent this activity, which is unacceptable, both environmentally and socially. I find however that the Criminal Code is too often used to raise the issue of criminalization.

What is the consequence of using the Criminal Code to penalize certain activities, whether environmental or other? It gives the federal government both an opportunity and the legislative means to step into areas of provincial jurisdiction. As my hon. Liberal colleague said earlier, and I agree with him, legislation and regulations exist in the provinces to effectively manage this activity.

That is the problem, because the bill before us is an infringement upon provincial jurisdictions according to the distribution of legislative jurisdictions under the Constitution Act, 1867.

I believe it is important to remember that some provinces, including Quebec, already have a special regime to control the sale of animals. In Quebec, I will quote among others, the Act respecting the Conservation and Development of Wildlife. Section 69 says:

No person may sell or purchase an animal the sale of which is prohibited by regulation. Authorized sale. However, the government may, by regulation, authorize the sale of an animal referred to in the first paragraph according to such norms and conditions as the government may determine.

“No person may sell or purchase an animal the sale of which is prohibited by regulation.” That is what section 69 of the Quebec Act respecting the Conservation of Wildlife says.

The danger is that through this private member's bill the federal government will, under the Criminal Code, intrude into areas of provincial jurisdiction while some provinces, including Quebec, have already been proactive in this regard. Quebec has also been proactive through its legislation to protect species at risk.

Back in 1990, the Quebec National Assembly passed a bill to protect species at risk on its territory.

An hon. member: It was under a Liberal government.

Mr. Bernard Bigras: That is correct. It was under Robert Bourassa's Liberal government that Quebec passed that bill.

What did the federal government do 13 years later? It passed Bill C-5. Some of my colleagues here in the House voted for it. I will not name their ridings, but some of them were once ministers in the Quebec government. They agreed to a federal statute overlapping and duplicating legislation passed in Quebec in 1990.

Today we do not need a bill which, through the Criminal Code, will give more power to the federal government to regulate the sale of wildlife. Why? Not because we do not want the sale of wildlife to be regulated, but because Quebec, in some respects, has been proactive and already has distinctive legislation in this regard.

•(1305)

I can understand that some provinces have not been as proactive in this matter. But when a province has been proactive, it must be understood that the Criminal Code is a powerful tool, a powerful instrument for imposing measures on some provinces, among other things, for the sale of wildlife.

Private Members' Business

Depending on the infraction, under sections 165, 167 and 172 of An Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife, there can be fines ranging from \$500 to \$16,400, prison terms of up to one year, and administrative penalties that could result in permits being suspended for up to six years.

Clearly, with the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife, Quebec is not simply banning the sale of wildlife, and that is made clear in section 69 that I just quoted. The act also provides for penalties, fines, prison terms and administrative penalties, to ensure that for the sale of wildlife, this is not just some obscure principle, but a principle that is strictly enforced when certain individuals decide to break the law.

In Quebec, there is a law with this objective. We fear that the federal government is interfering—as if it were not interfering enough—in an area of provincial jurisdiction. This is not necessary. This should be left up to the provinces.

Essentially, the bill's purpose is inconsistent with what the federal government has always said; the government opposite has always preached full partnership with the provinces in terms of enforcing environmental legislation, be it the Environmental Protection Act, the Species at Risk Act, or the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

When it comes to practising what you preach, however, the opposite happens. Take the example of the sub-agreement on environmental assessment or even the Canada-wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization. There are partnership principles, but why did Quebec not sign this accord?

When we consider legislation from the House, we realize that Bill C-280 contains essentially the same things as Bill C-5. This is unacceptable. The principles in the agreements must be reflected within bills from the House of Commons.

When we see that Bill C-280 on the sale of wildlife seeks to duplicate, to make it a crime, under the Criminal Code, to sell wildlife, when provisions already exist at the provincial level, we are led to question the wishes, not only of the federal government, but of this Parliament, since this motion and this bill were introduced by the opposition.

As we can see, it is not just the federal government proposing provisions which would duplicate existing legislation. On this side of the House, there are also members and political parties that share this vision of Canadian nation building.

If Quebec had not done its homework in this regard, I could almost understand the desire of the federal government to step in. Quebec was the first to adopt legislation on endangered species, and that was in 1990. It has taken the federal government an additional 13 years to adopt similar legislation. The difference is also noticeable when we look at our legislation on environmental assessment.

I will conclude by saying that we cannot accept a bill which, through the Criminal Code, would give more power to the federal government, when the work is already being done in Quebec and things work fine. We are not interested in setting aside the existing system.

• (1310)

[English]

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to briefly participate in the debate on Bill C-280, a private member's bill addressing concerns about the selling, killing, capturing and possessing of wildlife, especially endangered species.

My colleague from Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore would surely have wanted to participate in the debate, however, he is in Halifax representing all the Nova Scotia members at the funeral of a beloved Nova Scotia leader, Dr. Ruth Johnson. She was committed to her community, her church, and most of all to her beloved Africville. She has inspired literally generations of Nova Scotians, both in the Afro-Nova Scotian community and beyond. The member is sorry for not being here this afternoon. Knowing that he is there expressing the condolences of myself and my party I am happy to speak in his stead in this debate.

I wish to congratulate the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley on bringing this private member's bill forward again. I know she had done so previously but it expired on the Order Paper. She has demonstrated that she has a real concern about unacceptable practices that are too apparent, not just in Canada, but in other parts of the world as well regarding the handling of wildlife organs, wildlife parts and so on. She has taken it upon herself to bring this issue out of the shadows and into the light of day, and that this is a concern that must be taken seriously.

There are many citizens who are concerned about this. The purpose of this private member's bill is to place this issue higher on the public agenda and demand the kind of action that is called for from governments.

I have noted in the previous debate and again in debate this afternoon that there have been concerns raised about whether the manner in which the member proposes to address the problem is the appropriate one, acknowledging that jurisdictionally this is a matter that belongs primarily at the provincial and territorial level. I think there is no question about that.

I know the member herself, in responding to some of those questions, has indicated in the past that it is not her intention in any way to crowd the jurisdiction of provinces and territories, or in some way displace them regarding the handling of wildlife. Rather, the intent would be to strengthen at the federal level, in the most extreme cases the Criminal Code, provisions that might in fact back up the regulatory measures and existing laws at the provincial level.

At the end of the day, it is not clear to me whether the justice ministry, for example, would be prepared to see this as an appropriate way to go. The member is to be commended for bringing the concern forward once again to the House of Commons.

There are some member, and I am not alone in this, who represent urban ridings. Those of us that represent urban ridings are not inclined to get involved in this kind of debate because there are not great numbers of wildlife, endangered species or otherwise, that may be at risk from the poaching and preying on our wildlife that is contemplated by the legislation.

Private Members' Business

I have the privilege of representing the city of Halifax. Although Halifax is very much an urban riding, because of the foresight of our pioneers in Halifax about the importance of public space and wilderness space, we happen to be blessed with wonderful Point Pleasant Park at one end of the city. On the north end of the peninsula of Halifax there is Seaview Park and on the outskirts of the mainland of the city of Halifax there is a great deal of green space that aims to achieve the same objectives set out by the member: to improve habitat, and protect and enhance wildlife in our constituencies.

• (1315)

Am I aware whether there is poaching for this purpose happening in my riding? Frankly, I am not. I have not heard from constituents about it. However, I know that whether this is happening in my backyard or not, there is a proud tradition in Halifax, and throughout Nova Scotia, of citizen-based initiatives, community-based initiatives and non-governmental organizations that have shown a lot of leadership around issues of natural habitat, and have focused on the preservation and enhancement of wildlife and so on. The member must be commended for addressing this concern in the bill that is before us.

I am not aware whether this member has consulted directly with aboriginal leaders and aboriginal Canadians throughout her own province on this issue. There is no group of Canadians which has more expertise and more demonstrated commitment to the responsible use of our wildlife and responsible management of our habitat than first nations and other aboriginal Canadians. All too often that expertise is not consulted.

We do not recognize often enough the available resources of aboriginal Canadians, particularly when they have had so little support from the government around the kind of sustainable practices that would help them lift their own communities out of poverty. They are not brought in often enough as the experts and advisers that could give the best possible advice to the Government of Canada and to any one of the 301 members who share concerns about these issues.

In closing, it is important for us to be addressing this issue. I will listen with interest to the debate because, while I support the spirit of the bill, I am not entirely persuaded that the bill that is now before the House is one that will be truly effective in the manner that the member would wish.

I listened with interest to the comments from the member for Ottawa Centre. He too indicated that he shared the spirit in which the bill was introduced. However, speaking as a private member, and I know he did not pretend to be speaking on behalf of the Government of Canada, he showed a certain amount of chutzpah by saying he was not sure that it would be the most efficient way of dealing with this problem.

