



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, May 15, 2003**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 15, 2003

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1005)

[*English*]

### CANADIAN FORCES SUPERANNUATION ACT

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-37, an act to amend the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

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

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### IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE PROTECTION ACT

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-436, an act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (sponsorship of relative).

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise in the House today to introduce my bill. I believe it will help reunite families in Canada.

The bill, called “once in a lifetime”, would, simply put, allow someone to sponsor a relative to come to Canada who otherwise would not qualify under the immigration family class rules.

I know in Vancouver East and across the country there are many families desperate to reunite with a family member. The bill would allow them to do that in a reasonable and compassionate way.

I truly hope that members of all parties will support the bill to strengthen our multicultural diversity in Canada and to support families.

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

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### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-437, an act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (persons who leave employment to be care-givers to family members).

He said: Mr. Speaker, again I rise with great pleasure to introduce what I think should be the finest piece of legislation ever to grace the halls of Parliament.

The bill basically would enable people with relatives under palliative care or severe rehabilitation to leave their place of employment for up to six months to provide care for that individual.

It is not a question of if people will become caregivers, it is a question of when they will become caregivers. We have over 3 million caregivers in the country today that the bill would greatly assist.

Also, for those concerned about dollars, for every \$1 from the EI program that would be spent on the bill, \$4 would be saved on the health care system. That is not only a great fiscal initiative, it is also a great family initiative.

We encourage speedy resolution and support for the bill throughout the country.

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

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### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 187 could be made an order for return, the return would be tabled immediately.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed

[*Text*]

Question No. 187—**Mr. John Duncan:**

Concerning Canada-Iraq trade, what is, on an annual basis, the value of trade between Canada and Iraq for the past 20 years with a breakdown by imports/exports and type of merchandise?

Return tabled.

[*English*]

**Mr. Geoff Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all other questions be allowed to stand.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

### Supply

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 39(5) to inform the House that the matter of the failure of the ministry to respond to the following questions on the Order Paper is deemed referred to several standing committees of the House as follows.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Question No. 180, standing in the name of the hon. member for North Vancouver, is referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

[English]

Question No. 184, standing in the name of the hon. member for Edmonton Southwest, is referred to the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology.

[Translation]

Question No. 186, standing in the name of the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, is referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

[English]

Question No. 191, standing in the name of the hon. member for Macleod, is referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

[Translation]

Question No. 194, standing in the name of the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River, is referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Other weapons, like arrows and javelins, were invented and other types of shields were found to fend off these new attacks. To this day, things have evolved that way.

Now we have a missile defence plan, or antimissile shield. The concept of a shield has evolved as well. In our modern world, we are threatened by antiballistic missiles. There are people who wonder if we should get ourselves a shield, a missile defence plan. It is an American idea.

I would like to talk about more recent history. In 1972, the ABM treaty was signed, with the goal of preventing the militarization of space. The proliferation of nuclear arms was on people's minds and there had already been discussions about limiting this proliferation. But the great powers, Russia and the United States in particular—for we were still in the cold war era—understood then that it was very important not to militarize space. That is the ultimate in defence. It is also possible to have offensive weapons in space and people could not allow that, because it would restart the arms race.

In 1983, President Reagan put forward the idea of a space-based missile defence system to intercept missiles. This project was abandoned for many reasons, but especially because the technology at that time was not available. It was all rather futuristic. And it was about the same time that the film *Star Wars* came out, and the project became known as star wars, as well. Thus, this project was abandoned for a time.

President Reagan also understood that the ABM treaty signed in 1972 would make it difficult, and nothing could be done without amending the treaty or repudiating it.

The situation evolved under President Clinton, with what they called at the time the NMD or National Missile Defense. The idea of a counterattack or of a shield seemed to be downgraded. Perhaps it would no longer be done from space. Ground-based possibilities were to be studied.

This theory has changed again with the arrival of George W. Bush, who wanted, perhaps, to see a group of elements that would block a potential attack on the United States. It could be done from ships, for example; antimissile missiles could be launched from ships, or from aircraft or from the ground.

So we can see that this idea has evolved. At present, it appears to have been reactivated. I remember the debates we had here in this House two years ago. The Bloc Québécois asked questions. The federal government stayed far away from the new American philosophy of the antimissile shield, because it said we did not have enough details and that we would wait for the Americans to spell out the details.

We believe it is becoming an important issue today because the Americans want it to be. We also believe there have been contacts with the Americans.

•(1015)

But what is really going on? Is it realistic to think that a state could launch a ballistic missile attack against the United States of America?

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

•(1010)

[Translation]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—UNITED STATES MISSILE DEFENCE PLAN

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ)** moved:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their support. I am pleased to take the floor to address the motion before the House.

I was wondering how I should introduce this debate, and I finally decided that my starting point would be the long-standing military doctrine of the offence vs the defence. This doctrine probably goes all the way back to Cro-Magnon man.

In the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*, we see a Cro-Magnon man clubbing another man. Those who witnessed the incident probably thought that being hit with a big club seems to hurt, that maybe people should don a helmet to cushion the blow.

This has always been the military doctrine. The offensive side tries to overcome the enemy's defence, and the defence tries to resist the adversary's offence. This has evolved over time.

There are various types of missiles, with different ranges. Obviously, if we are talking about an intercontinental missile, not many people have such a capacity, apart from Russia, China and perhaps North Korea. Indeed, North Korea has been extremely active lately for reasons of international relations, and also perhaps to indulge in a little blackmail in order to get some economic support, to get some assistance. Its nuclear program is up and running again. Therefore, I believe that it possesses the necessary capability for such an attack. Actually, North Korea has the technology needed to launch a nuclear weapon against any city in the U.S.

However, we should remember that we still subscribe to a military concept which was developed at the time when the balance of terror, at it was called, was the rule, and which was known as mutually assured destruction. Now, any state that launches a missile against the United States can be assured of its own destruction. It has always been the rule that if you attack, we will respond in kind.

Furthermore, any state that decided to launch a missile against the United States should be aware of the fact that it runs the risk of simply being wiped off the face of the earth. I believe Russia as well as China have understood this.

Russia, specifically, has the means to launch a massive attack on the U.S., because it has enough nuclear weapons and the means to launch these weapons toward America. It is the only power currently able to do so.

China also has a number of missiles, but perhaps only a dozen that could be aimed at American cities. So, China has no reason to attack the U.S. because this would mean its automatic self-destruction.

This leaves the so-called rogue states, of which Iraq is not currently one. Incidentally, the Americans are still searching that country for weapons of mass destruction, without success. Nor do I think that Iran has the technological capabilities to launch a nuclear weapon on any American city. That leaves North Korea.

Is it really necessary to spend such sums for just one country, when obviously if that country were to attack, it would be destroyed. This is one consideration with regard to such missiles.

Of course, India and Pakistan also have nuclear capabilities, but their range capability is limited to the continent. So they can attack each other. I do not think they have the capabilities to launch a missile attack on an American city.

Canada's geography must also be considered. This is very important. Currently, the Americans are telling Canada that they will set up interceptors in Alaska. So they have to ask Canada, "Do you want to join us?"

I am happy that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is here to listen to what we have to say. I am happy that he is here because, ultimately, international relations are also at stake.

There is the whole question of debris because Alaska is on the far western tip of the Arctic. If a rogue state—North Korea, for example—were to launch a missile, this attack would cross the polar ice cap. It would fly over the polar ice cap. So, this is a problem for Canadians. In fact, interceptors leaving Alaska could fly over Canadian territory. I have a theory about this that I will discuss shortly.

### *Supply*

I must point out too that all of this involves NORAD. It is NORAD's decision if a missile is going to be launched. Having visited Cheyenne Mountain, I found American technology very interesting. Their satellite can detect a missile within mere seconds of its being launched. Our only problem, if the missile is headed toward Canada or the United States, is that this is only a realization of the situation. There is no retaliatory measure possible except the concept of mutually assured destruction to which I have already referred.

So a North Korean missile will take 20 minutes to reach U.S. territory. The U.S. President, and likely the Prime Minister, are informed in order to seek a balanced response. There is not much time. In fact, at this time there are no countermeasures that can be taken.

We have, however, always had the concept of mutually assured destruction I have already referred to. I personally do not feel that North Korea would risk launching a missile and then being destroyed itself within minutes.

Now for the limits. As I said, Russia is probably the only country currently with the capacity to launch a massive attack.

● (1020)

At this point in time, not only has missile defence failed in attempts to block a missile aimed at the U.S., but its costs are exorbitant. There is no way to stop a massive attack.

It must be made perfectly clear: missile defence is designed to respond to a targeted attack by a few missiles, and it is not yet ready. In future, maybe in ten years or so, perhaps three or four missiles might be blocked. It is certain, however, that if Russia launched a major attack using a hundred or so missiles, the concept of mutually assured destruction would apply and the end of the world would likely ensue.

There are other technological limitations. When this type of missile has been launched and is getting close to its target, it sends out "leures", which are I think "decoys" in English. In the recent attacks on Baghdad, the planes launched flares before the attack in order to thwart antimissile responses. The same thing applies to ballistic missiles. Just minutes before it hits, it sends out its decoys. This is where things get complicated; the antimissile missile may go after the decoys instead.

Until now, there have been eight interception trials; five were successful and three were not. However, there were no decoys involved. It was only a missile launched from a base and the Americans were trying to intercept it in a context where everything was well planned.

Therefore, the technology is still very questionable. When additional elements such as decoys come into play, interception will be more complex and increasingly difficult.

### *Supply*

Let us talk about the costs. For some time now, the Americans have adopted a step-by-step approach. They no longer tell us, "Are you fully with us, yes or no?" They have opted for a more gradual approach. I want to talk specifically about the joint strike fighter, the famous American stealth fighter airplane commonly called the F-35.

Here is how countries can participate in the development of this aircraft. Taxpayers who are listening will probably hear this for the first time. We have already invested from \$250 to \$500 million in this program. Our participation concerns a specific stage, stage III; there are several stages. This means that they can now tell us, "When the F-18s are obsolete, you will be able to acquire these aircraft at a better price, because you participated in their development. Furthermore, you will receive royalties". To those countries that did not participate but want to buy the aircraft, they will say, "You will get some money back and some royalties".

The same could apply to the missile defence plan. They will probably tell us, "We have defined some stages of the project; do you want to participate in them?"

As I said, the joint strike fighter has so far cost Canadian taxpayers between \$250 and \$500 million, and nobody knows about it. That too is not part of the public debate. Just like the space shield issue, it has not been brought before the House. Currently, the Liberal Party is split, as everybody knows. There are a lot of differences of opinion within the Liberal Party, especially now that the leadership campaign is on. The problem we have is that on issues as fundamental as the missile shield, they want to stifle the debate and only give briefings to Liberal members to convince them of the need for such a shield. We find it outrageous to have to go about having this debate today in such a roundabout way. We have had to use our opposition day and move a motion which, by the way, is not votable because the Prime Minister dared us to do so. We told the Prime Minister, "We will take up your dare, but we have used up our days to move a votable motion. Will you allow a vote anyway?" But today we most likely will have to be content with debating the issue. We do like a good debate, but we also like to vote.

The costs are astronomical. We can expect that the space shield and the joint strike fighter, in view of what I have just said about it, will cost 100 times more than planned.

Then there is the whole issue of starting up the arms race again. As I was saying earlier, those who saw Cro-Magnon man club someone thought to themselves, "Let us get a shield to protect our head". It will be the same with the space shield. The offensive—defensive doctrine still applies. As soon as the space shield is in place, people will try to find a way to circumvent it. To do that, they will develop an offensive weapon capable of going through the shield.

This will trigger a new arms race. The government has it easy right now because our defence and foreign affairs policy is 10 years old. We are not attuned to today's realities.

•(1025)

Incidentally, I would like to remind the government that the missile defence shield does not appear in its 1994 policy. There is, therefore, no national defence or foreign affairs policy to guide us. Limiting the debate, as is currently being done, is therefore a major

problem; so is allowing the government to basically do what it wants because its policy from 1994 no longer applies today.

We know that everything has been shaken up since the September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center. We know that everything has changed. The enemy is no longer visible. Our enemies are invisible. No missile defence shield could have prevented the World Trade Center attack. We need to understand this.

We might be better off investing money in measures better suited to this new military context, which is terrorism and the fight against terrorism. Why should the U.S. invest hundreds of billions of dollars and ask Canadians, who have less than they do, to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in missile defence? That is a fundamental question we need to ask ourselves.

The scenario that I envision for Canada is just as valid as any other scenario. What can Canadians say right now? "Why do we not set up interceptors in Canada's far north?" Earlier, I mentioned that an attack would come from over the polar cap. If we want to avoid debris from falling on Canadian territory, why not plan for a counterattack from remote Canadian regions? Incidentally, I think the Minister of Foreign Affairs knows this, but there are certain parts of the far north over which the United States has not given up its claim to sovereignty. It could be tempting for Canada to say, "If you launch anti-missile missiles from Alaska, and the debris falls on Canada, we are prepared to give you access to our territory in the far north. We will set up some interceptors there too. We will not pay for them, because we cannot afford it, but we will give you access to the far north to intercept missiles above the polar ice cap". That way we would be protecting ourselves because debris would fall over the ice cap. We could say to the United States, "In exchange, we want you to recognize our sovereignty in the far north, something we have been asking for for a long time". Maybe this is a fair scenario. We need to envision this type of scenario.

In summary, the cost is astronomical. I was looking at the statistics about the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Why invest hundreds of millions of dollars in this? Why not work at helping the disadvantaged instead? Or helping those countries and nations which are a veritable breeding ground for terrorism? They are desperate, left out, and they have no wealth. In fact, they are often plundered by bigger powers.

These are questions we must ask ourselves. There is also the issue of reliability. Why invest billions in projects that are not quite ready to roll and not entirely reliable? Why relaunch the arms race? It is one thing to spend billions of dollars on creating a space shield, but doing so will launch an arms race which, in turn, will lead to more spending, all on defence.

*Supply*

Finally, we must ask ourselves what kind of world we want to live in. Do we want to live in a world where we have weapons in space which are intended for defensive purposes but could eventually be used for more offensive ones? Is that the kind of world we want? Do we want to invest huge amounts in weapons? There is a difference between this level of sophistication and the weapons of Cro-Magnon men. The stick they used to club the other guys did not cost much, but modern weapons cost hundreds of billions of dollars. What kind of world do we want to live in?

I think it was good that the Bloc Quebecois put forward a motion today to at least initiate a discussion. I urge the government to consult the House before making a final decision on the space shield. This is important. I find that Parliament is currently handicapped by the vision the Liberal government has of the House of Commons and Parliament as a whole. Opposition members are left in the dark. The other day, in response to a question, the Prime Minister told me I should have attended the Liberal caucus meeting, that they had a great briefing. The fact is that we are not allowed to attend those meetings, and neither are the Canadian Alliance or the Canadians listening.

• (1030)

I think that the step the Bloc Quebecois is taking today is an important one. We are initiating the discussion, and I hope that Liberal members will express their views on this issue; there is no shame in speaking against a project like this one, which is likely to cost billions of dollars and which is not to the benefit of society or the world at large.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for my colleague, whom I wish to congratulate on his speech.

First, he raised the issue of the costs of the American decision. Does he not agree that it is the Americans who have decided to do this? It is their money that they will spend. Maybe the member, myself or other members of the House could tell them that they should put that money to better use, but they will spend it anyway. They will make that decision anyway. Should we make our decision based on their decision to do it anyway? In my opinion, that is what is important, and I will come back to it during my speech.

Second, at the end of his speech, the member said that the members of the Bloc were in the dark, that no one explained anything to them. Do the members of the Bloc not know that the Standing Committee on Defence and the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs have been studying these issues for years? Do the members of the Bloc not know that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, which includes members of the Bloc quite knowledgeable about these matters, even made recommendations in this regard in a report tabled recently in the House? They have had no end of opportunities to talk about this over the years.

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is not reassuring me at all if what he is saying is that whenever the Americans decide to spend money in this area, we automatically do the same. We have heard a lot about Ottawa's grovelling in Washington, especially about the Minister of Justice going there without even consulting with Parliament on the issue of marijuana.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs is confirming to us that this is normal, that we will follow the Americans on this issue because they are going to do it anyway. To me, this is not the proper way to handle international issues. The minister can say what he is saying because we have no policy in foreign affairs. Our policies go back ten years and he can therefore say whatever he wants, and he is often taken to task for this.

Washington is presently Ottawa's head office. It is Washington that makes the decisions. Besides, even if relations are tense between the Prime Minister and Washington, his ministers are going there to say, "We are preparing a bill. What do you think about it?" The bill has not been tabled here yet. We have not talked about it yet.

Regarding the study on foreign affairs that the minister is talking about, I would remind him that he has said himself that he was against the weaponization of space. The missile defence shield project could lead to the weaponization of space.

I am telling the minister of Foreign Affairs that his position is inconsistent. He said that he was against the weaponization of space. He has been saying for two years that he was against the missile defence shield and all of a sudden he completely changes policy.

I think that the inconsistency is on the Minister of Foreign Affairs' side.

[*English*]

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the speech of the hon. member but I found it to be full of a lot of speculation, such as this country can, this country cannot, this country will, this country will not. I do not know what crystal ball he has been looking into that can ascertain abilities and capabilities and what the future will bring in that regard.

We are quite certain that the United States will go through with this. Does the member not think we should be at the table to find out what the entire mission is about? Can he come up with some concrete reasons as to why we should or should not be at the table? We know it will be expensive if we participate to some degree. We know all that. It is foolish to make a decision on speculation. We had better get to the meat of it by meeting with the people involved.

I would like to know exactly what the member is thinking. He talked about debating in the House but he knows very well that when it came to the case of Iraq, the determination as to whether we went to Iraq was announced during question period by the Prime Minister of Canada, with no debate, with no vote, with nothing. I really question the judgment of the Prime Minister when it appears that the rest of us have no integrity to make a wise decision. Does the member not agree that this should be debated thoroughly and voted on by the House?

• (1035)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, the point about speculation may be true. But the lack of debate and the lack of participation by Parliament are the reason for this kind of speculation. There may not be many members in this House who have a good understanding of the issue.

*Supply*

Why would members of Parliament as a whole not debate this issue thoroughly instead of leaving it in the hands of the Prime Minister and his office? I think that this is the main problem and I also think that the member should applaud the Bloc Québécois for taking the initiative of using one of its allotted days to allow not only opposition members but also government members to speak to this issue.

I really think that we can no longer leave such fundamental decisions as our participation in the war in Iraq or our eventual participation in the space shield, in the hands of the Prime Minister's Office. Therefore, the member should applaud the Bloc Québécois for taking the initiative of bringing the issue of the space shield forward for debate today.

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for London—Fanshawe.

I congratulate my colleague from Saint-Jean on his speech, to which I listened very carefully.

[*English*]

I was pleased to hear that my friend, while he introduced talk of star wars, also recognized that this was not the same debate we had back in the 1980s when Canada was considering the strategic defence initiative, or what was then called star wars, being proposed by the United States. For many reasons that system of missile defence was abandoned. Let us be clear that present plans do not in any way resurrect them.

What is now at issue is a much more limited missile defence system and a vastly changed world of new threats in international relationships in which we live and to which we must make appropriate adjustments.

[*Translation*]

One key change is that missile defence is now going from theory to reality, as the hon. member for Wild Rose, who just asked a question, said. The Bush administration has made it a top priority in terms of security, devoting significant efforts and substantial funds to this project. The President stated that, in fall 2004, the United States will implement various missile defence systems to protect the continental U.S. and possibly Canadian territory along the U.S. border.