After the embarrassment of his own government's handling of the endangered species legislation and the manner in which the national firearms registration has been handled, it is good to know that there are some members on the government side who are genuinely focused on the question of the most effective and efficient manner of dealing with issues that concern Canadians.

• (1320)

Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC): Mr. Speaker, in relation to the time that is available, I just want to say a very few brief words on the bill brought forward by my hon. colleague and friend from South Surrey—White Rock—Langley.

This kind of legislation should come forth from private members. It is an exceptionally well thought out, well developed bill. It shows a lot of initiative from the member concerned. It is also the type of bill we certainly can support.

One concern in Canada, in relation to the preservation of our wildlife in particular, is what goes on above and beyond the legitimate side of it. We could also talk perhaps about the same thing in relation to the fishery.

We can bring in all kinds of rules, regulations and quotas and as long as they are adhered to we say that everything should be okay. However nobody knows what goes on behind the scenes in relation to the amount of poaching, excess catching, selling under the table and the list goes on. Certainly in relation to our wildlife, that is the case. The more special, or endangered or rare a species, the more lucrative it is for the black market.

The only way to stop something like that is for individuals across the country to take an interest and arrange to police this matter themselves just by drawing awareness to the various authorities. We have 1-800 lines that people can call. We have agencies through which we can go without causing a stir or getting drawn into it. Consequently these are the types of things that individuals should do.

I have seen in my own situation too often where people exceed bag limits, where for example instead of one moose, there are five. It goes on and on. As these statistics are not registered, after a while it plays havoc with the number of animals left within that certain species.

Without belabouring the point, let me just say to the member that it is exceptionally well thought out legislation. Undoubtedly it can be modified even a little more to make it a bit better. No legislation is perfect and we always can improve upon all of it. However the basis of it is extremely good and we support it wholeheartedly.

Mr. Alan Tonks (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if passed, Bill C-280 will create a new part XI.I in the Criminal Code and will create three new offences relating to the selling of wildlife. These offences will apply despite the provisions as has been pointed out of other federal acts of Parliament.

However the bill expressly states that the section setting out offences does not alter the application of any existing aboriginal or treaty rights, the point that was just raised by the member across the way.

The offences proposed in Bill C-280 would address three activities: the selling of wildlife in whole or in part; the killing or capturing of wildlife for the purpose of selling that wildlife in whole or in part; and finally, possessing wildlife for the purpose of selling wildlife in whole or in part.

Private Members' Business

It is worth noting at the outset that in contrast to penalty provisions found in the Canada Wildlife Act, the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act and the new Species at Risk Act, the offences in Bill C-280 are considered to be so serious that they must be proceeded with as has been explained by indictment only.

Providing for straight indictable offences is not an insignificant matter. I would like to take just a minute to examine the significance of providing for a dual procedure offence versus a straight indictable offence.

A dual procedure offence permits the prosecutor to proceed either by way of summary conviction or by indictment. There is a choice. The decision to do so will depend upon the circumstances of the particular case and therefore dual procedure offence models offer a great deal of flexibility for the penalty to fit the crime.

This is important in situations where the seriousness of a particular case may vary considerably. A summary conviction procedure can provide justice in an expeditious manner without compromising the quality of justice delivered. It is an appropriate procedure by which to address less serious instances of a particular crime. This flexibility is lost if the offences in Bill C-280 are classified as a straight indictable offence.

Restricting the offences to indictable offences also creates resource implications for the criminal justice system. Classification of an offence as an indictable offence means that the accused has an election as to the mode of trial, including an option to have a preliminary inquiry and a jury trial. There does not seem to be any valid policy reason for restricting the mode of trial to proceedings by indictment only.

In addition to the issue of maintaining flexibility in the justice system, there is another consideration. Penalties for new offences must fit within the Criminal Code in a sense that they are not disproportionate to the relative seriousness of other offences that may carry the same or lesser penalties. This is not an exact science but I suggest that the penalty provisions in Bill C-280 offend this principle of proportionality.

For example, it seems disproportionate that a second offence in relation to a threatened or endangered species carries a maximum penalty of eight years in Bill C-280 when the maximum penalty for an assault on indictment is five years. Further, the maximum penalties for offences in relation to threatened or endangered species of four years and eight years respectively are maximum terms that are unknown in the Criminal Code. This is another example of the inconsistency of these provisions with other penalty provisions in the Criminal Code. I also note that with a few exceptions most offences in the Criminal Code do not prescribe a higher maximum penalty for a second or subsequent offence.

Although the offences in Bill C-280 can involve serious commercial enterprises, I suggest there is a strong argument for saying that the penalty provisions as currently drafted are inconsistent with other offence provisions in the Criminal Code. As a minimum, it can be argued that they ought to be dual procedure offences.

In respect of the broader objectives of Bill C-280, I think most members of the House would agree that the goal of discouraging the selling of wildlife and wildlife parts, particularly wildlife which is threatened or endangered species, is a laudable one. The question however is whether this bill is the best way to achieve the goal.

This in turn raises a larger question: are the provisions of Bill C-280 in their essence about the prohibition of morally blameworthy behaviour which is traditionally associated with Parliament's exercise of its criminal law power?

● (1325)

Alternatively, is Bill C-280 more accurately characterized as a public welfare offence, which is traditionally associated with regulatory offences in a civil context? It is the position of the government that, from a constitutional perspective, Bill C-280 in its pith and substance is concerned with the regulation of wildlife rather than with prohibiting morally blameworthy behaviour. As such, the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code cannot be supported.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly outline some of the features of the bill that are traditionally associated with the creation of offences in the regulatory context rather than with Criminal Code offences.

One important feature of the bill is that it does not apply equally to all Canadians. It expressly exempts from application any person who is authorized, pursuant to a federal or provincial permit or licence, to commit the acts which otherwise would qualify as an offence as long as the wildlife involved is not a threatened or endangered species. Exemptions of this nature are extremely rare in the context of the Criminal Code.

Bill C-280 also permits the Minister of the Environment to exempt from application of the act any person or class of persons in respect of a threatened or endangered species where, in the opinion of the minister, the exemption is necessary or in the public interest. A provision of this nature is at risk of being declared unconstitutional on the basis that the criteria are so subjective and general that they do not provide any real limits on the behaviour to be exempted.

Another feature of the act, which is not normally found in the Criminal Code, is that the Minister of the Environment is given the power to designate by regulation an animal or wildlife for the purposes of the act. Another provision would permit the Minister of the Environment to designate a species of wildlife as either an endangered species or as a threatened species provided that the minister had consulted with the committee on the status of endangered wildlife in Canada. Again these provisions are more consistent with legislation aimed at the protection and regulation of wildlife than they are with the provisions found in the Criminal Code.

In concluding my remarks today, I would like to commend the hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley for bringing this important issue to the attention of Parliament. The goal of the legislation is laudable. My inability to support the bill does not relate to the fact that the goal of the legislation cannot be supported. The lack of support for the bill is based on the fact that the mechanism chosen to achieve the objective is inconsistent with the Criminal Code and with other federal legislation governing wildlife.

Private Members' Business

I would like to thank the hon. members for their attention with respect to this bill, and again I would like to congratulate the member opposite for putting forward the spirit of the bill, with which we can all agree.

● (1330)

Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Canadian Alliance): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the private member's bill by my colleague for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley.

I do not want to address the bill directly but I do want to make a point about how urgent legislation such as this is by drawing to the attention of the House two examples.

Since being elected there have been two examples of mass killing and selling of wildlife. In the first one, I received a phone call from a citizen in Clinton, British Columbia, on Highway 97 going north. I was told about a semi-trailer truck that stopped in front of a house. The trailer was full of sacks of frozen salmon. The salmon apparently had come from the Fraser River and were heading eastward for sale. I do not know where. I would guess probably Alberta and the Prairies.

The person was concerned that such a large number of fish would be going out, and obviously they were not legally caught fish. I contacted the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the response I received was that unless I had a licence number there was nothing it could do.

It is interesting that while there was so little concern for that, there have been a number of instances where the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has been quite happy to charge people with destroying fish habitat when the person involved was trying to save his house by unplugging a dam that was causing flooding.

A court case is going on in my riding right now because a large flood of Big Creek took out a person's hay fields and was endangering his house. He put a machine in the creek to unplug the dam that was causing the flood. He is in court now for destroying fish habitat.

The other instance I want to bring to the attention of the House is a conversation I had with a guide-outfitter in Anaham Lake, an aboriginal man who showed me his licences and the maps of his guiding territory. He was concerned about the number of semi-trailer loads of moose that were being killed and taken out of his region. His primary concern was that there were enough of those animals being taken out that it was endangering his livelihood.