This will include ground-based and sea-based interceptors, increasing our existing capabilities. In addition, the U.S. recently concluded an agreement with the U.K. to improve the early-warning radar system in Fylingdales, and it is also in talks with Denmark to improve the one in Greenland. These two sites will help the U.S. ensure complete radar coverage of North America.

In preparation for program implementation, the U.S. withdrew from the anti-ballistic missile treaty in June. Then, Presidents Bush and Putin signed a treaty committing their countries to significantly reduce their nuclear arsenals and to consult each other on missile defence. The U.S. is making every effort, too, to assure China that the aim of missile defence is not to weaken China's strategy on nuclear deterrence. These developments have had a significant impact on the geopolitical landscape.

Obviously, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of the weapons delivery system is an increasingly serious problem. Although Canada does not consider itself in as much danger from ballistic missiles as the U.S., it is essential not to assess missile defence solely in terms of our perception of the current situation. The missile defence system seeks to provide security for the future, to confront future threats using deterrence; it is very difficult to predict the kinds of danger that future generations will face.

Given these new circumstances, our government is re-assessing its position on missile defence. The Bloc finds it troubling that this re-assessment is being done in light of current events. I want to assure the Bloc and all Canadians that we are always prepared to re-assess our situation in terms of current geopolitical realities and not in terms of the theories behind our policies. We have been involved in discussions with the U.S. about its plans. However, these plans are now taking shape. While considering a possible role for Canada with regard to these plans, I want to assure the House that, whatever we decide, it will be based solely on our assessment of the best interests of Canada and Canadians.

● (1040)

[*English*]

The paramount issue we are considering here today is the future safety and security of Canadians. We share the same continent with the United States. Unfortunately, it is true to say that we live in a more dangerous world of weapons proliferation among states, and today, more dangerously, non-state actors.

We cannot afford to take for granted what will or will not be affected by attacks on our shared continent. An attack on Seattle will inevitably be an attack on Vancouver, as will an attack on Buffalo be one on Toronto, or in fact, on Toronto be one on Buffalo and on Vancouver be one on Seattle. I reiterate that this may possibly come not only from states but non-state actors.

We must keep in mind that any participation we might undertake in missile defence would only be one aspect of a comprehensive Canadian approach to ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction. Through continued diplomatic engagement we will enforce our efforts to dissuade those who would proliferate missiles and missile technology. We are not abandoning, as seems to be suggested by the opposition, our other forms of defence of the continent and our other diplomatic initiatives to make this a safer world.

These efforts are complemented by the multilateral arms control measures we continually supported. Canada is a founding member of the missile technology control regime which was established in 1987 to counter missile proliferation by controlling the trade in missile equipment and related materials. Our country was also instrumental in developing the Hague code of conduct which establishes the only existing standards regarding ballistic missiles and related activities.



Another important Canadian priority pertains to our longstanding opposition to the weaponization of space, which was alluded to by the member for Saint-Jean. Here we must be careful to distinguish the weaponization of space from the continuing use of space for military purposes, such as navigation, mapping, communications, surveillance, arms control verification, and intelligence gathering, which is currently conducted today by many countries.

However, let me reiterate to the House that Canada remains firmly opposed to the installation of weapons in space. The member for Saint-Jean said that I had changed my position on this issue. I have not changed my position on this issue. The U.S. missile defence system, to be in place by 2004, does not include the installation of weapons in space. We are watching developments in the U.S. very closely. We regularly voice our concerns and any discussions we have on BMD will in fact enable us to voice those concerns more clearly and more cogently.

Another fundamental consideration for Canadians must be our interest in the future of Norad, the North American aerospace defense command, which since 1958 has served us well for the joint defence of this continent. Our personnel work side by side there in detecting and tracking missiles, and responding to air threats. There is a great deal of overlap in the Norad mission and missile defence, and many assets are used for both missions. If missile defence were to become an exclusively American project and remain outside of Norad, the role and relevance of this important partnership, so crucial for our participation in the defence of North America, would come into question.

Over the decades Norad has provided us with essential intelligence gathering and surveillance of our territory. As we look to the future, Canada must continue to play an integral part in the defence of North America, and we can best achieve this if we are able to ensure the role of Norad, where we will continue to have an important voice.

Exploring our options with respect to missile defence is fully in keeping with Canada's long history of cooperation with the United States on our shared border and on continental security. In addition to Norad, we are partners with the United States on the smart border initiative, a 30-point plan for an open and secure border. Our two countries are also working together on the bi-national planning group for emergency preparedness against terrorist attacks and natural disasters. In light of this ongoing cooperation, it only makes sense to explore whether missile defence might be another layer of security partnership in our mutual interests.

• (1045)

The best way to ensure that Canadian interests are being served is to remain engaged in dialogue with the United States on all issues of our shared continental security. The Americans have made their intentions clear. That is why the government believes it is our responsibility to pursue talks with the United States in order to ensure the security of Canadians and the future of Norad. Many questions remain about our possible role in the development of a missile defence system, but these questions can be answered only by engaging our American allies in formal discussions in the interests of all Canadians.

### *Supply*

By entering these discussions we will be able to address our concerns about the future of Norad, about the weaponization of space, and any cost that might be associated. We say to the House and to Canadians that we must discuss these issues. If we do not achieve our negotiating goals we will not have to enter into an agreement, but if we do not discuss these issues we know one thing, we will be surrendering our voice, in fact our sovereignty, and ceding to the United States the role of unilaterally determining the shape of the defence of North America, and that for generations to come.

This would run counter to our traditions established since Ogdensburg in 1940, when we firmly established the fact that Canada was a partner with the United States in the defence of North America. It would run counter to our interests. It would put the safety of future generations who will face dangers, today unknown, exclusively in the hands of a friendly power, another power, our friendly neighbour, but one with whom we wish to share our defence, not be dependent upon.

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and I have some sympathy for the position that he finds himself in, seems to be deliberately blind to the long term goals of the United States government when it comes to the weaponization of space.

I would feel more assured if, for instance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs said that one of the things that the government would seek, in these talks with the United States, is an American agreement to pursue along with Canada a treaty against the weaponization of space. I have not heard the Minister of Foreign Affairs say that or perhaps even suggest that it be a condition of eventual Canadian participation in any national missile defence, and that it not be the lead up to the weaponization of space.

I have a document called "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century". It lists the goals that are now guiding the Pentagon and the White House.

Incidentally, there is nothing in the summary that even mentions anything having to do with multilateral negotiations, the United Nations or anything like that. It does, however, talk about:

Develop and deploy global missile defenses to defend the American homeland and American allies, and to provide a secure basis for U.S. power projection around the world. Control the new "international commons" of space and "cyberspace", and pave the way for the creation of a new military service—U.S. Space Forces—with the mission of space control.

• (1050)

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I do not deny that there are concerns about all of these issues that have been raised, but I go back to my original premise. How will we address these concerns if we are not at the table to discuss them with our American colleagues?

There is no suggestion that any discussions that we would have or enter into today would conclude with an agreement which would result in the weaponization of space. It is very clear that the system that is proposed is far away from anything to do with the weaponization of space.

*Supply*

There is speculation in the United States and I am sure there is speculation in Russia, the U.K. and France, and all sorts of think tanks that have been talking about weaponization of space. They have been talking about it for 50 years. Jules Verne foresaw it 150 years ago.

I saw a transcript of a U.S. senate hearing the other day where a general was speaking about the possibility at looking at the weaponization of space. The U.S. senator asked him about the cost and he replied that it was astronomical. He had no idea. He was asked if it was technologically feasible. He replied that he had no idea about that. He was then asked if he knew that it was contrary to the United States policy to not weaponize space. He answered that he had not given much thought to that, either.

Of course there will be a lot of speculation about this and people will talk about it. Our point is that we will be a more effective voice as a partner at the table to bring forward our objections than if we rest here and do not engage our American partners on these issues.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the minister just said that Canada is in a much better position if it is involved in the debate on missile defence rather than standing back. Yet, the government has chosen to do exactly that, to stand away and avoid the issue.

We have had no debate in the House of Commons on this issue until the Bloc brought it forward and, of course, it will be debated again because the official opposition will bring it forth. But the minister just said that if Canada is fully engaged or involved in this we will be in a much better position.

Why is it that three years after the Canadian Alliance, the official opposition, took a position on this, the government does not know what it will do? It has not been engaged in the proper process with our greatest friend and ally to the south. Why is that, when the minister said that we would be in a much better position had we done that?

**Hon. Bill Graham:** Mr. Speaker, opposition members always say that this has not been engaged in Parliament, that they know nothing, and that they are kept in the dark. The hon. member knows full well that very competent members of his party have sat on the defence and the foreign affairs committees. In my personal recollection, this matter has been discussed for the last five years.

When I was chairman of the foreign affairs committee, we spent a great deal of time considering this issue. The foreign affairs committee came out with a report recently which discussed Canada-U.S. relations. This is a matter on which interested members of the House have had an opportunity to participate in and be fully informed on for many years. The government took the position that it was not appropriate in the light of earlier circumstances to engage a discussion on this issue. In my view, that was the right decision to take, but conditions change.

One of the most important conditions is that the United States was able to resolve with Russia the issue of its position on this matter. There was a time when we might have considered making the world a more dangerous place than before and we registered our opposition to it. That important consideration has changed. With changed circumstances, the government can change. The government is able to defend the interests of Canadians in the light of changed

geopolitical circumstances. That is what we must do and that is what we are here to do.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Fanshawe, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join this important debate on national missile defence. I recall that some three years ago I chaired the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. At that time the committee held a series of hearings on the possibility of Canada participating in national missile defence.

Indeed, our colleague, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, was the chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. We held at least one joint session with his committee on national missile defence. At that time, I was about 95% convinced that Canada should join with the United States, our defence partner, in NMD. Today I am 100% convinced that this is the proper course of action for our country in our own national self-interest.

I want to be clear that we made the correct decision on the war in Iraq, and so do the majority of my constituents who have provided me with that input. We owe no apology to the United States.

• (1055)

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just heard a cellphone ring. Could members please be reminded that the House is no place for cellphones.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** There is an agreement among parties not to have cellphones in the House. I would ask members to please follow the rules.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague. It was not my cell phone and I hope his point of order is not coming out of my time.

We owe no apology on our correct decision in Iraq. We owe no apology to the United States about that. We made the correct decision as a sovereign nation, so we should not be joining the NMD system as some kind of makeup effort to the United States. That would be fundamentally wrong. We should join the national missile defence system because it is the correct decision for, and in the national self-interest of Canada. If we refuse to join, that would have profound implications for our future role in Norad.

I want to give the current Minister of Foreign Affairs due credit. He has changed his views somewhat in light of changing circumstances in the world. Three years ago when our committee was engaged in the set of hearings I mentioned, there was a lot more skepticism on the part of the current minister for this at that time.

Since then, there has been September 11, 2001. The world has shown itself to be a much changed and more dangerous place since then. I think the minister's change of opinion on this simply reflects the re-evaluation of the changing circumstances. I give him credit. To do anything less than that would be irresponsible of any parliamentarian, let alone our Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I want to deal with several misconceptions and misinformation that are floating around out there in the public as well as in the House of Commons and indeed in our party, our own caucus. There are different views on this. There is misconception and misinformation.

I would like to tackle the worst example right now, which is that somehow this is star wars two or son of star wars. That is factually incorrect. The people who propound that statement are either being deliberately misleading or they simply have not taken the time to review the facts, because it is factually incorrect to say it is son of star wars.

The fact is this is a land based system. It is based on ground based interceptors. The jargon used is GBIs. The first phase of this multiphase NMD system is that there would be some 20 ground based interceptors put into use to defend North America. It is not son of star wars. To say that is factually wrong. It is a land based system.

The second misconception is that somehow this is an offensive system which would make the world more dangerous. To say that it is an offensive system is factually incorrect. It is a defensive system with a limited land based missile system designed to counter what is an emerging, albeit limited, threat. Specifically, countries like North Korea are working on the development of missiles which could reach this continent. The fact is this is not an offensive missile system; it is a land based defensive system aimed at the protection of North America, which includes Canada by the way. We ought to remember that fact.

There is talk that it would somehow make the world more dangerous. I reject that categorically. When the defence committee held hearings three years ago, there was a very strong indication that the United States was prepared to share this technology with other nations. It is not out to have something exclusively for itself, to tip the balance of power so that it is then freer to go out and attack countries. That is nonsense. To not recognize that is to ignore the important facts.

Frankly, I think there are members speaking to this who do not have all the facts. They should have sat in on some of the hearings our committee held three years ago.

The third misconception is that this is part of an aggressive Bush doctrine. I do not agree with the pre-emptive strike idea of the Bush doctrine necessarily. I think it is potentially very dangerous. However this is not part of a Bush doctrine. NMD was initiated in 1998 under the Clinton Democratic administration. I have been to Washington. I have met with members of Congress from both parties. This initiative has strong bipartisan support. The critics who label it as George Bush Republican warmongering are simply incorrect. It denies the fact that this initiative was started by the Clinton Democratic administration.

• (1100)

The fourth misconception is that Canada cannot afford this. The fact is that when our defence committee was at the Norad headquarters Cheyenne mountain in Colorado, we had a very extensive series of meetings with our own Canadian military people there who help run the Norad headquarters as well as the American people.

### *Supply*

The contribution Canada would most likely be asked to make is what is referred to as an asymmetrical contribution. We would likely take on additional duties at Cheyenne mountain in the running of Norad, which would free up American personnel to take on more of the duties of the NMD. There would not be some huge cheque expected from Canada.

There would not be some huge amount of money that we would have to contribute to it. Frankly we know our defence budget could not bear that. I do not think Canadians would support our devoting a huge amount of our defence budget to it. That is not the expectation. Our contribution would be expected more in terms of personnel at Cheyenne mountain in an asymmetrical way.

The next misconception is that the United States is going to do this unilaterally and that Canada should stay out of it. That is wrong. The fact is the United States is going to go ahead with the missile defence system. It has made that very clear both politically and militarily to us as a country for the last several years.

We had witnesses from all sides of the argument, including groups like Ploughshares. Given the choice between a missile defence system under unilateral American control or a missile defence system under Norad control with Canada as a partner, not a single witness, not even the most antagonistic witnesses to this idea said that it would be better to have it under unilateral American control. They all said it would be better to have the missile defence system under the control of Norad where Canada is a partner in that important defence of North America.

The next misconception is that missiles are not a threat and there is no threat to North America from missiles; September 11 proved that when some maniacs hijacked planes and murdered a lot of innocent people. We cannot sell that to the American public and we certainly cannot sell that to the Canadian public.

People understand that there is an array of threats out there. Yes, missiles are a threat. They pose a threat. Of course, there are suitcase bombs and airplanes. There is a whole series of threats. To say that because these threats exist or even if they are perhaps more likely, that one ought not guard against the possibility of a missile attack would be incredibly irresponsible. The United States will not accept that logic and neither should Canada. The potential is there for a missile attack and it has to be dealt with.

Somehow the argument is that this would compromise our sovereignty. I think the minister referred to this as well. Over 60 years ago we formally became a defence partner with the United States in a special bilateral relationship in the protection of North America. It started at a little town called Ogdensburg in upstate New York. It was then formalized in the Norad agreement.

We are defence partners with the United States. Let us be candid, we are the junior partner, but the deputy commander of Norad is always a Canadian. We have a valuable and important role to play. We should continue that.

This serves our national self-interest. It continues our important historic partnership in defence of the continent with the United States. My view is it has strong support from the Canadian people.

*Supply*

We ought to do this not out of any sense of apology for our correct decision on Iraq. We ought to join the missile defence system because it is the right decision for Canadians. I look forward to seeing our participation in the missile defence system in the near future.

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, if I understood my colleague correctly, as a scenario, he sees the possibility, without investing huge amounts of money, of giving more responsibilities to NORAD for the protection of airspace, which could free up American personnel to take on more of the duties of NMD.

My question then has to be this. Can we afford to do indirectly what we do not want to do directly? This is the fundamental issue. Would the Americans agree to say, "In exchange for your participation, we will give more responsibilities to NORAD for the protection of airspace, and we will pull back on missile defence to control all of its technology"?

I wonder if this approach is not similar to the one used in the case of Iraq. We told the Americans that we would not go to Iraq, but that we could take over from the Americans in Afghanistan.

I think that we are doing indirectly what we do not want to do directly. Could we have further explanations on this?

[*English*]

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I think my colleague is really reaching to draw a parallel between Iraq and Norad. Iraq was an attack on a country which we decided, because it did not have UN sanction, we would not participate in. I thought that was the right decision then and today I think it was the right decision as well.

Norad however, is fundamentally different. It is a bilateral defence partnership with the United States and Canada in the defence of North America. It is a defence partnership.

What I said is it was made very clear to us at Cheyenne mountain, and I do not know if my colleague opposite has had the opportunity to be there, that the most practical contribution Canada could make in many ways would be to take up more of the efforts in current Norad operations at Cheyenne mountain, which would free up some key American personnel who would then possibly be shifted over to the missile defence part of it.

We would be fundamentally involved. I repeat that the deputy commander of Norad is, and always is, a Canadian general. The reality is that for our people and for this partnership to continue to function well, since the Americans are definitely going into a national missile defence system, we should be a partner in that effort as well. It is very difficult to separate out the parts of the efforts at Cheyenne mountain that deal with missile defence from the other part of the defence of North America. They are too inextricably linked. It is very important that we remain a key partner in this defence organization.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the member on one particular aspect of his speech, when he said that we made the right decision. We

made no decision in the House of Commons. We did not vote on it. The Prime Minister stood during question period and announced that would be the case. The member should indicate loud and clear what the truth is. The truth is the Prime Minister made the decision. We did not because we had no vote. In fact we did not even have a debate, other than take note debates and that kind of debate is not effective.

Second, I agree that we should be part of this program and particularly be at the table. I do believe that our foreign affairs minister has illustrated in the past that he can be diplomatic and very respectful and present our case in a good manner. I just hope the other members of the Liberal Party have received lessons in diplomacy and respect when they voice their concerns to the United States.

I am just wondering if the member and any of his other caucus members who have had loose lips in the past have had any lessons in that regard.

**Mr. Pat O'Brien:** Mr. Speaker, I do not consider myself to be part of the loose-lipped gang that unfortunately exists in all parties. I think my colleague in the Alliance Party has had some experience of loose lips in his own caucus. I guess one ought to be a bit careful when one seeks to cast the first stone vis-à-vis loose lips.

My mother was born in the United States. I am proud of the fact that I have American relatives. I am not anti-American.

I say again that we, meaning the Canadian government, made the correct decision in my view in not going into Iraq. With respect to a vote, this does not take place when we go into action; there are no votes. The Prime Minister exercised his authority, and the cabinet, as is traditionally done by governments of all political stripes in this country. But had there been a vote, I am proud to say I would have voted not to go into Iraq.

As for my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the compliments the member has given to him on his political judgment, those are deserved. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is an astute individual, perhaps one of the best prepared people to take up his post. He is very cognizant of the importance of our relationship with the United States.

• (1110)

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased indeed to speak today on this important issue of missile defence.

*Supply*

To me it seems absolutely incredible that this debate has not taken place in the House before now. Over the four or five years that this has been on the front burner and the seven years it has been talked about by our American friends and neighbours, over all that time, I find it incredible that the government has not once brought this issue to the House for debate. That is a shameful record on the part of the government. Members of the House of Commons, who represent the population of Canada, have been completely left out of this debate in the House of Commons. That is an unacceptable way of dealing with such an important issue, an issue which is quite controversial across this country. The government really ought to think about that. Still, I hope the government will soon call for a debate on this issue. The opposition certainly has. I know we will see more debate on this in the time ahead, but I doubt it will come from the government side.

I would like to start by talking about what missile defence is. The hon. member who spoke just previously gave a pretty good background on what it is. He also presented some very interesting and productive ideas on missile defence. I appreciate that. It is good to hear that from the government side, because until now we have not heard that. It is a step in the right direction.