The point I am making is that this is not a tiny little problem where once in a while a bear is killed and perhaps a part of the bear is sold to someone who may ship it to China or some other country where these parts are valuable. That is wrong. I would not disagree that people doing that should be charged. However the point I am making is that this is not just the odd part. These are truckloads of animals that, by my constituent's reports, have been seen and have been sent out of the country.

I think that as the House considers this private member's bill it should be aware that this is a large problem in some rural parts of our country.

● (1335)

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this private member's bill today. The government side of the House understands and respects what is at issue here and the grave concern there is in this particular area. We do have a problem, however, where it pertains to the legislation specifically and jurisdiction under the Constitution. I will take a couple of minutes to stress two specific points in those terms.

First, the bill would interfere with the provinces' ability to deal with matters within their legislative jurisdiction as they see fit. The federal government does not simply take over matters of provincial jurisdiction if someone is of the view that provincial laws could be tougher. This is exactly the rationale given by the member responsible for the bill. Perhaps this issue should be taken up directly with the provinces whose legislation she considers to be weak.

This is simply not a sufficient reason to impinge on provincial legislative powers under the Constitution. In fact, with this as the stated objective, the bill is likely unconstitutional on that ground alone. If the federal government legislates to strengthen valid provincial law, the federal government is in effect trampling on provincial rights. We cannot do this, otherwise our Criminal Code could end up covering every aspect of provincial law with more serious penalties.

A second and equally important reason as to why the bill's approach is not proper is that it devalues the true criminal nature of offences contained within the Criminal Code. Recent amendments to the Criminal Code on matters such as child pornography, terrorism, organized crime and existing offences such as sexual assault, murder, robbery, break and enter, and so on, would be devalued if we used the Criminal Code to remedy offences of a more regulatory nature.

Anti-poaching offences are clearly of a more regulatory nature. The activities that are prohibited are lawful if there is a licence issued. It is the licence that marks the dividing line between an offence and lawful behaviour. This is the hallmark of regulatory law, not criminal law.

In her last speech, the member for South Surrey—White Rock—Langley said that this was no different from there being driving offences in the Criminal Code. In fact, there is a very important difference. Driving offences in the Criminal Code are based on a standard of criminal fault, whereas provincial driving offences are not. Provincial driving offences are strict liability offences and Criminal Code driving offences require criminal negligence to be shown. The standards are different. The nature of the offence is different.

However what is being proposed in this legislation would be exactly the same offence with the same standard of fault: killing a wild animal without a licence. This provincial offence would simply be duplicated in the code.

Private Members' Business

In respect to driving offences, dangerous driving puts all of society at risk and so it is prohibited. It is prohibited criminally for the better protection of society as a whole. There is no licence for dangerous driving in any circumstances. The province never permits the kind of activity prohibited by the code.

The killing or taking of wild animals, on the other hand, is legal with the permission of the province with the issuance of a licence. It is only when there is no licence that the behaviour becomes unlawful. The absence of a licence is what sets apart lawful from unlawful. This is fundamentally different from dangerous driving provisions. The provinces do not authorize dangerous driving. It is potentially harmful behaviour and it is behaviour that is without qualification. In other words, the member's comparison is inapt.

● (1340)

The federal government has jurisdiction to legislate in regard to wildlife poaching where the poaching takes place on federal land, where trade in animal parts crosses a provincial boundary or has an international aspect, or where the subject matter is the preservation of an endangered species. In this regard, the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act, the Canada Wildlife Act, the Species at Risk Act and the Migratory Birds Convention Act are all operative pieces of federal legislation aimed at protecting wildlife in various ways.

The federal government has not neglected its responsibilities. There are existing comprehensive laws to protect wildlife. In any case, if the member from South Surrey does not think these statutes are adequate, then her bill should have sought to amend these statutes.

There is no compelling reason offered for why matters covered by provincial laws and a myriad of specialized federal laws should now be included in yet another statute. The approach in Bill C-280 would create an even more complicated and fragmented regime of anti-poaching laws.

The member also mentioned that the bill would not encroach on provincial jurisdiction because it would not force the provinces to use the code. This is not a determining factor for whether or not a bill would be unconstitutional. It is not the preservation of provincial prosecutorial choice that is important. We must look to the constitutional basis for the proposed measures.

Is the member suggesting that this is valid criminal law? This is hard to sustain given that the very same matters are legislated by the federal government in non-criminal statutes and regulated by the provinces under a power that clearly is not criminal law.

I do not think the federal government should be in the habit of judging the adequacy of every provincial statute and then legislating

improvements where it sees fit. This risks overstepping constitutional boundaries. If provincial legislation prescribes inadequate penalties for a particular kind of behaviour, then provinces should be encouraged to improve their laws. The government believes in working with provincial counterparts to solve problems that affect Canadian society. It does not believe in taking over unilaterally.

We cannot use the Criminal Code to remedy every deficiency in provincial law. We cannot simply duplicate every provincial offence in the Criminal Code and jack up the penalty. The bill essentially says that provincial wildlife poaching offences would now be criminal offences. This creates a dangerous precedent. It essentially declares the proposition that every provincial offence could be made a federal offence under the Criminal Code. In the absence of some link to a head of federal legislative power under the Constitution, this is unacceptable.

In addition, the bill is flawed in its approach to criminal law. It is inconsistent with existing criminal law in terms of procedure and in terms of penalties. The penalties provided are three, four and eight year maximum terms, depending upon the circumstances. These are unknown penalties under the Criminal Code. The penalty regime in the code is built on two, five, ten and fourteen year terms. There is no reason to create an entirely new grade of sentences.

Also, offences in Bill C-280 would be straight, indictable offences. This is grossly inconsistent with most criminal offences. Even offences like sexual assault are dual procedure, allowing the Crown to proceed summarily with simpler procedures where the circumstances suggest it is appropriate.

While we applaud the spirit behind the bill, the government cannot support it because it goes beyond achieving its objective in an inefficient and inappropriate way. There is a regime of laws in place that deals almost precisely with the same subject matter. There is no clear evidence that federal law in this area is inadequate. If provincial law is inadequate, then provincial law should be improved. There simply is no reason to duplicate existing offences in the Criminal Code, which is normally reserved for the conduct that attracts society's most harsh condemnation.

● (1345)

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

[*Translation*]

It being 1:46 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 1.46 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. BOB KILGER

The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. RÉGINALD BÉLAIR

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MS. ELENI BAKOPANOS

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

HON. ANDY MITCHELL

MR. BILL BLAIKIE

MS. MARLENE CATTERALL

MR. BOB KILGER

MR. JACQUES SAADA

MR. DALE JOHNSTON

MR. JOHN REYNOLDS

HON. DON BOUDRIA

MR. LOYOLA HEARN

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Thirty Seventh Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Abbott, Jim | Kootenay—Columbia | British Columbia | CA |
| Ablonczy, Diane | Calgary—Nose Hill | Alberta | CA |
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | Ontario | Lib. |
| Alcock, Reg | Winnipeg South | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Allard, Carole-Marie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage | Laval East | Quebec | Lib. |
| Anders, Rob | Calgary West | Alberta | CA |
| Anderson, David | Cypress Hills—Grasslands | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment | Victoria | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Assad, Mark | Gatineau | Quebec | Lib. |
| Assadourian, Sarkis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Brampton Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Asselin, Gérard | Charlevoix | Quebec | BQ |
| Augustine, Hon. Jean, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bachand, André | Richmond—Arthabaska | Quebec | PC |
| Bachand, Claude | Saint-Jean | Quebec | BQ |
| Bagnell, Larry | Yukon | Yukon | Lib. |
| Bailey, Roy | Souris—Moose Mountain | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Bakopanos, Eleni, The Acting Speaker | Ahuntsic | Quebec | Lib. |
| Barnes, Rex | Gander—Grand Falls | Newfoundland and Labrador | PC |
| Barnes, Sue | London West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Beaumier, Colleen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue | Brampton West—Mississauga | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bélaire, Réginald, The Acting Speaker | Timmins—James Bay | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bélangier, Mauril | Ottawa—Vanier | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bellemare, Eugène | Ottawa—Orléans | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bennett, Carolyn | St. Paul's | Ontario | Lib. |
| Benoit, Leon | Lakeland | Alberta | CA |
| Bergeron, Stéphane | Verchères—Les-Patriotes | Quebec | BQ |
| Bertrand, Robert | Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle | Quebec | Lib. |
| Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) | Vaughan—King—Aurora | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bigras, Bernard | Rosemont—Petite-Patrie | Quebec | BQ |
| Binet, Gérard | Frontenac—Mégantic | Quebec | Lib. |
| Blaikie, Bill | Winnipeg—Transcona | Manitoba | NDP |
| Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth) | Western Arctic | Northwest Territories | Lib. |
| Bonin, Raymond | Nickel Belt | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bonwick, Paul | Simcoe—Grey | Ontario | Lib. |
| Borotsik, Rick | Brandon—Souris | Manitoba | PC |
| Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bourgeois, Diane | Terrebonne—Blainville | Quebec | BQ |
| Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour | Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton—Melville | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Brien, Pierre | Témiscamingue | Quebec | Ind. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Brison, Scott | Kings—Hants | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Brown, Bonnie | Oakville | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bryden, John | Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Aldershot | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bulte, Sarmite | Parkdale—High Park | Ontario | Lib. |
| Burton, Andy | Skeena | British Columbia | CA |
| Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) | Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Caccia, Hon. Charles | Davenport | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cadman, Chuck | Surrey North | British Columbia | CA |
| Calder, Murray, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade | Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cannis, John | Scarborough Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of National Revenue | Thornhill | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cardin, Serge | Sherbrooke | Quebec | BQ |
| Carignan, Jean-Guy | Québec East | Quebec | Lib. Ind. |
| Carroll, Aileen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs | Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford | Ontario | Lib. |
| Casey, Bill | Cumberland—Colchester | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Casson, Rick | Lethbridge | Alberta | CA |
| Castonguay, Jeannot, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health | Madawaska—Restigouche | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Catterall, Marlene | Ottawa West—Nepean | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Outremont | Quebec | Lib. |
| Chamberlain, Brenda | Guelph—Wellington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Charbonneau, Yvon | Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies | Quebec | Lib. |
| Chatters, David | Athabasca | Alberta | CA |
| Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister | Saint-Maurice | Quebec | Lib. |
| Clark, Right Hon. Joe | Calgary Centre | Alberta | PC |
| Coderre, Hon. Denis, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Bourassa | Quebec | Lib. |
| Collenette, Hon. David, Minister of Transport | Don Valley East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Comartin, Joe | Windsor—St. Clair | Ontario | NDP |
| Comuzzi, Joe | Thunder Bay—Superior North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage | Hamilton East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cotler, Irwin | Mount Royal | Quebec | Lib. |
| Crête, Paul | Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques | Quebec | BQ |
| Cullen, Roy | Etobicoke North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cummins, John | Delta—South Richmond | British Columbia | CA |
| Cuzner, Rodger, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister | Bras d'Or—Cape Breton | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine | Laval Centre | Quebec | BQ |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | British Columbia | NDP |
| Day, Stockwell | Okanagan—Coquihalla | British Columbia | CA |
| Desjarlais, Bev | Churchill | Manitoba | NDP |
| Desrochers, Odina | Lotbinière—L'Érable | Quebec | BQ |
| DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Simcoe North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Dhaliwal, Hon. Herb, Minister of Natural Resources | Vancouver South—Burnaby | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Quebec | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Discepola, Nick | Vaudreuil—Soulanges | Quebec | Lib. |
| Doyle, Norman | | Newfoundland and Labrador | |
| | St. John's East | | PC |
| Dromisky, Stan | Thunder Bay—Atikokan | Ontario | Lib. |
| Drouin, Hon. Claude, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) | Beauce | Quebec | Lib. |
| Dubé, Antoine | Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière | Quebec | BQ |
| Duceppe, Gilles | Laurier—Sainte-Marie | Quebec | BQ |
| Duncan, John | Vancouver Island North | British Columbia | CA |
| Duplain, Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Portneuf | Quebec | Lib. |
| Easter, Hon. Wayne, Solicitor General of Canada | Malpeque | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| Efford, R. John | Bonavista—Trinity—Conception | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Eggleton, Hon. Art | York Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Elley, Reed | Nanaimo—Cowichan | British Columbia | CA |
| Epp, Ken | Elk Island | Alberta | CA |
| Eyking, Mark | Sydney—Victoria | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Farrah, Georges, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok | Quebec | Lib. |
| Finlay, John | Oxford | Ontario | Lib. |
| Fitzpatrick, Brian | Prince Albert | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Folco, Raymonde | Laval West | Quebec | Lib. |
| Fontana, Joe | London North Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Forseth, Paul | New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby | British Columbia | CA |
| Fournier, Ghislain | Manicouagan | Quebec | BQ |
| Frulla, Liza | Verdun—Saint-Henri—Saint-Paul—Pointe Saint-Charles | Quebec | Lib. |
| Fry, Hon. Hedy | Vancouver Centre | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Gagnon, Christiane | Québec | Quebec | BQ |
| Gagnon, Marcel | Champlain | Quebec | BQ |
| Gagnon, Sébastien | Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay | Quebec | BQ |
| Gallant, Cheryl | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | Ontario | CA |
| Galloway, Roger | Sarnia—Lambton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Gaudet, Roger | Berthier—Montcalm | Quebec | BQ |
| Gauthier, Michel | Roberval | Quebec | BQ |
| Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne | Jonquière | Quebec | BQ |
| Godfrey, John | Don Valley West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie—Bathurst | New Brunswick | NDP |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton Centre-East | Alberta | CA |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians | Wascana | Saskatchewan | Lib. |
| Gouk, Jim | Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan | British Columbia | CA |
| Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Toronto Centre—Rosedale | Ontario | Lib. |
| Grewal, Gurmant | Surrey Central | British Columbia | CA |
| Grey, Deborah | Edmonton North | Alberta | CA |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Grose, Ivan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs | Oshawa | Ontario | Lib. |
| Guarnieri, Albina | Mississauga East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Guay, Monique | Laurentides | Quebec | BQ |
| Guimond, Michel | Beauport—Montmorency— Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans | Quebec | BQ |
| Hanger, Art | Calgary Northeast | Alberta | CA |
| Harb, Mac | Ottawa Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Harper, Stephen, Leader of the Opposition | Calgary Southwest | Alberta | CA |
| Harris, Richard | Prince George—Bulkley Valley | British Columbia | CA |
| Harvard, John | Charleswood —St. James— Assiniboia | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Harvey, André, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation | Chicoutimi—Le Fjord | Quebec | Lib. |
| Hearn, Loyola | St. John's West | Newfoundland and Labrador | PC |
| Herron, John | Fundy—Royal | New Brunswick | PC |
| Hill, Grant | Macleod | Alberta | CA |
| Hill, Jay | Prince George—Peace River | British Columbia | CA |
| Hilstrom, Howard | Selkirk—Interlake | Manitoba | CA |
| Hinton, Betty | Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys | British Columbia | CA |
| Hubbard, Charles, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Miramichi | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Ianno, Tony | Trinity—Spadina | Ontario | Lib. |
| Jackson, Ovid | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound | Ontario | Lib. |
| Jaffer, Rahim | Edmonton—Strathcona | Alberta | CA |
| Jennings, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine | Quebec | Lib. |
| Johnston, Dale | Wetaskiwin | Alberta | CA |
| Jordan, Joe | Leeds—Grenville | Ontario | Lib. |
| Karetak-Lindell, Nancy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources | Nunavut | Nunavut | Lib. |
| Karygiannis, Jim | Scarborough—Agincourt | Ontario | Lib. |