I will start by saying a little bit about what missile defence is not. It is not star wars. Anyone who refers to this missile defence program as star wars, as the NDP will probably do and as many others in the House will probably do, is really presenting the facts in a misleading way. It is in no way star wars as President Reagan presented star wars. It is nothing like that whatsoever.

It does not employ weapons in space, in fact. It calls for a limited ground and sea based system employing six interceptors. The program will start in 2004 whether Canada is involved in it or not. Up to 40 interceptors could be in place by 2005. It is a very high tech system in some ways, but in other ways it is very low tech because in effect it is a large bullet hitting the target that they are trying to shoot down. These interceptors would not have warheads of any kind, again, just a mass to stop the missile coming in. It would destroy the missile simply by the force of impact of one mass hitting another.

This is not a cold war system of any type, but it is a post-September 11 system. This system was being developed four years before September 11. Because of the wall coming down and the cold war ending, the United States could see that a new threat could be forthcoming and that threat could be from an accidental launching from Russia or other former Soviet states or it could be from new rogue states developing the capability. We have seen, of course, that North Korea has come a long way in developing that capability. As a responsible government would, the United States is just putting in place some ability to defend itself against either one of those situations. The purpose of the system is to defend against a small number of incoming missiles launched either by rogue states, terrorists somewhere, or by an accidental launch.

One of the messages that has already been delivered and I am sure will be delivered again throughout today about the concern over Canada becoming involved is that there could be debris from a missile that is shot down, and it certainly could be an intercontinental ballistic missile with an atomic warhead on board. This is certainly a very real possibility. The concern expressed is that the debris may come down on Canada. That is in fact a very real concern, but I would like to ask a question to anyone who is going to bring up this

issue. Is it more likely that we can keep the debris away from Canada if we are at the table discussing this, if we are engaged on a day to day basis, and in fact further, if we are involved in the command as we are involved in the command of Norad?

• (1115)

In a situation where we just say no, we are out of it, or in the other situation where we are closely involved and actually become involved in the command structure, in which situation are we more likely to be able to keep debris away from Canada? Clearly it is in the position where we have a voice at the table on an ongoing basis in negotiating this system and in the command structure.

I would argue that it is extremely important that we become involved and we should have become involved at least three or four years ago, trying to look at this from a non-partisan point of view. The government certainly should have become involved at that time. That is when the Canadian Alliance, a responsible political party, the official opposition, took a position that we should go to our American friends and neighbours and say, "This is an interesting idea for several reasons", and I will get into those reasons in a minute, "and because it is good for Canada, because it is good for our security, we want to sit down and discuss this with you and develop a system". That is what should have happened three or four years ago but did not. Had we done that, of course, the likelihood of some negative impacts such as debris falling on Canada would be far, far less likely.

I want to talk about why missile defence is important. I want to make it clear that the primary reason that Canada should become involved in this missile defence program is for the security of Canada and for the safety of Canadians. In spite of the fact that I have been bringing this up for years now, how many Canadians or Americans know that we have no capability whatsoever to shoot down an intercontinental ballistic missile? If we have an accidental launch of a nuclear missile from Russia, as an example, and that could happen, although the probability is very low, I am not willing to sacrifice a city like Toronto, New York, Chicago or Edmonton. I am not willing, just because the risk is low, to say let us not bother doing anything about it.

I think a more responsible position is to say that we will work with the U.S. to develop some capability to shoot down an intercontinental ballistic missile, because right now we have no capability. Quite frankly, I think Canadians and Americans hearing that will be shocked. They will ask why we have not been involved in this. That is a question they should be asking the government because the answers have not been good and have not been explained why we have not been involved in it sooner in the way that the Canadian Alliance has recommended.

I want to get into a little bit of background on the relationship between Canada and the United States when it comes to security. Certainly the member of the Liberal Party who spoke just before me did a little of that and I will carry on. He referred to the Ogdensburg agreement of 1940. Since that time in the Canada-U.S. relationship, it has been recognized that the security of North America is indivisible. We cannot possibly set up a separate security system for Canada. It is simply not realistic. We could not afford it and it would not be effective.

### Supply

Just as in 1940, Canada and the United States are today facing a common external threat. However, unlike World War II, in recent years Canada has not been very effective in advancing its security interests with the United States. In fact in some areas, Canada has not even been effective in retaining a seat at the table. If this is not corrected, the potentially alarming consequences for Canadian security could be quite dramatic and our most crucial trading relationship would be affected as well.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Canada-U.S. security cooperation in the new era will be in the realm of border or perimeter security and law enforcement cooperation. Notwithstanding some progress on drafting some new agreements on cross-border security, Canada has not been very successful in reassuring the United States that unintended security threats will not emerge from this country, and now I am talking about the broad security arrangements between Canada and the United States.

David Jones, the former political minister and counsellor at the U.S. embassy in Ottawa, recently noted that border security and defence are two of the three main areas of contention in Canada-U.S. relations.

• (1120)

Mr. Jones warned that:

Canada has been offered the choice of assuring us that it is making comparable efforts to prevent terrorism or forcing us—at significant cost to both our societies—to protect against prospective terrorists in Canada... the semi-hysterical Canadian resistance to virtually every U.S. proposal—from sky marshals to tighter refugee screening—leaves the impression that Ottawa thinks it is humouring a batty uncle—

That is a quote from a top-ranking official responsible at the U.S. embassy, saying that in fact the Canadian government has acted as if the presentation of ideas like missile defence are not to be taken seriously. This has to be a real concern.

When we are looking at the security issue, it is not only that missile defence gives us a capability to shoot down intercontinental ballistic missiles, therefore making Canada a safer place, but it is that we have not gotten involved. And if the government holds off on a decision for another year or two or three, then we may not be allowed to become involved in any way, because the United States has made the decision that it will have a system in place by 2004. It has made that decision. It is Canada's choice whether or not to become involved in it, and because we have not become involved until this time we certainly have lost in many ways. I want to talk about how in fact that is the case.

In the area of continental defence, the United States is moving ahead with key military planning without any meaningful Canadian input. For several years, the United States has privately been urging the Canadian government to support the creation of an effective ballistic missile defence system for North America. It is not, as the Prime Minister says, that the United States has never yet asked us to be part of it. Only someone who is blind or not paying attention in any way and is not listening to what is going on could possibly realistically make a statement like that. This proposal has been on the table for several years.

In fact, General George Macdonald warned the House of Commons standing committee on defence, and I believe it was three years ago now if memory serves me well, that if Canada did

not participate “it would represent the initial stages of the atrophying of Norad”, the North American aerospace defense command. He further warned that his own position as deputy commander, the second in command at Norad at the time, the top Canadian at Norad, likely would become “non-viable” if Canada did not participate.

The former member talked about going to Cheyenne mountain. I was with a small group of Canadian members of Parliament, I believe there were four of us, who went to Cheyenne mountain. We had two days with General Penney and a good part of a day with General Eberhart, who is the top American in charge, the top commander at Norad and also at Northcom. Both of those military leaders made it very clear that the United States really would appreciate participation by Canada. To me it is an offer that is extremely generous; It could go ahead on its own.

In practical terms it probably would not make a lot of difference to the Americans, except that it is the North American continent they are defending and they do not want to intrude upon Canadian sovereignty. If they go ahead with a system to protect the North American continent, which of course includes Canada, without Canadian participation, they are concerned that it would look to the world like they are intruding on Canadian sovereignty.

The argument in fact could be made that this is happening to some extent. When the issue of sovereignty is discussed in relation to this issue, Canadian sovereignty in fact has been hurt already by the tardiness of the government in making a decision on this issue. Had the government said three years ago that it wanted to become involved in this, to sit down and have in-depth discussions with the Americans and decide what the program would be, and the Americans are certainly open to that, and that it wanted to be involved in the command structure under Norad, and the Americans have offered that, had the government done that, it would have been a very positive move in terms of protecting Canadian sovereignty. Because the government has not acted in that fashion, Canadian sovereignty has come under attack. Canadian sovereignty has been hurt by that, which is extremely unfortunate.

The Canadian Alliance document “The New North—Strong and Free” was released a couple of weeks ago. The subtitle of that document is “Protecting Canadian Sovereignty and Contributing to Global Stability”. It is the Canadian Alliance white paper on defence.

• (1125)

The government will not take action on defence issues. The foreign affairs department will not take action on laying out a new defence policy for our country, so the Canadian Alliance has done it as official opposition. It released this document a couple of weeks ago. In this document our very first recommendation reads as follows:

Canada should support maintaining NORAD as a viable defence organization to counter threats in North America, including those emanating from rogue states possibly equipped with ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction. NORAD should be given the command responsibility for the envisaged system for defending against ballistic missiles.

That is our very first recommendation of 33 and it is no accident. This issue has been in the forefront with the Canadian Alliance for some time. We took a position on it about three years ago within our caucus and within our party. Because the government has not, the impacts are quite substantial.

*Supply*

First is the impact in the area of security. I have talked about the importance in the area of security, of giving us some ability to shoot down intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The second is hanging on to Norad. We have to be involved. Already we may not have an option but we will see. I still believe if the government were to make a decision quite quickly, we could still protect our involvement in Norad. Norad gives the whole North American continent protection against external threats, such as bombers and things like that. However since September 11, it also provides protection against internal threats. That capability which Norad provides could well be lost if an agreement is not renewed.

Top Americans, including Ambassador Cellucci and Canadian generals, like General Macdonald, have said that there is a very real threat to Norad if Canada does not become involved very quickly in missile defence. That was also said three years ago. We are really at the point now where we have to make a decision very quickly. There are other areas that have to be considered and these too are areas of serious consideration.

We will members of the NDP say that when we talk about issues like missile defence, we should not talk about the economy. I would think it would be irresponsible not to talk about the economy in conjunction with this missile defence issue from two points of view.

The first is from the Canada-U.S. relationship. We know how it has suffered under this government due to some extremely harmful statements made, the attack on our American friends and neighbours. Becoming involved could help undo some of that harm so that we are more likely to keep goods flowing freely across the borders.

The other is the economic impact from high tech industry becoming involved in developing this product. Already Canadians are somewhat involved but there is a concern that involvement may disappear completely if Canada does not make a decision very quickly. I will quote from an article by Simon Tuck in the May 12 *Globe and Mail*. He states:

Ottawa's stated schedule for deciding whether to participate in the United States' controversial national missile defence system will be too late for Canadian companies to gain maximum benefit, defence industry officials say. Ron Kane, vice-president of policy and research at the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada, says Ottawa must decide whether or not to participate in missile defence by the end of July, if Canadian defence companies are to take full advantage. "If we don't commit over the next couple of months, we'll be shut out."

The sense of urgency that is felt by the industry is certainly not shared by the government. That is extremely unfortunate. In fact we heard the Prime Minister say just last Wednesday that negotiations with the United States about the missile defence system could begin soon, but a final decision could still be months away. The defence minister has said that there is plenty of time.

There are members of the New Democratic Party or the governing party who say that the economy is not important. I should remind them that a third of the goods produced in this country are exported to the United States. We depend on the United States for jobs. If we are to have members from the New Democratic Party or the governing party stand up and say that the economy is not important, then I challenge them to take two of their friends out to a street corner and say, "There are three of us here. Our relationship with the United States is not important, so one of us loses our job. Which one is it going to be?"

● (1130)

That is reality. One-third of the jobs in Canada depend on the export of goods to the United States, so the economy is important. This is primarily a security issue. We should look at it from a security point of view but if we ignore the economy, we are doing it at the peril of Canadians and jobs in this country.

There is a lot to say on this issue. I will depend on questions to bring out some other points.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague's speech. I have to give him credit for having raised an important issue, that being debris. However, he was certainly not serious when he said that he believed that, if we were to negotiate with the Americans, we could convince them not to send an antiballistic missile over Canadian territory towards the eastern American seaboard. It would inevitably have to go over Canadian territory because the interceptor would leave from Alaska.

I would like to know if the member thinks that the scenario I raised earlier is plausible. I was saying that the Americans could try to convince Canada to put a series of interceptors in Canada's far north so that the interception would happen over the polar ice cap. Thus, the Americans could tell Canadians, "This is the best way for you not to have debris on your territory, because otherwise, there will be".

[*English*]

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, I touched on the member's question in my presentation, the issue of debris falling on the country from missiles being shot down over it.

The hon. member is a member of the defence committee and I think he would know well from debate over the years that if we are involved in the negotiations, we have a lot better chance of ending up with a solution that is more beneficial to Canada.

The United States has said that it will go ahead with this program no matter what. Burying our heads in the sand, saying that we will not touch it and that we will allow all the planning to be left in the hands of the Americans, I would suggest is not wise. That is the position the government is taking.

The member has a point. If he is saying because we have delayed participation for at least three or four years beyond what we should have, that we have been shut out and that the options in terms of interceptor placement and the likelihood of debris coming down on Canada are limited, then he is right. However I do not think that is his point. His point was we should not be involved at all, and I believe that is wrong headed completely.

Let us be involved. Let us have Canadian input. Let us have Canada play a meaningful role in command through the Norad umbrella.

*Supply*

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as with the earlier debates, I listened very carefully to the debate of my hon. colleague. I agree with him that the current American concept of national missile defence, or now ballistic missile defence, is not star wars. It has changed integrally from the original concept under President Reagan. It is not a system that will weaponize space. I am very happy that he agrees with us in the opposition to the weaponization of space.

However I am a little disappointed. As a parliamentarian for six years, I have been very open in promoting the enhancement of the role of each of us as parliamentarians and our ability to impact. One of the most important ways we do that is by using our standing committees as a vehicle. Therefore, I was somewhat disappointed to hear him denigrate the standing committees because the members did hear from the former head of the defence committee who talked about how long they had discussed it.

You, hon. member are a member. My committee, foreign affairs, has done this. I am disappointed you do not think that is a worthwhile participation.

**Mr. Réginald Bélair (Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole, Lib.):** I am sorry to interrupt. Please address your comments to the Chair and not directly to any other member.

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, there were a couple of questions in that.

First, on the effectiveness of committees. Committees really have very little impact on what happens in this place. The work actually done has almost no impact on what the government does. From that point of view, committees are virtually useless, quite frankly.

From the point of view of learning about an area, committees can be very helpful. That is the thing. Through my work on the defence committee for years and on other committees, as the immigration critic on the immigration committee and as the agriculture critic on the agriculture committee, I learned an awful lot about those areas. There is that benefit.

In terms of committees being enough that is nonsense. First, reports from committees are ignored by the government on a routine basis. We can point to a handful of committees that have had any impact that would really be noticeable at all.

If we are to limit debate to those committees, the few people involved will come to understand the issue better, but there will be no impact on government. What is the point?

If there is a debate in the House, then all members of can be involved. Maybe there will be some impact on government. Rarely is there, but on occasion there may be.

We have the leadership of the current Prime Minister. Certainly the member knows that it is virtually an elected dictatorship in the way the House operates. Even within her caucus, she knows that it is a virtual dictatorship, an elected dictatorship. That is what separates us from others in the function. I have heard many Liberal MPs say the same thing and certainly many from opposition parties.

When we look at the process, a committee is not enough. It has to take place in the House as well.

• (1135)

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's speech. I could not agree with him more.

If we go back in history and read some of the articles, the same concerns, which I am hearing today, were also raised with regard to Norad. Yet Norad has worked as a seamless partnership between Americans and Canadians for years now with no major problems at all.

The hon. member mentioned there had been questions raised in regard to Canadian sovereignty over this. I have a great problem with that. I think if the Americans had not been there, we would have probably already lost what we like to call Canadian sovereignty. We depend upon the Americans due to the depletion of our forces to protect our borders now, from illegal immigration, a possible invasion through to threats from all countries. We depend more and more upon our neighbours to the south to protect us.

I remember in when I was growing up we were very proud of our forces. We were proud of what we stood for in Canada with regard to fighting for freedom in the world.

Every where I go one of the greatest concerns I hear is why are we not supporting our forces more. Why are we not more involved in these situations? Why are we always taking a back seat? Basically, in my opinion we have turned our own defence system in Canada into a disgrace.

I would appreciate the opinion of the hon. member on this. We really cannot offer too much to the Americans to help with this program, other than our willingness to become involved. Does the hon. member not think it has been a disgrace of the government and previous governments to allow our forces to be depleted to the extent that they have, where we have to depend on other countries?

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member brings forward an important point. Let us look at Canadian sovereignty, which is a key component. If the government were to give the military the resources it needs to be the type of military Canada needs, which means more people in the military and better equipment, then we could have units that would be extremely effective in operating with our allies, including the United States.

If we want to protect Canadian sovereignty we must keep the military's ability to actually contribute in a meaningful fashion with our NATO and American allies. If we do that, we strengthen sovereignty. By allowing the military to deteriorate the way the government has, we have lost some of our ability to control, which means we have lost some of our sovereignty.

The member has brought forward a very real concern. Becoming involved in missile defence would certainly allow Norad to go on and would expand the protection we get from Norad. Because we would have a place in the command structure, second in command but a prominent place, and because we would be involved in all of the discussions that take place, that would strengthen our sovereignty.



There is no better example of this impact than at Norad headquarters at Cheyenne mountain. We were told by the top Canadian there and by General Eberhart, the top American commander at Norad, that Canada has been excluded more and more from Norad. Canadians are even being excluded more at the headquarters at Cheyenne mountain. We are not involved because we have not signed on to the missile defence system. That truly is a threat to sovereignty. Rebuilding our military is certainly an important part of stopping that slide in our ability to control our own destiny.

• (1140)

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member of the NDP for shifting his time. He will be speaking after me. I will be splitting my time with my colleague from Nova Scotia.

It is an honour and a privilege to rise today on an issue of such importance to the peace and security of our country.

Never before have the people of Canada and the nations of the world been called to duty as they were in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the U.S.A. On that day we were reminded in the most vivid and vicious manner that our ocean borders would not protect us from the evils of the world.

I have long believed that Canada's best interests can only be served if we become fully engaged in the development, deployment and maintenance of the missile defence system. Unfortunately, at this time we have not come to a full decision within our caucus. However if the defence committee had gone to Norad to meet with our friends in the U.S.A. we would have been able to present a full report to Parliament and then could have had a debate on it.

I would now like to take the time to highlight the main reasons that our participation, as far as I am concerned as a member of Parliament, is essential to our national security.

For more than two generations, Canada and the U.S. have maintained a defensive line that is the envy of the world. Our mutual defence of the North American continent through the North American Aerospace Defence Command has ensured the protection of our country since the dawn of the cold war. Norad is a unique military partnership built on mutual interest and mutual trust. Both its missions and its motto can be summed up in three words: deter, detect, defend.

The missile defence system is therefore the natural extension and evolution of Norad and to that end there is little doubt that the U.S. will want to take full advantage of the Norad infrastructure and its technology as the basis for a missile defence system. Norad has the best equipment and personnel in the world in terms of long range satellite and radar tracking.

A key strength of the Norad partnership is the degree of integration between our two armed forces. Canadian and American military personnel work hand in hand and side by side at installations in both countries.

If a missile defence system were to be assigned to Norad and Canadians were not full participants, all our Canadian personnel at Norad would be sent home. They would not be able to assist with the

### *Supply*

maintenance of the missile defence system. They would not be able to help monitor for incoming ballistic missile threats. They would not be able to continue in the important commanding roles they play. To put it another way, if Canada does not participate in missile defence, Norad is as good as dead.

I doubt that even the most ardent skeptics of missile defence would want us to end our Norad partnership with the U.S. That is because we continue to live in a very dangerous world, a world in which there are some who wish the U.S. and Canada would fall apart.