| Keddy, Gerald | South Shore | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Kenney, Jason | Calgary Southeast | Alberta | CA |
| Keyes, Stan | Hamilton West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Kilger, Bob, The Deputy Speaker | Stormont—Dundas— Charlottenburgh | Ontario | Lib. |
| Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) | Edmonton Southeast | Alberta | Lib. |
| Knutson, Hon. Gar, Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East) | Elgin—Middlesex—London | Ontario | Lib. |
| Kraft Sloan, Karen | York North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Laframboise, Mario | Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel | Quebec | BQ |
| Laliberte, Rick | Churchill River | Saskatchewan | Lib. |
| Lalonde, Francine | Mercier | Quebec | BQ |
| Lanctôt, Robert | Châteauguay | Quebec | BQ |
| Lastewka, Walt | St. Catharines | Ontario | Lib. |
| Lebel, Ghislain | Chambly | Quebec | Ind. |
| LeBlanc, Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence | Beauséjour—Petitcodiac | New Brunswick | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Lee, Derek | Scarborough—Rouge River | Ontario | Lib. |
| Leung, Sophia | Vancouver Kingsway | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Lill, Wendy | Dartmouth | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Lincoln, Clifford | Lac-Saint-Louis | Quebec | Lib. |
| Longfield, Judi | Whitby—Ajax | Ontario | Lib. |
| Loubier, Yvan | Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot | Quebec | BQ |
| Lunn, Gary | Saanich—Gulf Islands | British Columbia | CA |
| Lunney, James | Nanaimo—Alberni | British Columbia | CA |
| MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence | Cardigan | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| MacKay, Peter | Pictou—Antigonish— Guysborough | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Macklin, Paul Harold, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Northumberland | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mahoney, Steve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport | Mississauga West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Malhi, Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour | Bramalea—Gore—Malton— Springdale | Ontario | Lib. |
| Maloney, John | Erie—Lincoln | Ontario | Lib. |
| Manley, Hon. John, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance | Ottawa South | Ontario | Lib. |
| Marceau, Richard | Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier | Quebec | BQ |
| Marcil, Serge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry | Beauharnois—Salaberry | Quebec | Lib. |
| Mark, Inky | Dauphin—Swan River | Manitoba | PC |
| Marleau, Hon. Diane | Sudbury | Ontario | Lib. |
| Martin, Keith | Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca | British Columbia | CA |
| Martin, Pat | Winnipeg Centre | Manitoba | NDP |
| Martin, Hon. Paul | LaSalle—Émard | Quebec | Lib. |
| Masse, Brian | Windsor West | Ontario | NDP |
| Matthews, Bill | Burin—St. George's | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| Mayfield, Philip | Cariboo—Chilcotin | British Columbia | CA |
| McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Defence | Markham | Ontario | Lib. |
| McCormick, Larry | Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington | Ontario | Lib. |
| McDonough, Alexa | Halifax | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| McGuire, Joe | Egmont | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| McKay, John | Scarborough East | Ontario | Lib. |
| McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Health | Edmonton West | Alberta | Lib. |
| McNally, Grant | Dewdney—Alouette | British Columbia | CA |
| McTeague, Dan | Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge | Ontario | Lib. |
| Ménard, Réal | Hochelaga—Maisonnette | Quebec | BQ |
| Meredith, Val | South Surrey—White Rock— Langley | British Columbia | CA |
| Merrifield, Rob | Yellowhead | Alberta | CA |
| Milliken, Hon. Peter | Kingston and the Islands | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mills, Bob | Red Deer | Alberta | CA |
| Mills, Dennis | Toronto—Danforth | Ontario | Lib. |
| Minna, Hon. Maria, Beaches—East York | Beaches—East York | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Ontario | Lib. |
| Moore, James | Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam | British Columbia | CA |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Murphy, Shawn | Hillsborough | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| Myers, Lynn | Waterloo—Wellington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Nault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Kenora—Rainy River | Ontario | Lib. |
| Neville, Anita | Winnipeg South Centre | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Normand, Hon. Gilbert | Bellechasse—Etchemins— Montmagny—L'Islet | Quebec | Lib. |
| Nystrom, Hon. Lorne | Regina—Qu'Appelle | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| O'Brien, Lawrence | Labrador | Newfoundland and Labrador | Lib. |
| O'Brien, Pat | London—Fanshawe | Ontario | Lib. |
| O'Reilly, John | Haliburton—Victoria—Brock | Ontario | Lib. |
| Obhrai, Deepak | Calgary East | Alberta | CA |
| Owen, Hon. Stephen, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development) | Vancouver Quadra | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Pacetti, Massimo | Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel | Quebec | Lib. |
| Pagtakhan, Hon. Rey, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) | Winnipeg North—St. Paul | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Pallister, Brian | Portage—Lisgar | Manitoba | CA |
| Pankiw, Jim | Saskatoon—Humboldt | Saskatchewan | Ind. |
| Paquette, Pierre | Joliette | Quebec | BQ |
| Paradis, Hon. Denis, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie) | Brome—Missisquoi | Quebec | Lib. |
| Parrish, Carolyn | Mississauga Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Patry, Bernard | Pierrefonds—Dollard | Quebec | Lib. |
| Penson, Charlie | Peace River | Alberta | CA |
| Peric, Janko | Cambridge | Ontario | Lib. |
| Perron, Gilles-A. | Rivière-des-Mille-Îles | Quebec | BQ |
| Peschisolido, Joe, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Richmond | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Peterson, Hon. Jim | Willowdale | Ontario | Lib. |
| Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister for International Trade | Papineau—Saint-Denis | Quebec | Lib. |
| Phinney, Beth | Hamilton Mountain | Ontario | Lib. |
| Picard, Pauline | Drummond | Quebec | BQ |
| Pickard, Jerry | Chatham—Kent Essex | Ontario | Lib. |
| Pillitteri, Gary | Niagara Falls | Ontario | Lib. |
| Plamondon, Louis | Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet— Bécancour | Quebec | BQ |
| Pratt, David | Nepean—Carleton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Price, David | Compton—Stanstead | Quebec | Lib. |
| Proctor, Dick | Palliser | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| Proulx, Marcel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport | Hull—Aylmer | Quebec | Lib. |
| Provenzano, Carmen | Sault Ste. Marie | Ontario | Lib. |
| Rajotte, James | Edmonton Southwest | Alberta | CA |
| Redman, Karen | Kitchener Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Reed, Julian | Halton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Regan, Geoff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Halifax West | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Reid, Scott | Lanark—Carleton | Ontario | CA |
| Reynolds, John, West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast | West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast | British Columbia | CA |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ritz, Gerry | Battlefords—Lloydminster | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board | Westmount—Ville-Marie | Quebec | Lib. |
| Robinson, Svend | Burnaby—Douglas | British Columbia | NDP |
| Rocheleau, Yves | Trois-Rivières | Quebec | BQ |
| Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Industry | Etobicoke Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Roy, Jean-Yves | Matapédia—Matane | Quebec | BQ |
| Saada, Jacques | Brossard—La Prairie | Quebec | Lib. |
| Sauvageau, Benoît | Repentigny | Quebec | BQ |
| Savoy, Andy | Tobique—Mactaquac | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Scherrer, Hélène | Louis-Hébert | Quebec | Lib. |
| Schmidt, Werner | Kelowna | British Columbia | CA |
| Scott, Hon. Andy | Fredericton | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Serré, Benoît | Timiskaming—Cochrane | Ontario | Lib. |
| Sgro, Judy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services | York West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Shepherd, Alex | Durham | Ontario | Lib. |
| Simard, Raymond | Saint Boniface | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Skelton, Carol | Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Solberg, Monte | Medicine Hat | Alberta | CA |
| Sorenson, Kevin | Crowfoot | Alberta | CA |
| Speller, Bob | Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant | Ontario | Lib. |
| Spencer, Larry | Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre | Saskatchewan | CA |
| St-Hilaire, Caroline | Longueuil | Quebec | BQ |
| St-Jacques, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development | Shefford | Quebec | Lib. |
| St-Julien, Guy | Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik | Quebec | Lib. |
| St. Denis, Brent | Algoma—Manitoulin | Ontario | Lib. |
| Steckle, Paul | Huron—Bruce | Ontario | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development | Brant | Ontario | Lib. |
| Stinson, Darrel | Okanagan—Shuswap | British Columbia | CA |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Strahl, Chuck | Fraser Valley | British Columbia | CA |
| Szabo, Paul | Mississauga South | Ontario | Lib. |
| Telegdi, Andrew | Kitchener—Waterloo | Ontario | Lib. |
| Thibault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | West Nova | Nova Scotia | Lib. |
| Thibeault, Yolande | Saint-Lambert | Quebec | Lib. |
| Thompson, Greg | New Brunswick Southwest | New Brunswick | PC |
| Thompson, Myron | Wild Rose | Alberta | CA |
| Tirabassi, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board | Niagara Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Toews, Vic | Provencher | Manitoba | CA |
| Tonks, Alan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment | York South—Weston | Ontario | Lib. |
| Torsney, Paddy | Burlington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Tremblay, Suzanne | Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis | Quebec | BQ |
| Ur, Rose-Marie | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Ontario | Lib. |
| Valeri, Tony | Stoney Creek | Ontario | Lib. |
| Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Prince Edward—Hastings | Ontario | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Vellacott, Maurice | Saskatoon—Wanuskewin | Saskatchewan | CA |
| Venne, Pierrette | Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert | Quebec | Ind. BQ |
| Volpe, Joseph | Eglinton—Lawrence | Ontario | Lib. |
| Wappel, Tom | Scarborough Southwest | Ontario | Lib. |
| Wasylycia-Leis, Judy | Winnipeg North Centre | Manitoba | NDP |
| Wayne, Elsie | Saint John | New Brunswick | PC |
| Whelan, Hon. Susan, Minister for International Cooperation | Essex | Ontario | Lib. |
| White, Randy | Langley—Abbotsford | British Columbia | CA |
| White, Ted | North Vancouver | British Columbia | CA |
| Wilfert, Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance | Oak Ridges | Ontario | Lib. |
| Williams, John | St. Albert | Alberta | CA |
| Wood, Bob | Nipissing | Ontario | Lib. |
| Yelich, Lynne | Blackstrap | Saskatchewan | CA |
| VACANCY | Perth—Middlesex | Ontario | |

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib. - Liberal; CA - Canadian Alliance; BQ - Bloc Quebecois; NDP - New Democratic Party;
PC - Progressive Conservative Party; Ind. - Independent

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Thirty Seventh Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ALBERTA (26) | | |
| Ablonczy, Diane | Calgary—Nose Hill | CA |
| Anders, Rob | Calgary West | CA |
| Benoit, Leon | Lakeland | CA |
| Casson, Rick | Lethbridge | CA |
| Chatters, David | Athabasca | CA |
| Clark, Right Hon. Joe | Calgary Centre | PC |
| Epp, Ken | Elk Island | CA |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton Centre-East | CA |
| Grey, Deborah | Edmonton North | CA |
| Hanger, Art | Calgary Northeast | CA |
| Harper, Stephen, Leader of the Opposition | Calgary Southwest | CA |
| Hill, Grant | Macleod | CA |
| Jaffer, Rahim | Edmonton—Strathcona | CA |
| Johnston, Dale | Wetaskiwin | CA |
| Kenney, Jason | Calgary Southeast | CA |
| Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) | Edmonton Southeast | Lib. |
| McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Health | Edmonton West | Lib. |
| Merrifield, Rob | Yellowhead | CA |
| Mills, Bob | Red Deer | CA |
| Obhrai, Deepak | Calgary East | CA |
| Penson, Charlie | Peace River | CA |
| Rajotte, James | Edmonton Southwest | CA |
| Solberg, Monte | Medicine Hat | CA |
| Sorenson, Kevin | Crowfoot | CA |
| Thompson, Myron | Wild Rose | CA |
| Williams, John | St. Albert | CA |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA (34) | | |
| Abbott, Jim | Kootenay—Columbia | CA |
| Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of the Environment | Victoria | Lib. |
| Burton, Andy | Skeena | CA |
| Cadman, Chuck | Surrey North | CA |
| Cummins, John | Delta—South Richmond | CA |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | NDP |
| Day, Stockwell | Okanagan—Coquihalla | CA |
| Dhaliwal, Hon. Herb, Minister of Natural Resources | Vancouver South—Burnaby | Lib. |
| Duncan, John | Vancouver Island North | CA |
| Elley, Reed | Nanaimo—Cowichan | CA |
| Forseth, Paul | New Westminster—Coquitlam—Burnaby | CA |
| Fry, Hon. Hedy | Vancouver Centre | Lib. |
| Gouk, Jim | Kootenay—Boundary—Okanagan | CA |
| Grewal, Gurmant | Surrey Central | CA |
| Harris, Richard | Prince George—Bulkley Valley | CA |
| Hill, Jay | Prince George—Peace River | CA |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Hinton, Betty | Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys | CA |
| Leung, Sophia | Vancouver Kingsway | Lib. |
| Lunn, Gary | Saanich—Gulf Islands | CA |
| Lunney, James | Nanaimo—Alberni | CA |
| Martin, Keith | Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca | CA |
| Mayfield, Philip | Cariboo—Chilcotin | CA |
| McNally, Grant | Dewdney—Alouette | CA |
| Meredith, Val | South Surrey—White Rock—Langley | CA |
| Moore, James | Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam | CA |
| Owen, Hon. Stephen, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development) | Vancouver Quadra | Lib. |
| Peschisolido, Joe, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Richmond | Lib. |
| Reynolds, John, West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast | West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast | CA |
| Robinson, Svend | Burnaby—Douglas | NDP |
| Schmidt, Werner | Kelowna | CA |
| Stinson, Darrel | Okanagan—Shuswap | CA |
| Strahl, Chuck | Fraser Valley | CA |
| White, Randy | Langley—Abbotsford | CA |
| White, Ted | North Vancouver | CA |

MANITOBA (13)

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|------|
| Alcock, Reg | Winnipeg South | Lib. |
| Blaikie, Bill | Winnipeg—Transcona | NDP |
| Borotsik, Rick | Brandon—Souris | PC |
| Desjarlais, Bev | Churchill | NDP |
| Harvard, John | Charleswood —St. James—Assiniboia | Lib. |
| Hilstrom, Howard | Selkirk—Interlake | CA |
| Mark, Inky | Dauphin—Swan River | PC |
| Martin, Pat | Winnipeg Centre | NDP |
| Neville, Anita | Winnipeg South Centre | Lib. |
| Pagtakhan, Hon. Rey, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) | Winnipeg North—St. Paul | Lib. |
| Pallister, Brian | Portage—Lisgar | CA |
| Simard, Raymond | Saint Boniface | Lib. |
| Toews, Vic | Provencher | CA |
| Wasylycia-Leis, Judy | Winnipeg North Centre | NDP |