We have learned that rogue elements in countries from the Far East to the Middle East are trying to develop weapons of mass destruction. We have seen tests conducted on long range ballistic missiles. We know that some of the weaponry of the former Soviet Union is unaccounted for and even possibly for sale on the black market.

No matter how unlikely a missile strike might seem to be in the post-cold war world, we simply cannot take the risk of ruling out that possibility.

There are some who will dismiss the warnings we have received from world events and the important lessons of history. We must be prepared and we must not turn our backs on our friends and allies in the U.S.A.

Our performance with respect to Canada's involvement in the war on terrorism and the war with Iraq are not worthy of the great tradition of diplomacy established by former Prime Ministers Sir Robert Borden and Lester B. Pearson.

Our defence relationship with the Americans is at a crossroads. We can choose to work with them to rid the world of the threat of terrorism, as have the Australians, the British and countless others, or we can walk away from our international obligations without a care or concern.

• (1145)

The first mission of the Canadian Forces is the protection of our borders but at the present time, if Canada were the target of a missile attack, there is nothing we could do to defend ourselves and all Canadians.

If the U.S. were attacked, its only recourse would be to strike back. That is why I am reminded of the words of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, who asked, "Given the choice, shouldn't we seek to save lives rather than avenge them?" I could not agree more.

A missile defence system, if effective, would allow North America to defend itself from an unprovoked missile attack. Ongoing tests have shown that the science and technology needed to make an effective system are now close at hand. Intelligence reports have shown that the threat of an attack is still a risk we must consider.

Common sense tells us that we must support our friends and our allies and that we should be part and parcel of the missile defence project that the U.S. is looking at.

*Supply*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the unanimous consent of the House to make the motion before us votable so it can be voted on tonight?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** Does the member for Saint-Jean have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bélair):** There is no consent.

The member for Cumberland—Colchester has the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to follow the remarks by the hon. member for Saint John. She has been very involved in this debate from the very beginning. She is very involved in the committee. Like her, I would like to state the position of our party but it is not possible because we do not know anything about what is being proposed.

We are inclined to support missile defence but we have never been told any details about the proposal. How will it involve Canada? Who is the threat? Who are we saying is going to threaten our country or the United States? We should know these things if we are going to build a defence system and pass judgment on it. We should have information available to us about who our missile defence system would be aimed at. Will it be based on land? Will it all be land? Will it be partly sea? Will it be partly space?

We do not know whether it could be nuclear or not nuclear or whether it could be adapted to nuclear. There are many questions that have a huge impact on our decision to support this or not. We want to support it but we need the information. It is incumbent on the government to give Parliament that information but it is not giving us any.

Hopefully the government has the information but if it does not I do not know how it will decide either. However when we are being asked to make a decision on such an important issue, which could affect every aspect of our country, our security and certainly life and death in the event of an attack, we must know the details of what we are getting into.

Who will manufacture these weapons? Will Canada get a benefit from the technology? We do not know that. Who is developing the specs and do we have those available? We do not know. We are being asked to pass judgment on this but we do not even know the specifications.

Where will the incoming missiles be intercepted? Will they be intercepted over Canadian soil, over the sea or where? What is the plan? What is the proposal? Will Canadian bases be asked to have missiles on them? We do not know that and we should have that information. There must be a plan or proposal somewhere. Hopefully the government has it. If it is discussing these issues it must have this information, otherwise I do not know how it could have an intelligent discussion or bring the question to Parliament and ask us to make an intelligent decision.

Is there any possibility these weapons could be used defensively? We have to know these things. What is the timeline for implementation? We do not know that. We do not know how fast this will go. We do not know whether it will be part of Norad or outside of Norad, or how that system will work.

Has Mexico agreed to participate, and what is its thoughts on this? We should hear from Mexico, as well as the United States, if we are going to have a continental defence system.

What is the proposed budget for this? What will it cost the Canadian taxpayers? Is there even an estimate of what it will cost? What is the benefit? Is there an estimate of the benefits to Canadian industry? Will we be involved in the technology and development of this high tech system? How much will come to Canada, if any?

Have we been consulted? We do not even know if the government has been consulted. The Prime Minister said in the House that he does not know anything about the plan yet he is having meetings with his cabinet to decide whether to participate. What is the consultation process? If we are to be a partner in this we should be consulted and not have the plan imposed on us. I do not know if we have been consulted but it sounds like Canada has not really been consulted and brought into the loop about all these questions I am asking. The government, apparently, is holding cabinet meetings to decide whether it will participate. How can these issues be discussed if we do not have these questions answered?

What departments in Canada would be involved? A missile defence system could involve the Department of Health, the Department of Industry, the Department of National Defence, CSIS, the RCMP and the Solicitor General. Will all these departments be keenly involved or will it just be the defence department? All these things are really important.

In my view our participation in this is dependent on the details of the plan. We are inclined to support it in principle but all we know about it is three words: missile defence system. There is a proposal for that but to ask us if we will participate in the missile defence system without any details is difficult to pass judgment. It is irresponsible to make a decision based on that minimum of information.

● (1150)

We in Canada must protect our interests. We must maintain our involvement with Norad. We must play a key role in Norad and stay in Norad. Hopefully this system will be part of that but we should enhance our participation in Norad and try to upgrade it.

We have to work on our relationship with the United States which has seen some rough waters lately. A great way to start on that would be to work as partners with the United States on the development of the missile defence system if we are expected to participate in the system. That could also go a long way to re-establishing the good relationship we have had with the United States for decades.

We must have access to the information on what this plan means before we can be asked to support it wholeheartedly. We hardly know anything about this plan and yet it is critical to our future, to our defence and to the safety of our country.

*Supply*

It is incumbent on the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and any other minister who is involved to share with Parliament everything they know about this issue. Where will it be based? Where will it intercept missiles? What will it cost? What will the benefits be to Canada? We know nothing about this. All we are being asked to do is to stand up and support a missile defence system. We only know those three words and that is not enough.

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin with the member's last comment. He said that the government has asked him to support this. Just to clarify the record, we have not asked him to do that. What he should say is that an opportunity has been presented today, through the opposition day motion, to discuss this issue and engage in debate.

Insofar as his view that cabinet will decide to participate or not, he has failed, unfortunately, to listen to what the minister said today and to what the Prime Minister has been saying every day in question period. What cabinet and caucus is considering is whether we should engage the Americans in conversation and negotiations so we will be able to receive the details that the hon. member feels are necessary prior to making a final decision.

I ask the hon. member to join with me and other members in listening to one another rather than coming in with a script that takes no cognizance of what has already been said.

• (1155)

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I love it. The hon. member stands up and says that they are discussing this in cabinet and in caucus and that they will be making a decision. What about Parliament? That is exactly my point. We know nothing.

She said a minute ago "caucus and cabinet". What happened to Parliament? Why is Parliament not involved in this? She said that we have not been asked to support it. That is because the government has not brought it to Parliament. She said herself that they were discussing it in caucus and in cabinet. This is something for the entire country to discuss. The government does not have members of Parliament in every riding in the country. This is Parliament. This is where it should be discussed, and that is exactly my point. We are in the dark and the government does not want to reveal any information about it. It just wants us to support it.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in a similar vein, I would ask my colleague what he thinks of the response given by the Prime Minister earlier this week regarding the need to debate and vote on this issue. His response was that we have allotted days to do that. My colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, just confirmed that. All the decision-making is done by the Liberal Party, and there is absolutely no involvement in the process by members on this side of the House.

Does the member think that the Prime Minister, the government and Liberal members are right in saying that they are giving us the opportunity to debate issues when the Bloc Québécois is being forced to use its allotted day today so this particular issue can at least be debated? I just asked for the unanimous consent of the House to make this motion votable because not only is it important to debate

it, but it is also important to vote on it. But the Liberal Party just denied us the right to vote.

Does the member think that the government is on the right track by keeping Parliament in the dark as to what is happening in these negotiations?

[*English*]

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, those are excellent points and I am glad the member raised them.

The parliamentary secretary said that we were not asked to make a decision on this but that is not true. The Prime Minister stood in the House and said that this could be debated on an opposition day and then we could decide whether or not to support it. We are doing what the Prime Minister told us to do. We are debating it. He challenged us to debate this on an opposition day and that is exactly what we are doing today. The government cannot say that we have not been asked to participate in it because we have been asked to participate.

The Bloc has asked for unanimous support to make this motion votable. Why would the government turn that down? Why would it not let Parliament vote on this motion? What is it scared of? Is it scared that some of its members would not support it and it would fail?

**Ms. Aileen Carroll:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member has acknowledged that we are debating this today and that it is not simply a matter, as I tried to elucidate, that it is not just the caucus and the cabinet.

The hon. member and I are members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. We have had ongoing discussions, some of which pre-date him. We had it as a recommendation in our report which is here on my desk. We have had a reply from the government.

Once again I am dismayed at the way in which hon. members of the opposition from a variety of parties denigrate the role of the standing committees.

**Mr. Bill Casey:** Mr. Speaker, I did not denigrate the action of the standing committee or its functions. Not at all. It serves a great purpose. I am talking about Parliament.

Parliament has been left out of the loop and the parliamentary secretary said that she was really glad we were here debating this. The only reason we are debating it is because the opposition moved the motion.

The government should move the motion and it should be votable but it is not. At least the opposition took the opportunity to have a debate. If it were not for the opposition, there would be no debate in Parliament.

• (1200)

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the Bloc Québécois for putting forward this motion today and providing the House of Commons with an opportunity to debate whether or not Canada should participate or for that matter whether or not Canada should begin a conversation with the United States of America on Canadian participation in what is sometimes called national missile defence but which is more appropriately called star wars. I will explain why that is so.

### Supply

Unfortunately, and I think my colleagues from the Bloc would agree, even though we are grateful to them for bringing forward today's motion, this is not exactly what we would have preferred.

What we would have preferred and what I am sure they would have preferred is for the government to have the courage of its own convictions, if that is not a contradiction when we are talking about Liberals, to bring forward a motion that would have authorized the Canadian government to begin negotiations with respect to NMD. Then members of Parliament could have expressed themselves and we could have voted accordingly. Presumably if the government has the support of its own members, the motion would have carried. Then the government could have negotiated with the United States of America on this subject and claimed that it had the backing of Parliament to do so.

Why would the Liberals not do that? It seems to me either they have a congenital contempt for Parliament that prevents them from allowing Parliament to participate in a proper way in these kinds of decisions, or perhaps they are so divided among themselves that they fear the consequences of such a vote, or perhaps it is both.

I do not want to get sidetracked too much on matters of process, although I may have something more to say about that later. I certainly regret that the government has not agreed to the request of the Bloc Québécois that by unanimous consent we might permit this motion to be voted on.

The Prime Minister invited opposition parties to use their opposition days. The Bloc members have done so. It is only a procedural fact that they do not have any votable motions left. However if the government were really keen on Parliament being able to participate, it could have agreed that this become a votable motion. The fact it has not agreed shows just how insincere and hypocritical the remarks of the Prime Minister were when he encouraged the opposition to bring forward this matter.

I want to begin speaking on the substance of this matter by quoting Nobel laureate John Polanyi, who is a senior fellow at Massey College, University of Toronto. As reported in an article in the *Globe and Mail* on Wednesday, May 7, he said:

It is evident that NMD points the world down the wrong path; it is the path of fortress-building, which, in the 21st century, is hopelessly anachronistic. Unchecked, weapons and counterweapons lead only to the development of further weapons. In the course of NMD, outer space will be weaponized. Satellites, now the vital eyes and ears of the world, will then become targets. The pursuit of security through unbridled armament will have led to a pandemic of insecurity.

This sums up the reasons the NDP and others see this step that the government appears about to take as the wrong decision. It is wrong to contemplate it in the first place. By agreeing to even discuss this with the United States we will be agreeing to an emerging doctrine, an emerging strategic defence doctrine, on the part of the United States that goes against everything Canada has stood for, for decades.

I am speaking here of our longstanding commitment to arms control through multilateral agreements. It is no coincidence that in order for the national missile defence plan to even be considered, the anti-ballistic missile treaty had to be abrogated by the United States.

● (1205)

A longstanding arms control treaty had to be abrogated unilaterally by the United States in order for the very thing the government wants to talk to the United States about to be able to happen. This should have been the first clue that what we are being asked to be a part of is contrary to Canadian tradition.

The government will say that geopolitical circumstances have changed. Mostly what it says is that now Russia and China do not have any objections, or particularly Russia, that somehow the United States has come to an accommodation with Russia on this. That may be true, but I would say to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that geopolitical circumstances can change again. I hope that is not so, but it could well be that five or ten years down the road there could be an antagonistic relationship between Russia and the United States once again and what would we have in place as a result of basing policy on what may well only be a snapshot in terms of geopolitical circumstances? We would have the very thing we have been trying to avoid for 40 years.

Let us not have so much confidence in the present that it will last forever. Let us be much more cautious than the government appears to be.

It is the wrong path because it repudiates decades of commitment to multilateral arms control. It is the wrong path because it is destabilizing, even if it is not star wars, and I contend that it is, for the very reasons so many people have outlined. This would be an encouragement to other countries to build similar systems or to arm themselves and to have even more missiles so that they could conceivably break through any missile defence the United States might have if they were to become enemies of the United States.

Mostly I want to say that it is an act of deliberate blindness on the part of the Liberal government to pretend that this is not star wars, that this is not part and parcel of a strategy at the Pentagon and on the part of the Bush administration to eventually create a world in which the very thing that we call star wars is a reality.

As evidence of what I am saying, let me cite from a document I have here, a report of the Project for the New American Century, September 2000. Incidentally this report was produced before September 11, 2001. So much of what happens today is supposed to be justified by what happened on September 11, 2001. The fact of the matter is that a lot of what we are discussing here today is not a response to September 11, 2001; it is something that had been in the works for a long time before the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

The report of the Project for the New American Century entitled "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century", is quite a lengthy document. It is recommended reading, I would say, for anyone who really wants to know what is going on because the people who wrote this report are the ones who are writing the script for American foreign policy at the moment at the Pentagon and in the White House. What does it say?

The section "Key Findings" talks about core missions for U.S. military forces and two of them are relevant to the debate here today. The first one says:

Develop and deploy global missile defences to defend the American homeland and American allies, and to provide a secure basis for U.S. power projection around the world.

Even if one does not accept the fact that there is anything to defend against in terms of missiles, at least in principle the idea of defending the American homeland and American allies is not something one would want to quarrel with. But to provide a secure basis for U.S. power projection around the world, what does that mean?

The second one says:

Control the new "international commons" of space and "cyberspace," and pave the way for the creation of a new military service—U.S. Space Forces—with the mission of space control.

• (1210)

This is the context in which the decision the government is about to make has to be looked at. It cannot be looked at ahistorically, as if it is happening in some pristine, idealistic environment. It is happening in the context of opening up discussions with an American administration that has this in mind.

Further to what I am saying, I would also like to read this into the record. It is the United States "Space Command Vision for 2020". Under a section called global engagement it states:

The proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction, WMD, requires an NMD.

So far, so good in the sense that this is the standard argument, although it is not something that we accept. Then it goes on to say:

NMD will evolve into a mix of ground and space sensors and weapons.

All I am asking of the Liberal government is to be straightforward with us, not to pretend, not to put its hands over its eyes or bury its head in the sand and pretend that somehow this is not part of a long term plan for the weaponization of space. Let us stop kidding the House of Commons, to the extent that the government consults the House of Commons.

Maybe government members are kidding themselves. They are certainly kidding the Canadian people. The Liberals are kidding them to the extent that, by entering into these negotiations they are in fact entering into negotiations to become part of a stage of something they have repeatedly said they are against, which is the weaponization of space.

They may want to argue that they continue to be against the weaponization of space and that is why they want to be at the table, that is why they want to be part of the negotiations. If that is true, then I invite them to make that a whole lot clearer than they have. I invite them to say clearly to the United States that not only are they against the weaponization of space in principle, but that a condition of the negotiations is that there will be no weaponization of space and that the United States will commit to hosting an international conference to develop a convention against the weaponization of space, as has been suggested.

U.S. congressman Dennis Kucinich of Ohio has called on Canada, or perhaps also the U.S. government, to launch a conference to seek approval of an international treaty to ban weapons in space. A former defence minister, Paul Hellyer, said in the *Globe and Mail* today that we would be much better off, and contributing to a more peaceful

### Supply

world, if we were to support this call by Congressman Kucinich rather than entering into these negotiations, as the government is about to do, and pretending that somehow this is not part of an overall American commitment to the weaponization of space.

So, wrong path, but also the wrong set of reasons given by Canada or in some sense not owned up to by Canada. I firmly believe, as many do, that the rush to judgment on this is not due to some American timetable but is due to an overzealous desire on the part of the government to make up for the decision that was taken with respect to Canadian non-participation in the war in Iraq.

That was a decision on the part of the Liberal government that I welcomed, that we in the NDP welcomed. However, we will not be welcoming it in retrospect if it leads in every other respect to the Canadian government feeling that it has to make up for that brief shining moment of independence by agreeing to everything else that the American administration wants the Canadian government to do. It will not have been worth it if in the end we were independent for a few months and then dependent and obedient for decades to come as a result.

• (1215)

I hope, but I suspect otherwise, that what we see here in respect of the government's position on star wars is not a form of atonement, if you like, for the alleged sin of not complying with American wishes when it came to the war in Iraq.

I said wrong reasons. Here are some of the other wrong reasons: "Well, we have to be at the table". Well, not if it is wrong. Not if it is wrong: surely the government is not counselling that wherever there is a table and somebody is discussing something Canada has to be there. We only want to be at the table if they are discussing something with which we agree. We certainly do not want to be there to legitimize something that we think is profoundly contrary to the long term security and peace of the world.

People may disagree about this. If the Canadian Alliance feels that this is in the long term interests of peace and security in the world and wants to be at the table, that makes sense. That is at least internally coherent, which is not always true of Canadian Alliance positions. But for the Liberals to say, "We are against the weaponization of space but we want to be at that table", I think they could be sending a much stronger message by saying, "We know what NMD is all about and we know that it is going to lead to the weaponization of space. We see it in American document after American document and we are not going to pretend otherwise. We are going to tell the truth about what this is really all about". That would be a much better thing to do.

This having to be at the table business just does not cut it. In fact, as even the Canadian Alliance member pointed out from a different point of view, this is an argument that the government rejected just months ago. If the government wanted to have influence on the war in Iraq, then it should have participated in the war in Iraq, but the Liberals thought that the war in Iraq was wrong, or that it was contrary to international law, or whatever the real reasons were that the Liberals did not participate. They did not want to be at that table. They did not want to be part of it. That is the way it should be with NMD.

### *Supply*

Then there is the economic argument, which the Liberals have given to some extent, but the Canadian Alliance is more guilty of this: that somehow we have to consider what is good for our economy. I would agree that we have to consider what is good for our economy, but we cannot allow economic considerations to cloud what are ultimately judgments about the future of the planet. We cannot allow those kinds of economic considerations to cloud our moral judgment if in fact we believe that the weaponization of space is something to which we would want to object on moral grounds. I find these economic arguments very specious indeed.

I have talked about the wrong path. I have talked about the wrong reasons, particularly the Canadian reasons being given. I understand the American reasons. They are much more honest about what they are doing. We disagree with them, but they are very up front about what they are about. They are not completely up front because they are trying to pretend that this does not have to do with star wars, yet document after document shows that it does. We know that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has been interested in the weaponization of space for decades, so to that extent they are not being completely forthright.

But they are being more forthright than the Canadian government, which suggests that this is just a limited thing, that there is nothing to worry about, that it does not even have to consult Parliament. It says, "We are going to have a complete departure from everything we have said for decades", and even from what this government has said about the weaponization of space, "and we are not even going to have a debate in Parliament. We are going to leave that up to the opposition. We are just going to have a discussion among the Liberal caucus". How many times have people stood up and said, "We are discussing this in the Liberal caucus"? The Liberal caucus presumably is being told by the government what is involved, or maybe not. Maybe the caucus is being asked to debate it in the kind of vacuum in which we are being asked to debate it.