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|------|
| Bradshaw, Hon. Claudette, Minister of Labour | Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe | Lib. |
| Castonguay, Jeannot, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health | Madawaska—Restigouche | Lib. |
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie—Bathurst | NDP |
| Herron, John | Fundy—Royal | PC |
| Hubbard, Charles, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Miramichi | Lib. |
| LeBlanc, Dominic, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence | Beauséjour—Petitcodiac | Lib. |
| Savoy, Andy | Tobique—Mactaquac | Lib. |
| Scott, Hon. Andy | Fredericton | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Thompson, Greg | New Brunswick Southwest | PC |
| Wayne, Elsie | Saint John | PC |
| NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (4) | | |
| Barnes, Rex | Gander—Grand Falls | PC |
| Byrne, Hon. Gerry, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) | Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte | Lib. |
| Doyle, Norman | St. John's East | PC |
| Efford, R. John | Bonavista—Trinity—Conception | Lib. |
| Hearn, Loyola | St. John's West | PC |
| Matthews, Bill | Burin—St. George's | Lib. |
| O'Brien, Lawrence | Labrador | Lib. |
| NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1) | | |
| Blondin-Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth) | Western Arctic | Lib. |
| NOVA SCOTIA (11) | | |
| Brisson, Scott | Kings—Hants | PC |
| Casey, Bill | Cumberland—Colchester | PC |
| Cuzner, Rodger, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister | Bras d'Or—Cape Breton | Lib. |
| Eyking, Mark | Sydney—Victoria | Lib. |
| Keddy, Gerald | South Shore | PC |
| Lill, Wendy | Dartmouth | NDP |
| MacKay, Peter | Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough | PC |
| McDonough, Alexa | Halifax | NDP |
| Regan, Geoff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Halifax West | Lib. |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore | NDP |
| Thibault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | West Nova | Lib. |
| NUNAVUT (1) | | |
| Karetak-Lindell, Nancy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources | Nunavut | Lib. |
| ONTARIO (101) | | |
| Adams, Peter | Peterborough | Lib. |
| Assadourian, Sarkis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Brampton Centre | Lib. |
| Augustine, Hon. Jean, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | Lib. |
| Barnes, Sue | London West | Lib. |
| Beaumier, Colleen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue | Brampton West—Mississauga | Lib. |
| Bélair, Réginald, The Acting Speaker | Timmins—James Bay | Lib. |
| Bélanger, Mauril | Ottawa—Vanier | Lib. |
| Bellemare, Eugène | Ottawa—Orléans | Lib. |
| Bennett, Carolyn | St. Paul's | Lib. |
| Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) | Vaughan—King—Aurora | Lib. |
| Bonin, Raymond | Nickel Belt | Lib. |
| Bonwick, Paul | Simcoe—Grey | Lib. |
| Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Brown, Bonnie | Oakville | Lib. |
| Bryden, John | Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot | Lib. |
| Bulte, Sarmite | Parkdale—High Park | Lib. |
| Caccia, Hon. Charles | Davenport | Lib. |
| Calder, Murray, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade | Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey | Lib. |
| Cannis, John | Scarborough Centre | Lib. |
| Caplan, Hon. Elinor, Minister of National Revenue | Thornhill | Lib. |
| Carroll, Aileen, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs | Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford | Lib. |
| Catterall, Marlene | Ottawa West—Nepean | Lib. |
| Chamberlain, Brenda | Guelph—Wellington | Lib. |
| Collenette, Hon. David, Minister of Transport | Don Valley East | Lib. |
| Comartin, Joe | Windsor—St. Clair | NDP |
| Comuzzi, Joe | Thunder Bay—Superior North | Lib. |
| Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage | Hamilton East | Lib. |
| Cullen, Roy | Etobicoke North | Lib. |
| DeVillers, Hon. Paul, Secretary of State (Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Simcoe North | Lib. |
| Dromisky, Stan | Thunder Bay—Atikokan | Lib. |
| Eggleton, Hon. Art | York Centre | Lib. |
| Finlay, John | Oxford | Lib. |
| Fontana, Joe | London North Centre | Lib. |
| Gallant, Cheryl | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | CA |
| Galloway, Roger | Sarnia—Lambton | Lib. |
| Godfrey, John | Don Valley West | Lib. |
| Graham, Hon. Bill, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Toronto Centre—Rosedale | Lib. |
| Grose, Ivan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs | Oshawa | Lib. |
| Guarnieri, Albina | Mississauga East | Lib. |
| Harb, Mac | Ottawa Centre | Lib. |
| Ianno, Tony | Trinity—Spadina | Lib. |
| Jackson, Ovid | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound | Lib. |
| Jordan, Joe | Leeds—Grenville | Lib. |
| Karygiannis, Jim | Scarborough—Agincourt | Lib. |
| Keyes, Stan | Hamilton West | Lib. |
| Kilger, Bob, The Deputy Speaker | Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh | Lib. |
| Knutson, Hon. Gar, Secretary of State (Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East) | Elgin—Middlesex—London | Lib. |
| Kraft Sloan, Karen | York North | Lib. |
| Lastewka, Walt | St. Catharines | Lib. |
| Lee, Derek | Scarborough—Rouge River | Lib. |
| Longfield, Judi | Whitby—Ajax | Lib. |
| Macklin, Paul Harold, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Northumberland | Lib. |
| Mahoney, Steve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport | Mississauga West | Lib. |
| Malhi, Gurbax, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour | Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale | Lib. |
| Maloney, John | Erie—Lincoln | Lib. |
| Manley, Hon. John, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance | Ottawa South | Lib. |
| Marleau, Hon. Diane | Sudbury | Lib. |
| Masse, Brian | Windsor West | NDP |
| McCallum, Hon. John, Minister of National Defence | Markham | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| McCormick, Larry | Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington | Lib. |
| McKay, John | Scarborough East | Lib. |
| McTeague, Dan | Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge | Lib. |
| Milliken, Hon. Peter | Kingston and the Islands | Lib. |
| Mills, Dennis | Toronto—Danforth | Lib. |
| Minna, Hon. Maria, Beaches—East York | Beaches—East York | Lib. |
| Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Rural Development) (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Lib. |
| Myers, Lynn | Waterloo—Wellington | Lib. |
| Nault, Hon. Robert, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Kenora—Rainy River | Lib. |
| O'Brien, Pat | London—Fanshawe | Lib. |
| O'Reilly, John | Haliburton—Victoria—Brock | Lib. |
| Parrish, Carolyn | Mississauga Centre | Lib. |
| Peric, Janko | Cambridge | Lib. |
| Peterson, Hon. Jim | Willowdale | Lib. |
| Phinney, Beth | Hamilton Mountain | Lib. |
| Pickard, Jerry | Chatham—Kent Essex | Lib. |
| Pillitteri, Gary | Niagara Falls | Lib. |
| Pratt, David | Nepean—Carleton | Lib. |
| Provenzano, Carmen | Sault Ste. Marie | Lib. |
| Redman, Karen | Kitchener Centre | Lib. |
| Reed, Julian | Halton | Lib. |
| Reid, Scott | Lanark—Carleton | CA |
| Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Industry | Etobicoke Centre | Lib. |
| Serré, Benoît | Timiskaming—Cochrane | Lib. |
| Sgro, Judy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services | York West | Lib. |
| Shepherd, Alex | Durham | Lib. |
| Speller, Bob | Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant | Lib. |
| St. Denis, Brent | Algoma—Manitoulin | Lib. |
| Steckle, Paul | Huron—Bruce | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Human Resources Development | Brant | Lib. |
| Szabo, Paul | Mississauga South | Lib. |
| Telegdi, Andrew | Kitchener—Waterloo | Lib. |
| Tirabassi, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board | Niagara Centre | Lib. |
| Tonks, Alan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment | York South—Weston | Lib. |
| Torsney, Paddy | Burlington | Lib. |
| Ur, Rose-Marie | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Lib. |
| Valeri, Tony | Stoney Creek | Lib. |
| Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Prince Edward—Hastings | Lib. |
| Volpe, Joseph | Eglinton—Lawrence | Lib. |
| Wappel, Tom | Scarborough Southwest | Lib. |
| Whelan, Hon. Susan, Minister for International Cooperation | Essex | Lib. |
| Wilfert, Bryon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance | Oak Ridges | Lib. |
| Wood, Bob | Nipissing | Lib. |
| VACANCY | Perth—Middlesex | |
| PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4) | | |
| Easter, Hon. Wayne, Solicitor General of Canada | Malpeque | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence | Cardigan | Lib. |
| McGuire, Joe | Egmont | Lib. |
| Murphy, Shawn | Hillsborough | Lib. |
| QUEBEC (71) | | |
| Allard, Carole-Marie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage | Laval East | Lib. |
| Assad, Mark | Gatineau | Lib. |
| Asselin, Gérard | Charlevoix | BQ |
| Bachand, André | Richmond—Arthabaska | PC |
| Bachand, Claude | Saint-Jean | BQ |
| Bakopanos, Eleni, The Acting Speaker | Ahuntsic | Lib. |
| Bergeron, Stéphane | Verchères—Les-Patriotes | BQ |
| Bertrand, Robert | Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle | Lib. |
| Bigras, Bernard | Rosemont—Petite-Patrie | BQ |
| Binet, Gérard | Frontenac—Mégantic | Lib. |
| Bourgeois, Diane | Terrebonne—Blainville | BQ |
| Brien, Pierre | Témiscamingue | Ind. |
| Cardin, Serge | Sherbrooke | BQ |
| Carignan, Jean-Guy | Québec East | Lib. Ind. |
| Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Outremont | Lib. |
| Charbonneau, Yvon | Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies | Lib. |
| Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister | Saint-Maurice | Lib. |
| Coderre, Hon. Denis, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Bourassa | Lib. |
| Cotler, Irwin | Mount Royal | Lib. |
| Crête, Paul | Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup— Témiscouata—Les Basques | BQ |
| Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine | Laval Centre | BQ |
| Desrochers, Odina | Lotbinière—L'Érable | BQ |
| Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs | Saint-Laurent—Cartierville | Lib. |
| Discepola, Nick | Vaudreuil—Soulanges | Lib. |
| Drouin, Hon. Claude, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) | Beauce | Lib. |
| Dubé, Antoine | Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière | BQ |
| Duceppe, Gilles | Laurier—Sainte-Marie | BQ |
| Duplain, Claude, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Portneuf | Lib. |
| Farrah, Georges, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok | Lib. |
| Folco, Raymonde | Laval West | Lib. |
| Fournier, Ghislain | Manicouagan | BQ |
| Frulla, Liza | Verdun—Saint-Henri—Saint-Paul— Pointe Saint-Charles | Lib. |
| Gagnon, Christiane | Québec | BQ |
| Gagnon, Marcel | Champlain | BQ |
| Gagnon, Sébastien | Lac-Saint-Jean—Saguenay | BQ |
| Gaudet, Roger | Berthier—Montcalm | BQ |
| Gauthier, Michel | Roberval | BQ |
| Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne | Jonquière | BQ |
| Guay, Monique | Laurentides | BQ |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Guimond, Michel | Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans | BQ |
| Harvey, André, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation | Chicoutimi—Le Fjord | Lib. |
| Jennings, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine | Lib. |
| Laframboise, Mario | Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel | BQ |
| Lalonde, Francine | Mercier | BQ |
| Lanctôt, Robert | Châteauguay | BQ |
| Lebel, Ghislain | Chambly | Ind. |
| Lincoln, Clifford | Lac-Saint-Louis | Lib. |
| Loubier, Yvan | Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot | BQ |
| Marceau, Richard | Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier | BQ |
| Marcil, Serge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry | Beauharnois—Salaberry | Lib. |
| Martin, Hon. Paul | LaSalle—Émard | Lib. |
| Ménard, Réal | Hochelaga—Maisonneuve | BQ |
| Normand, Hon. Gilbert | Bellechasse—Etchemins—Montmagny—L'Islet | Lib. |
| Pacetti, Massimo | Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel | Lib. |
| Paquette, Pierre | Joliette | BQ |
| Paradis, Hon. Denis, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) (Francophonie) | Brome—Missisquoi | Lib. |
| Patry, Bernard | Pierrefonds—Dollard | Lib. |
| Perron, Gilles-A. | Rivière-des-Mille-Îles | BQ |
| Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre, Minister for International Trade | Papineau—Saint-Denis | Lib. |
| Picard, Pauline | Drummond | BQ |
| Plamondon, Louis | Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour | BQ |
| Price, David | Compton—Stanstead | Lib. |
| Proulx, Marcel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport | Hull—Aylmer | Lib. |
| Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, President of the Treasury Board | Westmount—Ville-Marie | Lib. |
| Rocheleau, Yves | Trois-Rivières | BQ |
| Roy, Jean-Yves | Matapédia—Matane | BQ |
| Saada, Jacques | Brossard—La Prairie | Lib. |
| Sauvageau, Benoît | Repentigny | BQ |
| Scherrer, Hélène | Louis-Hébert | Lib. |
| St-Hilaire, Caroline | Longueuil | BQ |
| St-Jacques, Diane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources Development | Shefford | Lib. |
| St-Julien, Guy | Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik | Lib. |
| Thibeault, Yolande | Saint-Lambert | Lib. |
| Tremblay, Suzanne | Rimouski-Neigette-et-la Mitis | BQ |
| Venne, Pierrette | Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert | Ind. BQ |