But the Liberal caucus and the Liberal Party are not Canada. The Liberal Party and the Liberal caucus are not Parliament. The Liberal Party and the Liberal caucus are not the entire political world of Canadians. Quite apart from the issue of star wars, regarding the answers we have received that "we are discussing it among ourselves", I have not seen any evidence so strong in a long time that shows just how arrogant and self-contained the Liberal collective ego is with respect to how they see the country and their relationship with the country.

• (1220)

All of us here, all Canadians, both opposition parties and citizens and others, we are just dross. We are just props to create the illusion of democracy, because the real decisions are being made in the Liberal caucus, and if things are being discussed there why should any of us even be concerned about it? We should just feel reassured that the best minds in the country are gathered at the feet of the Prime Minister. The rest of us have nothing to worry about.

Wrong path, wrong reasons, wrong process, contempt for Parliament: there is a lot to talk about but I think my time has almost expired. Certainly we in the New Democratic Party are adamantly opposed to NMD. We call it star wars. We call it stars wars because in the end that is what this is about. It is a funny thing.

Star wars in its former incarnation was the SDI, the strategic defense initiative. Even Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, not noted for his independence of mind when it comes to U.S. foreign policy, was able to say to the United States when it came to SDI and star wars, "No. We are not going to be a part of that".

All we are asking of the government is that it have at least the independence of mind that prime minister showed with respect to SDI, which is what star wars was called then. Star wars is now called NMD. The government should stop pretending that it is just some limited thing, that it is not part of an overall strategic doctrine inimical to everything Canada has ever stood for. The government should stop pretending that. It should be honest with Canadians. If the government still wants to go ahead, then it should at least be answerable for what it is really doing, instead of getting away with pretending it is doing something else.

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the views of member, as I did to the former speaker, views that are well expressed and articulate as ever, but naive also, and dismayingly so. No matter how he might say that he is not indicating what I believe he is indicating when he says that by even agreeing to discuss this it signals an acceptance on our part or it signals a diversion from the foreign policy tenets that have underlined our foreign policy, he is. Even while saying that he is not saying that, he is saying that. I listened very carefully. In my view, the conclusion he draws is that we should pull our hats down over our eyes and ears, assume the prenatal position and hope to God nothing happens.

However, if we are part of a continent so dictated by geography and if we want to learn, which the hon. members would have us believe they want to do, then we have to participate in the usual human discourse called conversation. If we want to gain the answers that he and his Progressive Conservative colleagues want to have, then we have to communicate. This is what we are discussing. This is what the government is discussing here in the House, in committee, in caucus and in cabinet.

I am appalled to hear him imply that perhaps we should deal in a way with a country such as North Korea by not assigning diplomatic relations because that might imply approbation. No. It merely means we had better talk and we had better set up the vehicle by which we can talk.

Only then can we learn whether what he worries about is star wars or not. In our view it is not. There has been a progression and we have learned about the progression and the changes on the part of the American administration by communiqué. How can one come to the House of Commons and say we will not communicate? It is incredible to listen to a man with his reputation send that message to this eminent place.

*Supply*

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ, obviously. I think the truly naive people in this debate are in the government. The government members are the ones who are curled up in a prenatal position saying, "Please do not tell me that it is related to star wars. Please do not cause me to face up to the fact that it has to do with the ultimate weaponization of space. Please, we do not want to hear anything about that because we are in this bind, we have to do something to please the Americans, and this is the thing that is on the table right now. The last thing we want to hear is that what we are about to do is against everything we stood for".

These are the people who are in the prenatal position. It is not the NDP. I think the real naiveté is on the part of anyone who believes that this is not part and parcel of a long term plan to weaponize space.

If people want to be for that, then they are not in a prenatal position; they are out front debating it. But if they want to pretend that it is not about that, in the final analysis those are the people who are being truly naive.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague for his speech and perhaps draw his attention to one point—I think he raised it, but I would like him to elaborate a little further—that is the definition of star wars.

I think that we are already into the process of "The Empire Strikes Back". I believe that the Americans drove the point home to Canadians that, following their non-participation, it was now the time for us to help them and to take part in the missile defence plan.

In fact, I have felt for some time that the Liberal Party was allergic to the words star wars. I would like my colleague to tell me if he has the same feeling. Indeed, we want to get away from everything that is called weaponization of space, but I think that the Americans are smart enough to use a concept that will lead to the weaponization of space.

If Canadians have taken part in the first stages of this project and if we pursue negotiations, this will inevitably lead them to the weaponization of space.

I would like the member to give me his opinion on the fact that the words star wars have now been banned by the Liberal Party, because this is exactly the purpose of the project.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. He refers in his last comments to the fact that apparently the cabinet has chastized the Minister of Canadian Heritage for referring to NMD as star wars. I think the Minister of Canadian Heritage has got it right on this one. I wish she had it right on a few other things, but she got it right on this one. The cabinet's disapproval of her use of the words star wars is part and parcel to what I was talking about earlier, this wilful blindness on the part of the Liberals when it comes to this issue. It is what they call in the Bible "eyes that will not see and ears that will not hear". This is what we have on the part of the government.

There may be people who are for NMD and ultimately for the weaponization of space. We can disagree in principle and in substance with those kinds of people, but once again we have a Liberal government that is not being forthright with Parliament and the Canadian people and preventing a real debate from taking place. That really is ultimately a great sin against democracy.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing on which I agree with the member it is the democratic process in this place. There ought to be open transparency in all of these issues. There should be some involvement from every side of the House with regard to this particular main issue of the future.

I believe that when somebody denies or just says no, that it will not be made votable, that person should have to spend at least one minute defending why they are saying no. The truth of the matter is that we just do not operate under a democracy in this place and we really need some serious changes. I agree with that.

I get the impression when I listen to an NDP speaker, and this member is no different, that the only ones who are the beholders of the truth are members of the NDP, that everybody else is all wet but the NDP has all the answers.

I wish I were so confident in my support or non-support of a particular issue. I want to know more about it. I want to have an open debate. I want full discussions. I want to see some good, honest disclosure. I do not want to listen to a speech that says, "If you think it is not about this, then you are just barking up some tree, because we know that is what it is all about". I am sorry. If NDP members base it on their socialist documents or whatever documents they base it on, that is not good enough for me. I do not think that is any more convincing than the Liberals and some of their arguments.

I would like to ask the member, first and mainly, does he not believe for a moment that a democratic process can take place by having open, honest discussions with the United States about this issue? I would also like him to know that defence has weapons as well as there being offensive weapons. This project is always talked about as being the offensive project of star wars, but I keep hearing more about the defence of a nation and of a people.

The constitution of the United States says that the President of the United States is responsible for the safety and protection of all its citizens. I assume that is what we want in Canada. I believe that the discussions need to go far beyond comments such as those I have heard today. I do not have the capability of understanding fully what this is all about, but I would like to have the opportunity to do so. I will not take the hon. member's word for everything any more than I would take anybody else's; I want to get right down to the meat of it. We can do that with open debate and being at the table with our American allies where we can ask them what it is they are really up to, and to please get it down to my kind of language so I can understand it.

• (1230)

**Mr. Bill Blaikie:** Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that the member for Wild Rose would be the last person to be critical of someone because that person was sure of what he or she was saying and said it with conviction, as if other people who disagreed with that individual were wrong.

### Supply

This is our position. The member has his position. On this issue, unlike a great many others that the member speaks in the House, perhaps he is not absolutely sure what the right position is, in which case that is fair enough. Certainly, the member speaks on many other matters as if anyone who disagrees with him is to be cast into the sea of fire or something. Let us not have too much of that from the member for Wild Rose.

I agree with him when it comes to the whole question of the democratic process. The member gives me an opportunity to read one more thing into the record, again, talking about the current and long term context in which we have to see this issue. I am quoting from the document called "United States Space Command: Vision For 2020". There is a very interesting comment here. What is really worrisome is the extent to which the United States assumes that it will not have an antagonistic relationship with the rest of the world. On what basis would it be doing that? I have sometimes wondered about that. In future trends, as part of this document, it states:

Although unlikely to be challenged by a global peer competitor, the United States will continue to be challenged regionally

It then goes on to say:

The globalization of the world economy will also continue, with a widening between "haves" and "have-nots".

It is the have-nots that are ultimately the threat to the United States. It is the current corporate model of globalization which is creating the have-nots, the insecurity, and the antagonism toward the United States and the global economic model that it is imposing on the rest of the world through the WTO and elsewhere. If the Americans want peace and security, and a peaceful world they should start to rethink their commitment to the corporate model of globalization instead of star wars.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to the motion which reads as follows:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Champlain.

I would like to commend the hon. member for Saint-Jean on his motion. It comes from a member who, as defence critic, is very respectful of military issues but who also has been very clear about knowing exactly what the government wants to do with the Canadian armed forces. Today, by raising this issue in the House of Commons—and that is another reason I support it—he is making the government face the fact that it has put the cart before the horse once more.

We ought to ask questions about the kind of international action we want Canada to take in all fields, including defence. With regard to defence, in order to define what kind of armed forces we want, these questions must be answered—not randomly, one at a time, but with the knowledge, right from the start, of what choices have been made.

On this subject, we are very worried about the current federal government's attitude. On missile defence, its attitude suggests that it

wants to be forgiven for positions it previously took vis-à-vis the Americans.

I say to the people who are listening, and to the Americans who may be listening, that we understand very well the reflexive need for security after the events of September 11, after the war in Iraq that the U.S. government decided to wage without the UN's approval, after what has just happened in Saudi Arabia, where high-ranking Americans have been subject to terrorist attack after terrorist attack. We can understand the American reaction.

But, when we say we are good friends with the Americans, we must also be able to tell them that the solution does not necessarily lie in erecting a very costly wall around America. Maybe there are other solutions that would be less expensive and that would also be more profitable in terms of reinvestment. We know that, traditionally, investments in the defence sector may be spectacular, but the impact is not always what one might expect.

Let us remember that when Clinton was President of the United States, he decided to invest less in the military. During his term, the U.S. economy grew a lot as a direct result of his choice. It is worth noting.

I am very happy to support the motion because it clearly asks the government not to blindly buy into the idea that developing new weapons will make the world a safer place. That is one point of view. Current events are proving it wrong. I think everyone on the planet has understood that or should have understood it. There will never be a fool-proof defence system, if all one does is defend oneself. If we do not reach out, if we do not get our act together and solve problems in this world, we will never get anywhere.

In our system in Quebec and Canada, we do not throw people in jail for just about anything or for the slightest breach of the law. It would cost an awful lot, and there would be no rehabilitation. The same applies to international relations. We must behave responsibly.

The whole issue begs the following question. In view of what this project might cost, is it the best way to spend money? Would it not be better to invest in other areas? Incidentally, Canada has just set aside \$200 million to help in the reconstruction of Iraq. The Bloc Québécois leader applauded that move, saying that this had to be done multilaterally, of course. We recognized that move as a positive one.

However, by blindly buying into the missile defence plan, the government is being totally irresponsible, I believe. On December 17, 2002, President Bush announced the start of the deployment of the missile defence plan with the installation of the first 10 interceptor rockets within two years to protect the United States against possible attacks from rogue states. He was referring to North Korea or terrorist groups, among others.

● (1235)

Incidentally, if a decision is made to invest in the fight against terrorism, huge weapon systems may not be the best approach; it may be worthwhile to look into how to ensure that 18 or 20 individuals do not get to board commercial planes to commit acts like the attacks of September 11, 2001.



Even with the greatest missile defence system, in the absence of preventative measures to deal with such behaviours, the problem will not have been solved, and piles of money will have been spent for nothing. The CIA and the FBI have money. They have spent a great deal of money on a daily basis, yet did not achieve the desired result of preventing the events of September 11. We must keep this in mind in connection with the missile defence system.

We are told that the Pentagon was given a free hand in June 2002, at the expiration of the 1972 ABM treaty, which dated back to the cold war and banned national missile defence systems. Since 1999, five trials in the land-based mid-course intercept missile program have been successful, but the latest one was not. That is what we were told on December 11, 2002.

This whole debate goes way back. Things have evolved since 1956, particularly the phase of former U.S. President Ronald Reagan's star wars I project, in which the government chose not to participate. What we have today, under President Bush, is almost star wars II.

In fact, the substance of this project has come under heavy criticism. There are many concerns about the technologies and astronomical costs involved, the questionable usefulness of the system and its impact on the nuclear threat.

Instead of taking the attitude of favouring disarmament by negotiating hard with other nations to achieve a certain result, the attitude is, "We will have the best missiles and the best missile defence plan; so, you had better arm yourselves well if you plan to attack us". We must be keenly aware of the fact that this will start off an arms race.

Those who were around in the 1950s and 1960s will recall the intense feeling of insecurity among the population during that period and how long it took to get over this feeling and find ways of promoting freer trade between nations and try to slowly build a more lasting peace.

So we are in a situation where, until now, the Government of Canada has adopted a very closed attitude. As far as I am concerned, the Prime Minister said some things that are completely unacceptable, "We will discuss this issue in cabinet and in caucus only". The only party that would be consulted on this issue is the government party caucus. That is incredible. During question period, the Prime Minister said, "If the opposition wishes to discuss this issue, it can make it a matter of debate on an opposition day. As a government, we believe that it is not important to have a debate on this issue. We do not wish to hear what the people think about this".

The Bloc Québécois took him up on his suggestion. The member for Saint-Jean brought forward an interesting motion. Worse even, the Prime Minister himself, who invited us to ask for a debate at the House, personally refused that the motion be made votable. There is a degree of machiavellianism behind that, and it is unacceptable. We are not in a state where we only have to move pawns on a chessboard to win the game. We have to make choices that will have a profound impact on future generations.

Yesterday I was in Rouyn-Noranda. We talked about a lot of different subjects. Young people of an age to be attending CEGEP are concerned by these questions. People may wonder why we in

### *Supply*

Rouyn-Noranda have such concerns. Because we live in an era of globalization. We know that important decisions can be made in the United States or here in this Parliament. It is no longer easy to pull the wool over people's eyes. They are very much aware that parliamentarians must assume some responsibility.

I do not think that a single Liberal member said, during the last election campaign, that if the missile defence plan became an issue, he or she did not want it talked about in the House and would support the Prime Minister so it could all be dealt with in secret. I am sure no Liberal MP said such a thing. Their approach would instead have been to focus on the importance of defence, saying, "We will carry out the necessary studies. We must be sure, before going ahead, that our positions are solid ones and that we know where we are headed".

•(1240)

But today we are faced with the reality of a motion calling upon this House to set aside its intentions, to not participate in the U.S. missile defence plan. We are dealing here with something of great concern to us, the impacts of which we do not fully comprehend.

I think it is far more responsible to say "Let us maintain the attitude of previous Canadian governments, of the people who want to see peaceful solutions in this world". By so doing, let us send a clear message to the government that the U.S. missile defence plan, a plan hardly anyone in Canada really knows anything about, apart from the Prime Minister and cabinet, perhaps, must be dropped. There is very little information available now on which to base any involvement in this plan. And any involvement must be supported of this House.

•(1245)

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the member's comments, but I still have a small problem.

He says that the United States must choose other areas on which to spend their money. However, the Americans have already made their decision. Canadians certainly cannot tell the American government what its priorities should be.

The Canadian government must now ponder how it will reply. We believe that we should discuss both the process and the system with the Americans. This is their choice. As I said, they have reached a decision. Right now, we are thinking about our answer. We can choose to disregard reality, as some members said earlier, or we can take part in the negotiations to learn more about this whole project.

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. We have to be clear. I understand that the Americans have made their choice. The problem is that we also have to make choices. We cannot make a choice just because the Americans have made one and hop on the same train without asking any questions and without knowing what is going on.

I will answer her question with another. Is it right that on a bill that will have such important consequences for the future of all Canadians, the Government of Canada is not giving any real information to the opposition members? Is that how democracy works? Is that the kind of democracy we want in this country?

### Supply

There is another important element to consider. In the position that Canada adopts, there is also a message to the international community. Is our way of looking at this really the same as the Americans' or is there another way? Do we not have a responsibility in the multilateral approach that we are developing to take into consideration the views of all the countries concerned, namely all the countries on the planet, in order to find appropriate and democratic solutions? In this respect, we have a responsibility regarding the message that we want to send to the Americans and to the rest of the world, while being very aware of the economic importance of our neighbour, the most powerful nation in the world.

The responsible attitude is not to say yes without knowing what the bill will contain, but rather to ask questions about what it will contain. At this point, with what we know, the Bloc Québécois cannot support this plan.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent speech. He was very articulate. I will ask him to elaborate on this issue.

This morning, I concluded my speech by saying: "we must ask ourselves what kind of world we want to live in". The member said something similar earlier when he asked if the solution would be to have the best missiles and the best antimissile shield to protect ourselves.

Could we not adopt an international point of view and think about distributing wealth more equitably so that all nations on earth, including the United States of course, feel respected, and live in a world where we lean towards pacifism instead of militarism?

**Mr. Paul Crête:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Saint-Jean for his question.

In fact, there is an underlying issue to this whole debate and it has to do with the choices we want to make. Earlier today, a NDP member quoted a document which said that, given the wide gap between the poor and the rich of this world, we must build all sorts of barriers to protect ourselves from the have-nots.

I do not think we should go that way. We should choose openness. Let me make a quick comparison. We suffered through two world wars before we discovered that free trade could help us expand markets without our having to resort to political wars.

Could we not promote another type of process and could the Government of Canada not champion that process instead of agreeing with an antimissile system whose content and impacts we know nothing about? I call upon the Government of Canada to meet that challenge.

•(1250)

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon (Champlain, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, like others before me, I want to thank the member for Saint-Jean for bringing forward this motion that deals with a most important issue.

If we are elected to this House to speak on behalf of our constituents, we should have the right to speak to these kinds of issues. I am always outraged to see the government make decisions without giving us the opportunity to debate the issues, as is the case today since it is not the government party that brought this issue forward, even though it should have done so.

I was a provincial MP in Quebec and I remember that, when there were fundamental issues to be discussed, René Lévesque always told us, "We will discuss it on the floor of the National Assembly; that is where the representatives of the people are and that is where we should have the right to express our views on behalf of our constituents". Mr. Lévesque was a person who truly believed in democracy.

Personally, I think that the last question asked by the member for Saint-Jean is fundamental. What kind of world do we want to live in? We are globalizing poverty and imbalance. We have to protect ourselves more and more because there are people in other countries who will live in poverty because of our wealth, and we are letting it happen.

This morning, I think someone raised the matter of the U.S. president's discussion paper. The document says that the number of poor people will increase and that there will be fewer and fewer rich people, but that they will be increasingly rich, and that they will need to protect themselves against the poor. It is quite alarming to hear such comments and to know—on top of that—that it is true. That is where we are headed.

Last week I had the opportunity to attend the 9th Conférence de Montréal, which brings together all of the countries of the Americas to discuss various themes and subjects. I went along with two ministers from the House and there were also other members there. There are always experts who speak at these conferences. This time, there were experts from the World Bank who told us that unless we woke up, we would basically put an end to this world as we know it.

They showed us, for example, that 20% of the world's population, 20% of the world's countries, do not have electricity. This figure will surprise many people. As population increases, more and more hard energy is used, such as coal and wood, because it is cheap energy. We are in the process of polluting the planet in certain areas.

I am not making this up, this comes from an expert from the World Bank who gave a presentation. In some parts of the world right now there is a cloud of pollution that filters out between 10% and 15% of the sun's rays. This expert told us how to make you aware of this problem and to tell you that now is the time to act.