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|------|
| Anderson, David | Cypress Hills—Grasslands | CA |
| Bailey, Roy | Souris—Moose Mountain | CA |
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton—Melville | CA |
| Fitzpatrick, Brian | Prince Albert | CA |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians | Wascana | Lib. |
| Laliberte, Rick | Churchill River | Lib. |
| Nystrom, Hon. Lorne | Regina—Qu'Appelle | NDP |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pankiw, Jim | Saskatoon—Humboldt | Ind. |
| Proctor, Dick | Palliser | NDP |
| Ritz, Gerry | Battlefords—Lloydminster | CA |
| Skelton, Carol | Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar | CA |
| Spencer, Larry | Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre | CA |
| Vellacott, Maurice | Saskatoon—Wanuskewin | CA |
| Yelich, Lynne | Blackstrap | CA |
| YUKON (1) | | |
| Bagnell, Larry | Yukon | Lib. |

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of February 21, 2003 — 2nd Session, 37th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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| Gérard Asselin | John Duncan | Dale Johnston | Gerry Ritz |
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Marcel GagnonRick Laliberte
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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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Vice-Chairs:

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Sarmite Bulte
R. John Efford
Liza Frulla

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Loyola Hearn

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Wendy Lill
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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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| Mark Assad Roy Bailey Bernard Bigras Serge Cardin | Joe Comartin Joe Jordan Rick Laliberte | Gary Lunn Bob Mills Julian Reed | Andy Savoy Hélène Scherrer Alan Tonks |

(16)

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| | | | |
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(18)

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Ted White
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Vice-Chairs:
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Andy Burton
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Reed Elley
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Loyola Hearn

Dominic LeBlanc
Joe Peschisolido
Carmen Provenzano

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Jean-Yves Roy
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Lynne Yelich

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| Bill Casey | Mark Eyking | Keith Martin | | |

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| Claude Bachand | Peter Goldring | Inky Mark | Carol Skelton |
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| | | | | |
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| | | | | |
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| Bill Casey | Gurbax Malhi | Beth Phinney | Yves Rocheleau | |
| Irwin Cotler | | | | |

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

| | | | | |
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| Scott Brison | Robert Lanctôt | Gilles-A. Perron | Paul Szabo | |
| Roy Cullen | Steve Mahoney | Gerry Ritz | Tony Tirabassi | |
| Ken Epp | | | | |

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| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Jim Abbott | John Duncan | Betty Hinton | Charlie Penson |
| Diane Ablonczy | Reed Elley | Rahim Jaffer | Dick Proctor |
| Rob Anders | Brian Fitzpatrick | Dale Johnston | James Rajotte |
| David Anderson | Liza Frulla | Gerald Keddy | Scott Reid |
| André Bachand | Christiane Gagnon | Jason Kenney | John Reynolds |
| Roy Bailey | Cheryl Gallant | Gary Lunn | Werner Schmidt |
| Rex Barnes | Jocelyne Girard-Bujold | James Lunney | Carol Skelton |
| Leon Benoit | Yvon Godin | Peter MacKay | Monte Solberg |
| Rick Borotsik | Peter Goldring | Inky Mark | Kevin Sorenson |
| Garry Breitkreuz | Jim Gouk | Keith Martin | Larry Spencer |
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| David Chatters | Stephen Harper | Val Meredith | Vic Toews |
| Joe Clark | Richard Harris | Rob Merrifield | Maurice Vellacott |
| Paul Crête | Loyola Hearn | Bob Mills | Elsie Wayne |
| John Cummins | John Herron | James Moore | Randy White |
| Stockwell Day | Grant Hill | Deepak Obhrai | Ted White |
| Odina Desrochers | Jay Hill | Brian Pallister | John Williams |
| Norman Doyle | Howard Hilstrom | Pierre Paquette | Lynne Yelich |

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE ESTIMATES PROCESS

| | | | | |
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Hélène ScherrerCarol Skelton
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(16)

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Loyola Hearn
John Herron
Grant HillJay Hill
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Rahim Jaffer
Dale Johnston
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Jason Kenney
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Val Meredith
Bob Mills
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John Williams
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HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

| | | | | |
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| Norman Doyle | Monique Guay | Larry McCormick | Suzanne Tremblay | |
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Associate Members

| | | | |
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| Rob Anders | Reed Elley | Gerald Keddy | Scott Reid |
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| Roy Bailey | Paul Forseth | Wendy Lill | Jean-Yves Roy |
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| Scott Brison | Gurmant Grewal | Philip Mayfield | Tony Tirabassi |
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| Bill Casey | Stephen Harper | Val Meredith | Maurice Vellacott |
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| David Chatters | Loyola Hearn | Bob Mills | Elsie Wayne |
| Joe Clark | John Herron | James Moore | Randy White |
| Paul Crête | Grant Hill | Anita Neville | Ted White |
| John Cummins | Jay Hill | Deepak Obhrai | John Williams |
| Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral | Howard Hilstrom | Brian Pallister | Lynne Yelich |
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----|
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK

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| Roy Bailey | Brian Fitzpatrick | Gary Lunn | Werner Schmidt |
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| Bill Casey | Richard Harris | Bob Mills | Judy Wasylcyia-Leis |
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| David Chatters | John Herron | Lynn Myers | Randy White |
| Joe Clark | Grant Hill | Deepak Obhrai | Ted White |
| Joe Comartin | Jay Hill | Brian Pallister | John Williams |
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LIAISON

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| | | | |
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| Chuck Cadman | Howard Hilstrom | Réal Ménard | Peter Stoffer |
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| Yvon Godin | | | |

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| | | | | |
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| Claude Bachand | Cheryl Gallant | Joe McGuire | Janko Peric | |
| Leon Benoit | Ivan Grose | Anita Neville | Louis Plamondon | |
| Robert Bertrand | | | | |

Associate Members

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
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| Diane Ablonczy | Brian Fitzpatrick | Yvan Loubier | John Reynolds |
| David Anderson | Paul Forseth | Gary Lunn | Gerry Ritz |
| André Bachand | Peter Goldring | James Lunney | Svend Robinson |
| Roy Bailey | Jim Gouk | Peter MacKay | Werner Schmidt |
| Rex Barnes | Gurmant Grewal | Inky Mark | Carol Skelton |
| Stéphane Bergeron | Deborah Grey | Keith Martin | Monte Solberg |
| Rick Borotsik | Monique Guay | Pat Martin | Kevin Sorenson |
| Garry Breitkreuz | Art Hanger | Philip Mayfield | Larry Spencer |
| Scott Brison | Stephen Harper | Alexa McDonough | Darrel Stinson |
| Andy Burton | Richard Harris | Grant McNally | Peter Stoffer |
| Chuck Cadman | Loyola Hearn | Dan McTeague | Chuck Strahl |
| Bill Casey | John Herron | Val Meredith | Greg Thompson |
| Rick Casson | Grant Hill | Rob Merrifield | Myron Thompson |
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| David Chatters | Howard Hilstrom | James Moore | Rose-Marie Ur |
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| John Cummins | Rahim Jaffer | Deepak Obhrai | Randy White |
| Stockwell Day | Dale Johnston | Brian Pallister | Ted White |
| Norman Doyle | Gerald Keddy | Charlie Penson | John Williams |
| Stan Dromisky | Jason Kenney | Carmen Provenzano | Bob Wood |
| John Duncan | Francine Lalonde | James Rajotte | Lynne Yelich |

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| | | | | |
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| Scott Brison | Gurmant Grewal | Philip Mayfield | Chuck Strahl |
| Andy Burton | Deborah Grey | Grant McNally | Greg Thompson |
| Chuck Cadman | Art Hanger | Réal Ménard | Myron Thompson |
| Bill Casey | Stephen Harper | Val Meredith | Vic Toews |
| Rick Casson | Richard Harris | Rob Merrifield | Maurice Vellacott |
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| Joe Clark | John Herron | Deepak Obhrai | Randy White |
| Paul Crête | Grant Hill | Brian Pallister | Ted White |
| John Cummins | Jay Hill | Charlie Penson | John Williams |
| Stockwell Day | | | |

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MARINE TRANSPORTATION

| | | | | |
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SPECIAL COMMITTEES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS

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| Libby Davies | Dominic LeBlanc | Jacques Saada | Greg Thompson | |
| Hedy Fry | Derek Lee | | | |

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| | | | | |
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Joint Vice-Chair:

Representing the Senate:
The Honourable Senators

Representing the House of Commons:

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|---|----------------------------|--|---|------|

Associate Members

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