He told us that with approximately \$600 billion, we could provide clean energy for the whole world. Six hundred billion dollars over 15 years would solve the problem. Otherwise, we are headed to our demise. I did not make this up. Ask some of the Liberal members who were at the same presentations as I was.

Obviously these people who are invited to show us problems as they are do not come there to lie to us. They come to tell us the truth because they are scientists who travel the world over in their work with the World Bank.

We are now talking about a missile defence plan that will cost somewhere between \$60 and \$100 billion, or one sixth of what we would need to solve a major part of the global energy problem, to solve a major part of the pollution problem that we are responsible for because we do not take action and we wait until tomorrow, because there is not enough of a financial advantage for us, because we do not give a damn about the people who live in misery and poverty.

•(1255)

Every time I attend such conferences, I wonder what we can do to get some response. I asked a Liberal member who was with me, “Do you think that the Prime Minister and Mr. Bush listen to these speakers? Do they ask them questions?” He said, “I am sure they do not. And even if they listened to them, they would not believe that they are telling the truth”.

However, these people are our leaders; they are making decisions about our future. We were talking about young people. My colleague was saying that yesterday he met some young people who are concerned. They are right to be concerned, not because we would not be able to change things, but because we do not have the courage to change things, because we do not have the guts to change things, because we live as though we are the last people who will walk on this planet. I find this quite discouraging.

When the government tells us, “We have no choice; the Americans have decided this”, I say, “No way. We are a country. We are able to take our responsibilities”. We should be able to tell them what is wrong—

**Hon. Denis Coderre:** You are right, we are a country. I am pleased to hear that, coming from the Bloc.

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon:** That is a fact. Until further notice, it is still a country, at least I hope so. We are quite capable of taking our responsibilities. Why be followers? Why buy their pitch? Why not tell them they need to take a different approach?

**An hon. member:** We must act like a country, not a branch office.

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon:** That is right, we must act like a country, and not like a branch office, as we are doing right now.

Recently, in an interview with young people from my riding, I said, “At my age, I for one have polluted enough. I am from the generation that got rich destroying our resources. It is time we realized this kind of thing no longer makes sense”.

What will it take? Since September 11, 2001, we keep hearing that things have changed. What has changed? I recall a message from the so-called world leaders following September 11. In this message, Tony Blair said, “We are going to have to give thought to a better distribution. We are going to have to really think about poverty. We are going to have to think hard, or else we will be planting the seeds of terrorism”. Weapons will not rid us of terrorism, but rather a change in attitude; we must seek a more balanced distribution of wealth. Talk is cheap unless it is backed up by action. And we could take action nationally. For example, we could help the poorest in society by giving them the money that is owed to them. I am thinking of those seniors who are deprived of the guaranteed income supplement. That is one action that could be taken.

Since I am getting the signal that my time is up, I will just add that I will keep repeating in every forum that this situation does not make sense. Indeed, it does not make sense that we, in Canada, are encouraging the Americans and taking our lead from them when unpardonable mistakes are being made.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague has made an excellent speech that goes to the core of his concerns and those of the Bloc Québécois.

### *Supply*

Unfortunately, the hon. member did not have enough time to talk about the democratic dimension of this issue and what is happening in the House right now. I would like to hear his comments on this.

Last week, the Prime Minister was asked questions on missile defence. We were asking for a debate on this issue, and the Prime Minister answered that we had opposition days and we should use them for that purpose.

We are taking up the challenge. We are using one opposition day. The Prime Minister even said that we had supply days when the House can vote on the opposition motion. In our case, we have run out of days when we can have a vote on our motion.

What does the hon. member think of the way the debate is evolving? We are being told repeatedly, “This is going on in the Liberal caucus, in cabinet, in the offices of Liberal members, but opposition members do not have a say”.

Thus, we are forced to use an opposition day to discuss the missile defence plan. Is this not a problem with democracy in Parliament?

•(1300)

**Mr. Marcel Gagnon:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Indeed, there is something drastically wrong with democracy if we cannot debate this kind of issue. It is not only about putting our views on the record but also about voting on the issue. If ever there was a topic worthy not only of being looked at in depth by all of us together, but also of being voted on, it is this one.

I would like to know how many members across the way support this plan? Why is the government not willing to let us vote on it? Because it knows full well there is a lot of dissension.

Apart from the members whom I met at a conference last week and whom I identified, I personally know several others who are in total disagreement with the decision the government is about to make. They are totally opposed to decisions of this kind being made behind closed doors, at the prime ministerial level, without any consultation. Is this a democratic country, supposedly the best country in the world?

Why could we not have a debate and make a decision, that is at least vote on the issue to know exactly what the elected representatives of the people think about it? As someone said earlier, nobody was elected for saying, “Do not worry, the major decisions will be made by the Prime Minister and I will not have a say on it”. This is not true. When we are out there on the campaign trail, we say, “I will be there to defend your interests, represent you and inform you”. If we were in a true democracy, an issue as important as this one would be brought forward for debate by the Prime Minister himself, and voted on.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my friend, the hon. member for Brossard—La Prairie.

To begin, I want to say how delighted I am that we are having the debate. This is Parliament at its best. This is what we are supposed to do in here.

### Supply

I also would like to thank the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of National Defence for their willingness, not only to participate in this debate but to extend that courtesy in private meetings with members of Parliament and to take the time to consider this important step at which we are looking.

Finally, I would like to thank the Prime Minister himself for encouraging the debate both within caucus and in Parliament, for urging us to take the time necessary so we can satisfy ourselves about some questions.

I think everybody in the House shares a common view about the war on terrorism. Our repugnance, our horror at what happened in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001 has demanded and evoked from Canadians an appropriate response, a response to fight terrorism wherever it is, a response to defend our continent with the United States against terrorist attacks and a response which has seen our participation in Afghanistan, which has served as a launching pad, a staging ground, for terrorism. That commitment to Afghanistan will continue this coming summer as we try our best to ensure that Afghanistan does not slip back into a state in which it would be once again a failed state and, hence, a potential home for terrorists. I think we are all on the same page on the war on terrorism.

The problem is there is a bit of a dispute, I suppose, among our friends, the Americans, as to what constitutes a clear and present danger.

We can see, as recently as this week's news, that is the horrific bombings in Saudi Arabia, that the enemy has not disappeared. We have no evidence of the deaths of Osama bin Laden or Mullah Omar. We have a lot of evidence that the network continues and it will need all our attention. That is where we need to concentrate our resources immediately. That is why, in his state of the union speech in January 2002, I think Canadians were genuinely puzzled that the President seemed to be taking his eye off the ball against the war on terrorism and moving it onto some other subject, which is called the axis of evil. At that point we were puzzled.

We now see that is part of a larger doctrine, which is known variously as the project for the new American century, or the Bush doctrine, or the national security strategy of the United States of America, as announced last September. We now have some sense of what was animating Mr. Bush when he made the shift in his state of the union speech, and we have seen the Bush doctrine in action in the war in Iraq.

One of the questions we have to ask ourselves is, how does this new context work? That is to say the context of the Bush doctrine, a doctrine which supposes unilateralism, military superiority in every sphere without any other country challenging, a doctrine which encourages unilateral interventions and pre-emptions of attack to occur, as was the case in Iraq, a new doctrine in which the context of national missile defence has to be seen.

One of the arguments put forward in order to ask questions is that we need to have a dialogue, or talks or conversations with the United States and that this is something different from negotiations. If one were to look back over 40 years of defence talks with the United States, one would find that inevitably they led to negotiations. There

is a continuum, there is no point at which this suddenly ceases to be a conversation and becomes a negotiation. We have to see this as a continuum and we have to admit it.

• (1305)

There are those who argue quite persuasively, and I put the Minister of Foreign Affairs in that category, that we cannot ask the questions unless we have the conversations, and I accept that. Conversations have taken place with other officials and will continue to take place, but conversations at the level of ministers are important. However those conversations leading to potential negotiations have to have two qualities.

One is we have to be able to ask questions and get satisfactory answers. The second is based on what we learn. We need a negotiating position which sets out some preconditions. Just as the Minister of Foreign Affairs today has indicated, as I hear him and I hear him loud and clear, a deal breaker would be that national missile defence would contain an element of the weaponizing of space. At that point Canada would not participate.

It is in that spirit that I would like to raise 25 questions, if I can get them out, that would form part of that conversation and which would in turn lead to the negotiating position which would have some preconditions. Let me group them.

One would be about rogue states, the rogue state doctrine. What is the rogue state doctrine which is affecting us so much? This is the definition from the American Cato Institute:

The rogue state doctrine is predicated on the claim that those states act irrationally, and therefore cannot be deterred with America's offensive nuclear arsenal. Armed with ballistic missiles, they may strike the U.S. at any time. Therefore, the argument goes, the U.S. must deploy an [national missile defence system]...

One, does Canada accept or reject the rogue state doctrine, as laid out in that argument, and the assumption that rogue states are irrational and, thus, undeterrable by conventional means, if one can describe nuclear retaliation as such?

I would only ask members to consider the problem with the rogue state doctrine because any land based missile always has a return to sender address and any rogue state attacking the United States could expect swift, massive and total retaliation. Is this the way of the dictators of the sort we have seen, whether it is Saddam Hussein or Kim Jong-il, or do they actually seem to enjoy the perks and pleasures of power, the palaces and the special trains. I will not go into the other inappropriate perks and pleasures power, but do we think they have behaved that irrationally or do they actually enjoy being dictators? That is a big question.

Two, if Canada accepts the rogue state doctrine, is this not an argument for the United States and others to expend more energy on disarmament and non-proliferation? How do we intend, if we join the national missile defence, to have some equal energy put into non-proliferation? How do we ensure that this stuff, the fissile material, does not fall into their hands? Will we abandon that part or will we give extra effort to that part? How do we ensure that countries which are marginal are on our side right now? We wink at them when they acquire the stuff, but we have to recognize that they may in turn become a rogue state one day and will always have the bomb.

Three, does Canada believe that national missile defence will give other states more or less incentive to develop long range missiles?

Four, does Canada believe that national missile defence will increase or decrease the likelihood of U.S. interventions abroad, particularly in the context of the Bush doctrine which is an interventionist doctrine? That is what is different from the situation we found ourselves in with the Clinton administration when we did not sign it either.

The next set of questions has to do with Canada's continental national security.

Five, does the current and projected ballistic missile threat to Canada, as determined by Canada, justify involvement in the U.S. deployment of national missile defence?

Six, how does the current and projected ballistic missile threat to Canada compare to other risks to national security? What is the risk analysis, in our view, compared to the sorts of things that may be entering our harbours today and going forward to New York tomorrow in some container? How do we make that assessment?

Seven, based on that assessment, how does the estimated return on investment in national missile defence compare to the estimated return on investments of other homeland defence measures?

Eight, if Canada does not participate in national missile defence, how would we interact with the United States government in regard to friendly and enemy missiles over our territory?

The next set of questions have to do with Canada's missile defence, and I have a feeling I will not make it to the end.

Nine, what specific role is Canada considering playing in national missile defence? What role will the United States allow us to play under the Bush doctrine?

• (1310)

Ten, what is Canada bringing to the table by way of potential contribution to national missile defence negotiations?

Eleven, would Canada consider the placement of interceptor missiles or NMD-specific radar on its territory?

Twelve, what is an acceptable debris zone for Canada? And it will not be Don Valley West if I have anything to do with it. We hear talk of this Orwellian phrase "debris acceptance". Are we allowed to reject it?

Thirteen, what are the odds that an intercepted warhead might detonate when it falls back to earth?

Fourteen, what is the risk of collateral damage to Canada from an NMD intercept?

Fifteen, how will Canada define national missile defence technology as successful, especially if we are counting on it for some purpose?

Sixteen, what are the current and potential long term financial costs of participation in NMD? We are told today that no one has asked us for any money. There is a bill before the U.S. congress called the missile defence burden sharing act from a democrat

### *Supply*

representative from Maine that asks that all who are protected should pay their share. How do we know they will not come back to us?

Seventeen, what is the range of estimates of financial benefits to Canadian companies if Canada joins NMD?

Eighteen, what is the opportunity cost of joining national missile defence? Would joining diminish Canada's capacity to take a leadership role in restoring multilateralism and promoting nuclear disarmament?

Those are but a few questions and I will post the rest on my website.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is asking the right questions. Besides, in most of the speeches that we are going to hear today, thanks to the Bloc Québécois, we will certainly find this kind of question. Answers will certainly be given, or there will be some speculation, as we were told this morning.

The basic question I have for my colleague is that he must have a very clear idea of this whole issue. If he has taken the time to think about all the 25 or 29 questions, he must have a clear idea of the whole plan. Is this plan in the interests of Canadians?

I would not want to see him hide behind the excuse that as long as he does not have an answer to his 29 questions, he will not judge the concept. I think that he has a clear idea as to Canada's participation in this plan. My question is this. Does he think, overall, with all the information that he has, that the space shield is in the interests of Canadians?

• (1315)

**Mr. John Godfrey:** Mr. Speaker, this is exactly why we are having this debate today.

We have to ask the right questions, demand the right answers, and then come up with negotiating position with the Americans and so on, if we want to talk, to ask questions to the Americans. But the beginning of wisdom is asking the right questions. I think that this is what this debate, this conversation, is all about.

[*English*]

**Mr. Andy Savoy (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns regarding this national missile defence. The U.S. is moving forward with this, regardless of what Canada does. Does the hon. member not believe that instead of being outside of the house looking in at the table, we should actually be in the room at the table with them as this process goes forward? We cannot impact the decision to move forward because it is going forward. Does he not feel that we should be at the table as this process moves forward?

**Mr. John Godfrey:** No, Mr. Speaker. No more than I felt we should have been at the table as the inevitable attack on Iraq moved forward. If it is inevitable, that does not mean that we have to join in because if it is inevitable, it may be that there is no table. A table implies two people negotiating and that something fundamental will change.

*Supply*

Everyone seems to agree that it is inevitable. The Americans will do it and they will do it their way. The first phase is already set. It starts in 2004 with missiles in California and Alaska. Nothing we can say or do will change that fact.

The only thing that our participation in this process will do is to undermine our position as independent negotiators in the world with another point of view about the importance of disarmament, fighting proliferation, and being able to make our judgments when we participate with the Americans, as we should on issues like smart borders and doing our bit in Afghanistan.

While exercising sovereign judgment, we cannot, as a sovereign state, come to that decision without having better quality answers to the questions I was beginning to put forward.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I shall read the motion before us once more:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

The least one can say is that I am not in any way inclined toward nor do I have any sympathy for militarism as a doctrine for this government.

My recent activities illustrates my point very well, including my involvement in the elimination of landmines, my active support of the struggle against the recruitment of child soldiers, my humanitarian involvement in Chiapas and Iran, my support for the establishment of an international criminal court, and my unequivocal support for my government when it decided not to participate in the war in Iraq.

And yet, I encourage my government to begin talks with the United States about possible Canadian participation in missile defence for the North American continent. I would like to explain my position, which is based on four fundamental principles.

First of all, I believe that the state has the duty to ensure the security of its citizens. I do not necessarily share the American assessment that Canada would be a potential target for hostile action by someone, somewhere on this planet.

Nevertheless, the world has been full of surprises in the last 15 years, and no one can predict with certainty what the geopolitical state of the world will be in another 15 or more years. Canada must continue to actively promote the cause of peace, but cannot, on its own, prevent all extremism.

In addition, the fact that Canada may not be a potential target does not mean that it could not be a potential victim. An attack by a missile with a nuclear, bacteriological or chemical warhead aimed at Chicago, New York or Seattle would almost certainly produce fallout in Canada. Are we going to leave it up to others to protect us?

That brings me to the first fundamental principle of my position, that is, the exercise of Canadian sovereignty. In this matter, I refer to the White Paper on Defence, published in 1994, which states the following:

Canada should never find itself in a position where the defence of its national territory has become the responsibility of others.

For our American allies, in terms of decision-making, missile defence is a *fait accompli*. It presupposes the careful examination of a host of scenarios and the planning of countermeasures that would have to be launched within 20 minutes or less of the launching of a hostile missile.

Would we be better able to ensure the protection of Canadians if we participated in examining these scenarios, or if we were absent? Would Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver be better protected if our neighbours were left to assessing needs on their own, or if our government took part in these plans to protect us? For me, the answer is obvious.

Canada's participation, incidentally, would be fully in line with our commitment to contributing to the defence of North America. This commitment dates back to the second world war. It stems from the Ogdensburg declaration, signed in 1940 by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Mackenzie King.

This commitment is the foundation of an essential instrument for defence cooperation known as the Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence, or the PJBD. I have had the honour to chair the Canadian section of this board since 1998.

The Ogdensburg declaration paved the way for the NORAD agreement, in 1958. This agreement to protect North American airspace is a marvellous example of military cooperation that reports to a binational command that fully respects the sovereignty of both countries. This is one of the cornerstones of our position, and my position especially, which is that missile defence absolutely must come under NORAD.

Some people argue, quite honestly, I am sure, that supporting missile defence means supporting the weaponization of space. We need to make a critical distinction here between the militarization of space and the weaponization of space.

• (1320)

The militarization of space has long existed. For example, reconnaissance satellites for military purposes have been circling the earth for many years, using the technologies of many countries, including Canada.

The weaponization of space, which would mean deploying arms in space, is a whole other ball game. Canada has traditionally opposed the weaponization of space. It must continue to do so aggressively.

In passing, the Americans have not yet decided where they stand on this. There has been no debate yet in the U.S., and should there be, there is little to indicate that the American political class will decide to deploy weapons in space.

I am fully convinced that we must continue to use all our moral influence to oppose the weaponization of space. This has nothing to do with a decision on the missile defence plan. It has nothing to do with the famous star wars program as imagined by President Reagan.

*Supply*

Opponents of Canada's participation in the missile defence plan allege that it would encourage nuclear proliferation. Nothing could be further from the truth. Canada has always played a key role in fighting nuclear proliferation and must continue. The diplomatic fight against proliferation and the missile defence plan are not mutually exclusive.

But the missile defence system would send an interceptor carrying no explosives of any kind, to destroy a hostile missile solely upon impact. It is not illogical to think that having a missile defence system could deter a hostile country from even producing nuclear weapons since they would be useless. This would therefore reduce the danger of proliferation, not increase it.

Perhaps this explains in part the interest expressed many countries such as China, Russia, Japan, European countries and others, in the missile defence plan.

It is absolutely impossible in a few short minutes to speak comprehensively about such a complex issue, which has been discussed for many years by the Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence.

So, on the basis of these principles, Canadian sovereignty, the protection of Canadians, the fight against nuclear proliferation and the refusal to weaponize space, I encourage my government to undertake constructive talks with our American friends about our participation in a future missile defence system. The Canadian public must participate in this debate, not based on dogma but rather on facts and our real options.

• (1325)

**Mr. Claude Duplain (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the member for Brossard—La Prairie. The speech that he just made was very short, very measured, and very substantial, and expressed the government's position well, unlike what we have been hearing since the beginning of the day, for someone who is more accustomed to agriculture.

In this debate, I thought I would put myself in the position of the people who are listening to what is happening today, that is the fact that the opposition wants a debate on these issues. We heard the comments of the member for Saint-Jean and the words that I have noted are: I do not think so; possibly; perhaps; could perhaps. However, the government members have not indulged in speculation.

I wanted to congratulate our member, who knows how to assemble the facts to tell people exactly how the government can work cooperatively. We also heard the minister talk this morning about the smart borders strategy and the desire to pursue the dialogue and to sit at the table to be able to make decisions with our allies. He did a magnificent job and I was not the only one who thought so.

**Mr. Jacques Saada:** Mr. Speaker, I am embarrassed, I am blushing and I am afraid my ego is getting more and more inflated by the minute. Seriously, there is one thing that I want to say. When the Bloc Québécois brought forward this motion this morning, I thought that it was really doing something worthwhile because these issues are extremely complex. However, we must not get caught in

technical details, dogmatism, superficiality or prejudice at the expense of the real questions that we should be asking ourselves.

If there is anything we should be doing to benefit from the fact that we are debating this motion today, it would be to give Canadians an opportunity to consider what I think is the real issue here. Is Canada contributing to world peace or, on the contrary, is it not acting in the interest of world peace by taking part or considering taking part in this system? My answer is that it is contributing to world peace.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, indeed my colleague from Brossard—La Prairie just raised a most interesting question. Does he at least give credit to the opposition, in this case the Bloc Québécois, for bringing forward this issue for debate because his government would not do it?

It is the opposition, more precisely the Bloc Québécois, that proposed a motion today to launch this debate. We do not have a lot of information so far. The Bloc must be given credit for launching this debate. Since there was no time for a briefing and since we have not been given any information, any more than the public has, perhaps that explains why we are using the conditional.

We could not say, "This is what is going on and this is what will happen". We are forced to get into a debate without having any information whatsoever on the issue being debated.

Nevertheless, I am happy to hear the member say that he gives credit to the Bloc for having brought this issue forward for debate. Perhaps he could say it even more clearly.

**Mr. Jacques Saada:** Mr. Speaker, in school, I learned this maxim by Boileau:

What is conceived well is expressed clearly,  
and the words to say it arrive with ease.

I have said all I had to say in this respect.

As for making this debate possible, I must point out that the Standing Orders of the House are very clear. Opportunity is given to the opposition to select the topic of discussion for debate on an opposition day.

This is what we are having today; this is democracy at work. The consultation process has started. I am happy with that. There will be more discussion at every level. I think that the public and the media will take part. I welcome this debate with great serenity and comfort.

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first I would like to indicate that I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague from Rosemont—Petite-Patrie.

Second, I wish to commend the hon. member for Saint-Jean on the relevance of bringing this issue forward for debate in the House today. Clearly, this is a debate this Liberal government wanted to avoid, given the internal tensions. This illustrates the culture of this truly unique party in Canada. Being in office 69 years over the past 100 years is taking its toll, there is no doubt about it. We are witnessing a trademark of this government and this political party.

### *Supply*

I congratulate the hon. member for Saint-Jean because this is a very important debate. This issue is causing anguish. The more I hear and read about it, the greater my concern, especially with my understanding of the context in which antimissile defence is being contemplated. Given the recent history of the United States, it comes at what seems to me to be a pivotal moment.

To give a brief historical overview, the 1960s saw the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. We are familiar with the tragic incidents at the end of the war in 1945 at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These are sad memories in the history of humanity.

So we find ourselves in the 1960s with two superpowers, the USSR and the USA. In 1972, wisdom dictated the ABM treaty. This was a 30-year treaty signed by Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev banning the development of antimissile missiles, ensuring nuclear parity and balance, and limiting the number of offensive nuclear weapons allowed in each country to 100. This created some balance and lessened tensions considerably.

Things went relatively well except that in the 1980s the Reagan administration decided to get involved in a nuclear initiative that would upset the balance if taken to the extreme. Concern heightened. Apparently in response to pressures from the other nuclear powers, the Americans were obliged to back down on this aggressive approach which had the potential to upset everything that had already been discussed.

Now, moving on to 2002, things got really worrisome. The Americans called for the 1972 treaty not to be renewed when it reached the end of its 30-year term, that is in 2002, and refused to proceed any further with the country that had by then become Russia.

So the situation now is one of open doors and the rather terrifying concept of the so-called pre-emptive strike. We saw that concept put into use in Iraq. Now we see it behind the missile defence plan.

Fortunately, as has been already touched on, there appears to be an important debate going on within the U.S. itself, among the Americans who see how dangerous it may be to get involved in initiatives of this type. With the post-war situation in Iraq, we find ourselves in a world where there are no controls and world public interest is non-existent. With the unilateral action of the Americans, no one at present is in a position to lecture them or to have any negative reaction such as telling them not to go too far.

• (1330)

The U.S.S.R. no longer exists, and China has not reached that same level. Actually, in this debate, China is not only expressing its displeasure in whatever way it can, but it is also suggesting a complete demilitarization, so that all nuclear arms would be prohibited, and all weapons of mass destruction would be destroyed. This is the position of China at present.

After the aggression against Iraq, the Americans rule the world unchecked. That is another sign, obviously, of what has inspired them. The American doctrine of manifest destiny has led the U.S. from victory to victory, to the point that they are now a dominant force not only militarily but also economically. And while they are at it, they want to control space as well.

This attitude is not very wise. This is just the political-military instincts or interests talking. This does nothing to enhance a sense of security. When we think about the political-military complex and an investment of \$60 to \$100 billion in this plan, should it be carried out, we are far from talking about the Tobin tax or its equivalent or about the unequal distribution of wealth between individuals, countries and continents.

I came back from Africa last week. I went to the Ivory Coast and I was fortunate and unfortunate enough to leave the luxury hotels we were staying in—you know how these things work Mr. Speaker—and go to the shantytowns. I was with a colleague, a member of Parliament from Benin. Again I explained my reaction. I had been to Abidjan a few times before, and I always say that it is terribly sad to see such poverty and idleness, to see people wander around with no place to go. People just walk. Some sell apples, others sell pineapples or old tires. They live in dirt and dust. I told my colleague how terrible and unacceptable those conditions were and he replied, “My dear colleague, it is even worse in my country; at least people here have shoes. They have a little white vest. They have a place where they can sleep. In my country, things are much worse”.

So ours is a time of development of the underdevelopment. And yet, we see projects that, clearly, are just toys for the privileged few in this global society. These people are preying on the rest of the world and want to prey on it even more; they never have enough material wealth and never have enough power. We stand by, powerless to deal with this form of political and economic chaos. We are among the privileged few. At least we can speak out. I hope we can still do so safely, because even parliamentary democracy could be threatened one day.

Where will it stop? It is just like the airline industry after September 11. We are killing this international public service. It is getting increasingly complicated and uncomfortable to fly. Not only are the security checks getting more and more thorough before boarding, but on deplaning we are informed that there will be further passport checks. Imagine 200 to 300 tired passengers. It is 5 o'clock in the morning, in Paris, and they are getting their magnifying glasses out to check passports. Is this the kind of world we want to live in? Is this tomorrow's society? I am happy I am the age I am and not 20 years old. What kind of a world will we end up with if this kind of mentality prevails? Where is all this going to lead us? There is no collective reflection. There is no concern for social justice in this world. Even though the United States are sucking up the world's wealth, there are 50 million poor in that country, and nobody seems to care.

With projects like that one, we have every right to be worried, unless things change and we have a frank discussion, however limited our means to do so are as human beings.

The government should abide by the recommendation made by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs in its report made public last week.

• (1335)

Recommendation No. 12 states:



The government should not make a decision about missile defence systems being developed by the United States, as the technology has not been proven and details of the deployment are not known. However, the government should continue to monitor development of this program with the government of the United States and continue to oppose the weaponization of outer space.

That is what Liberal members and others said. It is to their credit, and I believe we should proceed with calm, wisdom, reflection, and a concern for social justice and a better distribution of wealth. There is no other way.

• (1340)

**Mr. Jacques Saada (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to my hon. colleague and there are several things that bother me considerably. I think it may just be a lack of sensitivity, but he spoke about preventive attacks with respect to the U.S. government's actions in Iraq.

Is he aware that today we are talking about a defensive weapon, not an offensive one? Is he aware that the issue is protecting oneself against attack rather than attacking?

The second thing is that there was mention of collective reflection and my hon. colleague has been extremely eloquent on many topics, particularly social conscience, social justice and so on. Perhaps I should remind him that it was our government that launched the initiative for Africa. It was our government—or at least, the previous finance minister—who put forward the idea of global equalization. I believe these things are not mutually exclusive. That has nothing to do with antimissile defence.

In what way does protecting the security of our citizens within a reasoned and reasonable framework have a negative effect on our activities in trying to attack the fundamental causes of human poverty and hopelessness?

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau:** Mr. Speaker, when we speak of pre-emptive strikes, I think this is very much to the point. Means are being put in place for defence against potential attacks from where? We need to be realistic. What country on this planet can believe it has the capacity to seriously attack the United States, even at this time, without anti-missile missiles and with a missile defence plan in place as well? I think that there is something reprehensible about this when one thinks of other ways the funds could be used. This is what needs to be kept in mind primarily.

If we put the \$60 billion to \$100 billion we are going to put into the military-political complex into some just cause, famine in Africa, drinking water in Africa, we would achieve our goal promptly. That is obvious. So we have the wrong target here.

As for the other aspect, saying that our government has done this, our government has done that convinces me that we need to elevate the debate somewhat. The Liberal Party is being attacked on its lack of democratic transparency. I believe that, as a fellow human being, the member for Brossard—La Prairie should be able to feel that my words are not partisan. I think that what is at stake here is humanity.

We must all elevate the level of this debate in order to address the leaders of this world, those who are in the spotlight, as well as all those who are backstage, out of sight, the ones that remain unseen, ghostly presences, but human beings nonetheless. The leaders need to be reminded that these invisible others have children and that those children will have children and wonder whether the sun will

### *Supply*

end up killing them instead of providing them with the means to live on an equal basis with others.

As my colleague from Champlain has already pointed out so eloquently, the sun is going to kill us pretty soon, if we continue—and this is one of the issues—to let pollution run rampant, to allow the environment to deteriorate.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want, unlike my hon. colleague for Brossard—La Prairie, to congratulate my hon. colleague for Trois-Rivières because he is a man of social conscience.

This has everything to do with the fact that we are elected representatives in a society that must set priorities when it comes to spending taxpayers' money. When it comes to deciding to invest their money in projects worth hundreds of millions, and hundreds of billions, of dollars in the U.S., I think that, as politicians, we have a role to play.

On that note, I want to congratulate the hon. member because he is involved, and this is quite relevant to the debate. I want to tell him that I greatly admire his thinking.

I would like him to say, in closing, a few words about establishing priorities in a society. Should we not, for example, adopt a more pacifist approach, based on international solidarity, rather than on defence and maximum security to protect ourselves from those for whose poverty we are ultimately responsible?

**Mr. Yves Rocheleau:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to protect ourselves from the paranoia of our neighbours and friends to the South. The media is completely misleading the public. An attempt is being made to justify implementing all sorts of control mechanisms that will erode not only the Americans' quality of life, but perhaps that of the entire planet. People will feel like cats and dogs fearing, from sunup to sundown, an attack on their person or their country.

This is, to some extent, unhealthy, a fact that must first be acknowledged and then condemned. The healthy development of humankind is in no way advanced by this attitude. We should be focussing on how to make the world a better place.

• (1345)

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to rise and speak to the Bloc Québécois's opposition day motion, moved by my colleague, the member for Saint-Jean. I would like to take the time to commend him today for his work.

I was listening to his speech this morning. Not only was he very convincing, but he also gave us an overview of the factors that led Canada to take part in discussions in recent weeks about the possibility of participating in a missile defence plan.

The motion reads as follows:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

### Supply

It has become clear that because of the events of September 11, the U.S. government has decided to view the future through a different lens. Some months later, on December 17, 2002, the American President announced the development of a missile defence system that would deploy its first 10 rockets within two years. The U.S. government announced and acknowledged that the purpose of the plan was to protect the United States from what it called rogue states and terrorists.

It is interesting to recall that in the weeks following the U.S. government's announcement, President Bush said, in a press release, and I quote:

The United States will take every necessary measure to protect our citizens against what is perhaps the gravest danger of all: the catastrophic harm that may result from hostile states or terrorist groups armed with weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them.

In the months following December 17, 2002, the United States government stepped up the pace on what would become its new policy and its new approach. Incidentally, in the weeks that followed the U.S. president's announcement, the Pentagon announced that there would be an initial deployment of 10 missiles in 2004 in Alaska, California and at sea.

Not only did the events of September 11 provide the Americans with a motive for pursuing the deployment of the missile defence system, but there was a very important and very real international factor in June 2002, when the ABM treaty expired. This treaty was signed in 1972 in Moscow. Not only did this treaty expire, but the United States announced that it would not be signing on again.

This treaty is pivotal in history as a mechanism setting limitations on ballistic missile systems by first banning the development of antimissile missiles and then reducing their number to 100. A significant step was made in Moscow in 1972. Unfortunately, in June 2002, the Americans refused to renew the treaty.

As my colleague from Saint-Jean indicated this morning, these are not new projects. In March 1983, President Reagan launched a star wars project, which I feel would have weaponized space. We must ensure that successors to this American president do not pick up where he left off. We must be vigilant.

● (1350)

Why would government members opposite have us believe that this missile defence plan is appropriate to achieve the objectives pursued by the U.S.? The U.S. itself says it wants to protect its citizens against hostile countries. It wants to protect the public against terrorist groups. That may be, but is this system the best weapon, the best tool for that purpose? Personally, I do not think it is.

I think that any future war will be much less overt and will use much less sophisticated weapons. The enemy may attack from a distance, but it will certainly not be thousands of kilometres away.

If the hostile countries the Americans have in mind are countries like Iran or Iraq, the question we must ask ourselves is whether at present they have nuclear weapons of mass destruction—I emphasize nuclear—that could reach the United States. Weapons inspectors, starting with Hans Blix, and the Americans on site did not find any nuclear weapons in Iraq.

Therefore, this American solution to which the Canadian government is opening the door is not the answer to the problem of protecting American citizens against the hostile countries I have mentioned. Neither is it an appropriate tool to fight terrorism, because terrorism is at a much closer range, inside our countries even.

Finally, if there were only one country that could reach North America, as my colleague from Saint-Jean was saying, it would perhaps be North Korea. As he pointed out, upon commencement of hostilities, it would take up to 20 minutes for the first missiles to reach the United States. Would a missile defence system block a missile coming from North Korea? I do not think so.

Therefore, we must wonder about the relevance of this plan. So far, testing has not been conclusive. Moreover, this plan has generated distrust among European countries, in Russia and in China. Indeed, this missile defence plan could upset the international balance of power.

We must work toward a solution that will bring peace, not one that could cause a return to militarization. I think that some members opposite want to achieve this goal, but they must realize that missile defence is not a solution.

Finally, with regard to costs, there is good reason to ask ourselves a lot of questions, knowing that the estimated cost of this plan is \$60 billion to \$100 billion U.S. If the Canadian government opposite thinks that simply taking part in discussions—as it did recently, on January 20, 2003, when it sent a delegation of diplomats and military officials to discuss Canada's participation—will have no impact, it should remember what happened in the past.

My colleague mentioned it this morning. When we look at Canada's participation in the first phase of the joint strike fighter program, which will cost \$250 million to \$500 million, I think it shows that these initial discussions could be the first step toward Canada's definite involvement in a plan which, I am sure, is not supported by the people of Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, whom I represent in this House.

● (1355)

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague for his speech, which was very clear, as usual.

There is one side of the issue he has not dealt with, namely how things are being done in the House these days. People should have seen the procedural hoops the Bloc Québécois had to go through to bring to the House this debate the government seems determined to restrict to the Liberal Party.

I would like the member to share his thoughts with us on the way the debate was initiated. It was not at the urging of the Prime Minister; this is not his motion and he is refusing to allow it to be made votable.

The member for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie could perhaps give us a rundown on the democratic process in the House at this point of the debate on the missile defence plan.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** Mr. Speaker, it is self explanatory, but I will make one comment.

I believe the way this Parliament and this government are behaving is totally unacceptable and undemocratic. How can we accept the government sending a Canadian delegation to the United States on January 20, 2003, when Parliament had not even debated the issue? Especially as the committee had made several recommendations. I invite the parliamentary secretary, who is glaring at me, to read Recommendation No. 12 which states:

The government should not make a decision about missile defence systems being developed by the United States...

I could go on.

Not only has this government shown a lack of respect for the House by engaging in discussions before the issue was even debated by Parliament, but it is also showing a lack of respect for the committee that recommended otherwise. Furthermore, the Prime Minister said in the House last week, I heard him, that the Bloc could use its opposition days. The Bloc is doing exactly that. The Bloc is using its opposition day.

The government and the Prime Minister have the authority to ask Parliament to voice its opinion and vote on the issue. If the Prime Minister and the government were as democratic as they claim, they would let us vote on the issue and everybody in this Parliament would be happy.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Andy Savoy (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as a geological engineer, I am proud to rise today to salute the mining industry which forms the economic backbone of more than 100 Canadian communities. These communities are located in all regions of the country, but are mainly in remote and rural areas.

Canada ranks first in the world for the production of potash and uranium and is the second largest producer of nickel and asbestos, according to 2002 statistics.

Canada is a world leader in the production and export of mining equipment, expertise and innovation. These include software development, robotics, geophysics and the use of global positioning systems in exploration and mining operations.

The Canadian mining industry is a world leader in the development of telemine, the operation of mining vehicles by remote control from above ground consoles, and in fuel cell development for heavy industries in addition to mining.

In 2001 the government contributed \$370 million to research and development in the mining and mineral processing industries.

S. O. 31

With this being National Mining Week, we are proud to say that we support the mining industry in Canada.

\* \* \*

### YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals new young offenders act has been rejected outright by my constituents.

Seniors are afraid to leave their homes and reports of property damage and theft are escalating at an alarming rate. Parents fear for their kids' safety because of the new legislation's inability to deter youth on youth crime. Others fear their children will become workers for organized crime because of their relative immunity from the law.

The Liberal government has failed our youth. It should listen to Canadians and immediately take back the new act. It must bring forward the necessary legislation that will properly protect our communities and our children. As one of my constituents said, "As a parent of teens, I find this act as I did the old one: totally inadequate and non-supportive of any parent who is trying to teach their kids some consequences for their actions. It is a spineless law".

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● (1400)

### HEARING AWARENESS MONTH

**Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House and all Canadians that May has been designated Hearing Awareness Month by the Hearing Foundation of Canada.

One in every ten Canadians is profoundly affected by hearing loss. If we transfer those statistics to the House of Commons where there are 301 members, approximately 30 members of the House of Commons would be suffering from acute deafness. I sometimes think it is far greater than 30. Six in every 1,000 babies born in Canada have hearing loss.

Since 1979 the Hearing Foundation of Canada has raised millions of dollars to support services for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing Canadians.

The Hearing Foundation of Canada urges Canadians to join in the fight against hearing loss by avoiding overexposure to noise, wearing hearing protection and donating to medical research.

I ask all hon. members to please join me in wishing the Hearing Foundation of Canada a successful Hearing Awareness Month.

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### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES

**Mr. Larry Spencer (Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the UN General Assembly has proclaimed May 15 as the International Day of Families. The UN program of action for social development states:

The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support.

*S. O. 31*

Shamefully, in our world today there are those who are bent on the destruction of the family. Some would advocate practices which would simply impact children like pieces of property to be passed around to accommodate adult conveniences.

The best interests of the children in any family should be the family's guiding principle. The protection and support of families should be the number one priority of the government.

The Canadian Alliance believes in protecting, supporting and encouraging families as the basic unit of Canadian society. Today I would like to honour those who are committed to their families. Their commitment to their families may sometimes go unnoticed, but its value is immeasurable. On behalf of Canada's official opposition, I thank them for their commitment to their families.

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**WILLIAM OSLER HEALTH CENTRE**

**Mr. Roy Cullen (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, dealing with the SARS outbreak is challenging enough for Ontario hospital staff and physicians, but managing a hospital evacuation in one month and then managing the prevention of the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome in the next month has certainly shown that staff and physicians at William Osler Health Centre have an extraordinary commitment to the health of their patients.

During the month of February a power failure necessitated the evacuation of William Osler Health Centre's Brampton campus. This event demonstrated the teamwork, commitment and dedication of the health care individuals who work under sometimes very trying circumstances.

A short month later William Osler Health Centre staff rose to the next challenge, the management of SARS.

Tireless individual effort and exceptional teamwork across all three sites, and specifically the Etobicoke campus, once again enabled the William Osler team to successfully implement the provincial directives on SARS.

Congratulations to Bob Bell, the president and CEO of the Etobicoke campus of the William Osler Health Centre, and to all the staff and volunteers at this great hospital.

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**MINING INDUSTRY**

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Nunavut, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, May 12 to 18 is National Mining Week. Mining puts innovation to work for Canadians every day, from developing leading edge mining technologies such as telemine, to using high strength steel, aluminum and magnesium to manufacture lighter weight automobiles.

This year's theme, "Mining: An Innovative Industry For Canadians", reminds us that the mining industry is one of the most innovative, technologically advanced and productive sectors in the Canadian economy.

Canada is one of the largest mining nations in the world. We produce more than 60 minerals and metals. In 2001 our mineral

exports earned us approximately \$46 billion and accounted for more than 12% of Canada's total domestic exports.

Let us recognize mining for its contribution to our country.

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[Translation]

**CHEVALIER DE LORIMIER**

**Mr. Roger Gaudet (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in this House to note that this year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of a patriot, Chevalier de Lorimier.

François-Marie-Thomas Chevalier de Lorimier was born in Saint-Cuthbert, in the riding of Berthier—Montcalm, on December 27, 1803. Found guilty of high treason, Chevalier de Lorimier was sentenced to hang and was executed with his comrades on February 15, 1839.

Historians and biographers agree that the greatest merit of Chevalier de Lorimier was to have taken his political ideals and his commitment to revolution to the limit, at the cost of his own life. He earned his place in history as a great patriot and as a martyr to the cause of the independence of Lower Canada, which is now Quebec.

The people of Saint-Cuthbert will honour this great patriot on May 18 by unveiling a commemorative plaque in his honour and changing the name of the village's main street to Chevalier de Lorimier.

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● (1405)

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES**

**Ms. Raymonde Folco (Laval West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as it is each year, May 15 is an opportunity for all Canadians to celebrate the International Day of Families.

Today we are marking the 10th anniversary of this day being celebrated around the world, and we hope that it will bring happiness, prosperity and success to all Canadian families.

On this special day, I would like to speak directly to each family in Canada to remind them of the important role families play as the foundation of our society. Whatever their makeup, it is through our families that we develop our first human and interpersonal relationships, learn to communicate with others, and interact with the world.

Families have the ability to foster good education and to protect and support their members, and thanks to this ability, we will be able to fulfil our mission as a government, which is to better support the health and well-being of Canadian society in the long term.

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**YOUTH SERVICE CANADA**

**Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to announce a new project called "Si Sainte-Émérie-de-l'Énergie se racontait", under the federal Youth Service Canada program, in the riding of Berthier—Montcalm.

S. O. 31

This pilot project by the Matawinie CFDC will receive a financial contribution of \$129,595 to provide ten dropouts or unemployed youth in the Matawinie RCM with the chance to participate in a heritage experience that will first twin them with seniors and then introduce them to Sainte-Émélie-de-l'Énergie's heritage.

This innovative project will certainly help these young people prepare for a job and above all join the labour market in the riding of Berthier—Montcalm, which is thereby benefiting from a successful federal program.

In closing, I want to wish all the best to participants in this excellent initiative.

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[English]

#### INTERNATIONAL PEACE OFFICER MEMORIAL DAY

**Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, May 15 of each year has been dedicated around the world to remembering and honouring those police officers who have been killed in the line of duty. While we mourn their loss, we are reminded of the service that we as a society ask them to provide.

Our police and peace officers toil in heroic anonymity, putting their lives on the line every day in the interests of safety and security.

Today we pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. They have given their lives selflessly to serve and protect our communities.

On behalf of the Canadian Alliance, I offer our thanks and our prayers to the families, communities and the police and peace services that have lost officers.

While we can never repay the debt we owe them, we must, and we will, always remember them.

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#### KEVIN CLEARY

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to Mr. Kevin Cleary who died peacefully at home in Halifax on May 10, surrounded by his family after a courageous and dignified battle with cancer.

Kevin devoted over 50 years of his life to Saint Mary's University, holding positions including registrar and secretary to the senate. He retired in 1999. It is rather remarkable that the passing of Kevin Cleary coincided with this year in which Saint Mary's University celebrated its 200th anniversary; an institution to which he dedicated most of his life.

Kevin was a vital part of the university community when my brother, husband, sister, and I attended the university in the sixties. He continued to contribute to the university's growth in so many facets during the many years since.

He was a loving husband, dedicated father, caring grandfather, and a steadfast and true friend. Kevin's wisdom, laughter and loyal heart will be sadly missed by a great number of people.

● (1410)

#### NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this week is National Nursing Week and today we celebrate the vital role of nurses as the backbone of our health system. We also celebrate the successes of the women who make up 95% of the nursing population.

The recent SARS outbreak has underlined the dedication and sacrifice that nurses bring to the front line of health care.

My colleagues and I in the NDP would like to pay a special tribute to one nurse in particular who has changed the face of nursing in Canada over her career as a trade unionist, nursing professional, and role model for women.

Kathleen Connors has devoted her life to leading the battle for better health care and advocating for nurses. She has served 20 years as president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, providing nurses with a strong and distinctive voice on the national health care stage. While strengthening her own organization, she has proven to be an outspoken leader in the battle to save medicare, as chairperson of the Canadian Health Coalition.

As Canadians pay tribute to the profession they value and trust above all others, we recognize the special contribution of a woman who has played a major role in all our lives.

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[Translation]

#### SEMAINE QUÉBÉCOISE DES FAMILLES

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of Families, but also the Semaine québécoise des familles. This year's theme is "Métro, boulot, famille, dodo!". This theme encourages reflection on how to reconcile family life and work.

Over the last few years, Quebec has adopted unprecedented measures to help Quebec families. There are the \$5 per day day care facilities, the family allowance, a beneficial tax policy, not to mention the parental leave program, at the heart of Quebec's policy on families.

The federal government, which should applaud this initiative, is hindering its full implementation and continues to say no to the broad Quebec consensus by refusing to transfer the necessary funds to Quebec so that it can create its own parental leave program, as authorized under the federal Employment Insurance Act.

The family is the cornerstone of our value system, and that is why the Bloc Québécois salutes all Quebec families, the cradle par excellence for human development.

*Oral Questions**[English]***TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the House's attention to the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence and for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

All of us can remember that special teacher who believed in our potential and encouraged us to do our best: the teacher who introduced us to the beauty of poetry, to the wonder of chemistry or to the great big world outside our school doors. Every morning teachers across Canada meet their students with energy and creativity, and an unshakeable determination to see our kids succeed. We owe these teachers an incredible debt.

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence have honoured exemplary elementary and secondary school teachers since 1993. Today, 16 teachers will receive that award. Ten educators will be presented with the first ever Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education, a recognition of the critical role that early childhood educators play in shaping the lives of young children. These awards recognize Canadian teachers who are equipping our children with the skills needed to meet the challenges ahead of them.

I ask all members to please join me in celebrating their very important but often overlooked work and dedication.

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**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Canadians now have a new venue to describe their problems in registering their firearms with the gun registry. This is through a new website just launched at [www.gunregistry.ca](http://www.gunregistry.ca).

Although the registry system has cost over a billion dollars, it still does not work. We want to hear about the problems people are having registering their firearms.

Earlier this month the Solicitor General said, "We want to talk directly to those people who have problems and we want to fix those problems". We are here to help the Solicitor General. Since the gun registry site was launched we have already had a lot of response. We are hearing from Canadians who registered one gun and received four registrations or who registered five guns and received two registrations or none at all.

We urge Canadians who have experienced problems to log on to [www.gunregistry.ca](http://www.gunregistry.ca) and outline their experiences. We will bring all of these issues raised by frustrated Canadians to the attention of the Solicitor General.

We in the PC Party intend to hold him to his word and ensure that these issues brought to his attention are addressed.

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**HOMELESSNESS**

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton Centre-East, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of homeless outrageously

claimed in committee great success in helping Canada's homeless over the past three years by spending \$753 million.

Edmonton's emergency shelters have been overfilled for five years. After three years and \$20 million, only 12 new permanent emergency shelter beds were added. This winter the homeless were forced to sleep on the cold floor of a subway station because of the lack of basic emergency shelter space. Two unlucky homeless persons died.

A memorial vigil was held in Toronto for 300 homeless persons who have died. Prior to the minister's help, 9 persons per year died on the streets of Toronto. Now, with the minister's help 34 persons per year have died on the streets of Toronto. The minister unconscionably brags about achievement while more homeless perish on the streets from her neglect.

The minister of the homeless file is a monumental failure.

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**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

● (1415)

*[English]***JUSTICE**

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in the last three or four days the Ontario police have been able to track down over 200 sex offenders in the greater Toronto area. The problem is if sex offenders were outside Ontario the police would not be able to track them down. The sex offender registry the government proposes will not have any convicted sex offenders on it.

Does the government now see the need for a retroactive national sex offender registry?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course we see the need for a national sex offender registry. We have put legislation before the House and I would hope that the opposition would join with us in getting that legislation through as quickly as possible.

We are making every effort. In fact, at the federal-provincial-territorial meeting last November we received approval for the legislation and introduced it in the House. It will be in committee before long. I hope the opposition works with us on it.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, this is how to construct a national sex offender registry: take all convicted sex offenders, their name and address, and put them in a database so that it is available to our police forces.

Why does the government expect all sex offenders to reoffend before their name is put on the national sex offender registry?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the last thing we want to see happen is sex offenders reoffending. Let us keep that clear.

The fact of the matter is that there is a sex offender registry in Ontario. We do not intend to make our legislation retroactive for very good reasons. We are in negotiations with Ontario to see if we can make that portion retroactive to accommodate its legislation.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, here is how not to set up a national sex offender registry: talk about it for two years and then bring it to Parliament through committee, and when the sex offender registry is here, this is what it looks like. It is blank. It does not have one single name or address on it.

Why does the government not get a national sex offender registry that is retroactive and would include the names of those offenders?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when we bring in legislation, we want the legislation to withstand any challenges that may come before the courts. We do not want to introduce legislation that could fail. We are accepting the best legal advice there is and bringing it in as a registry. We will then put names in it as we go along.

We are in negotiations, as I indicated a moment ago, with the Government of Ontario to try and accommodate its registry, which would be retroactive to include those names if we are successful in those negotiations.

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#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, our key allies, the United States and the United Kingdom, have placed an important resolution before the United Nations Security Council. That resolution would lift the economic sanctions on Iraq and allow for the reconstruction to continue. The government has said it supports the lifting of sanctions and has pledged additional dollars for the reconstruction and we support that.

Has the Government of Canada conveyed its support for the U.S. and U.K. resolution that is currently before the Security Council?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member pointed out, that resolution has just been deposited. It is being given considered by the members of the Security Council.

He has accurately stated the position of the Government of Canada. We wish to see the sanctions lifted as quickly as possible. We are actively participating and looking not only at humanitarian relief, but also at how we can help reconstruct and rebuild Iraq. In so doing, we want to work with the international community in the fullest way possible both, as the United States and the United Kingdom have said, through agencies of the United Nations and with them in their roles. We will be looking at ways in which we can play the most positive role for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

• (1420)

**Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, along with the money, the one thing the government can do is actually give support to this Security Council resolution, and not waffle and waste any time. There is currently a split at the Security Council over this resolution. Russia, France and Germany are trying once again to thwart the efforts of our allies for the reconstruction of Iraq.

#### Oral Questions

Will Canada support the resolution at the UN Security Council to lift these sanctions on Iraq and allow for this reconstruction to continue?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one thing I can promise the hon. member and the House is that the government is looking at how Canada can benefit the Iraqi people in the best way possible through an active process of engaging the international community and all parties involved. We do not believe it is helpful to turn it into a domestic political football for the opposition's purposes.

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[Translation]

#### FISHERIES

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec has announced emergency measures to assist the hundreds of Quebec workers who find themselves without income because there is no cod or crab to process. The Quebec Minister of Employment, Social Solidarity and Family Welfare, Claude Béchar, has stated, however, that Quebec cannot go it alone.

Because what lies behind the crisis is poor federal management, and because of the Prime Minister's talk of a new era of Liberal cooperation, can the minister tell us whether Ottawa is going to do its part for the fisheries workers, as the Government of Quebec is asking it to?

**Hon. Claude Drouin (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say how pleased I am to see the cooperation of the Government of Quebec which, with the \$600 million we are transferring for manpower training, is giving support to the regions experiencing these problems.

At the same time, we have announced \$14 million in short term measures and immediate consultation for long term measures we should be announcing next fall. I am certain that we can, with the people in the communities and the Government of Quebec, find solutions for the people in these regions.

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what the two Quebec ministers involved in this matter have said is that Ottawa is the one responsible, that Ottawa is not doing its part, and that Ottawa had better get going and do something. The workers have had \$45 billion taken from them. That is exactly what they have said.

In the meantime, people are starving. Some families have nothing to eat. Instead of hemming and hawing here until the fall, could the federal government not give a response to the Government of Quebec—a Liberal government—without any partisanship? Let them stand up and announce, “Yes, we are going to respond to the demands from the Government of Quebec; yes, we are going to respond to their demands, which are very specific”. There is money available, money that they have misappropriated, and that is unacceptable.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Claude Drouin (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member had paid proper attention to the reply, he would have understood that we have put \$14 million immediately into short term measures, and \$600 million has been transferred from the Government of Canada to the Province of Quebec.

The present provincial government has understood the importance of working together to help the people of the region who are experiencing difficulties. And long term measures will be forthcoming. That is what we are going to do. I congratulate the Government of Quebec, which has understood the importance of working with us.

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the crisis in the fishery is the direct result of 30 years of mismanagement by the federal government. The regions of eastern Quebec and Canada are experiencing unprecedented social and economic upheaval. The Government of Quebec has done more than its share in helping the people affected and it is urgently calling on the federal government to provide the \$200 million it has yet to transfer, which is Quebec's share of what the federal government has set aside for labour market training.

Does the federal government plan on following up as soon as possible on the request made by Quebec?

**Hon. Claude Drouin (Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is \$600 million. We saw the Government of Quebec assume its responsibilities. It understood the importance of helping people in the regions, and it put measures in place immediately.

We have done the same thing with short-term measures. The Bloc Québécois needs to recognize that we made \$14 million available to them immediately. I can tell the member that both regional offices already have jobs available and together we will come up with solutions.

**Mr. Jean-Yves Roy (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, how can the federal government believe that transferring money for labour market training is enough and that it can wash its hands of its responsibility in the fisheries dispute when it is sitting on a cushy \$45 billion surplus in the EI fund? This money is supposed to be used for hard times like these.

[*English*]

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate what my colleague has said. We are very happy to be working in partnership with the government of Quebec on this very important issue. As my colleague indicated, every year we transfer almost \$600 million to the province of Quebec for just such a case.

We are very happy that the unemployment levels are coming down in Canada. These moneys are there for all Canadians who may find themselves without work. We know that the fishery is an area of direct concern right now. The moneys will be funnelled to those areas because that is where the need is today.

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Natural Resources.

Looking at the recent rise in the value of the dollar, it seems to me that the government now has a much stronger case in the softwood lumber negotiations when they resume today. The Liberals must stop selling out our forestry workers.

Why does the government's strategy rely on provincial concessions rather than seeking a bilateral forestry agreement with the United States?

[*English*]

**Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is talking about dealing with the workers, as he knows we announced \$350 million to make sure we support workers and we support communities. In fact, my colleague responsible for WED has put out a call to see how we can diversify their community economies: \$50 million of new programs to help in tourism and help them diversify their economies. We are monitoring the situation very closely. We know that the dollar value does have an effect, but we are making sure that we are helping those communities that need it through the \$350 million program which we announced.

\* \* \*

**INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about supporting Canadian sovereignty and we certainly hope that on the softwood lumber file the Liberals have more luck than they did when Mr. Spliff went to Washington. He came back with an American drug policy but unfortunately what he did not come back with is an American steel policy, because Americans do something about steel dumping: They defend their steelworkers.

This government is allowing 600 jobs at Algoma Steel to disappear in Ontario because it will not do what the industry and the union have recommended. When is the government going to stand up for steelworkers in this country?

**Mr. Murray Calder (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that Algoma has made this difficult decision and Canadian producers who believe that they are being injured by dumped or subsidized imports have access to Canada's anti-dumping and countervail rules. With respect to the CITT safeguard recommendations, the government continues to carefully survey all its options and the Government of Canada remains an active participant at the OECD high level meetings on overcapacity and subsidies, which is the root of the problem.



### INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. The House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador has adopted unanimously a resolution directing its government to begin a renegotiation of the terms of union.

In its "Reference re Secession of Quebec" in 1988, a court opinion sought by the Prime Minister, the Supreme Court said when "one participant in Confederation... seek[s] an amendment to the Constitution" there is "an obligation on all parties to come to the negotiating table". The court calls that a "binding obligation".

Does the Government of Canada consider itself bound to negotiate when a province seeks an amendment to the Constitution?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, even well before the ruling of the court it has been very clear that the Government of Canada is always willing to discuss any suggestions coming from provinces, whether constitutional or not. The Government of Canada will do it with frankness and we will say frankly what we think about the proposal. Frankly and politely is the way we work.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, this is not a question of discussion. This is a question of what the Supreme Court of Canada, in an opinion sought by this government, calls a "binding obligation". The resolution adopted yesterday by the House of Assembly refers specifically to "the establishment, through an amendment of the Terms of Union, of shared, equal, constitutional authority...over the fisheries adjacent to the province".

Will the Government of Canada honour its binding obligation to negotiate or will it ignore the opinion of the Supreme Court?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, never would Canada ignore anything from the Supreme Court of Canada. The Supreme Court of Canada never spoke about the obligation to agree to what is under discussion. The Government of Canada said very frankly that to share responsibility of the fishery in this way would be detrimental for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador and for all Canadians. We say that very frankly and we are very open to discussing it with the government of the province.

\* \* \*

• (1430)

### ETHICS

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, reading from the ministry and crown corporation ethical guidelines, it is stated, "No Minister should personally promote the private interests of any individual, corporation or non-governmental organization including a constituent, with any Crown corporation".

When the Prime Minister repeatedly phoned the president of the Business Development Bank on behalf of a constituent, why is that not breaking his own ethical guidelines?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was on November 21, 2000, that the ethics counsellor concluded his examination of this very question. In a letter addressed to the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the ethics counsellor, after his

### Oral Questions

examination, said that "the Prime Minister, in calling the President of the BDC, did not violate any rule...established by the...Government in terms of Ministers dealing on behalf of constituents with government agencies".

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, it is the ever changing ethical guidelines, I guess. The way it reads here is that "No Minister", that would be the Prime Minister, "should personally promote the private interests of any individual, corporation or non-governmental organization", that would be the Grand-Mère inn, "including a constituent", that would be Yvon Duhaime, "with any Crown corporation", and that would be the Business Development Bank. Yet it was the bank president who was fired, who was threatened with criminal charges and who has paid the price for this.

Why is it that if it is so unethical now to do this, it was just fine to do it back in 1997?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the question has been answered and the matter has been resolved. What we are seeing here today, and what we have seen this week from members of that party as they put these questions, is a vivid demonstration as to why they fail to capture the confidence of the Canadian people. They have nothing to offer. They have nothing to offer in any matter of substance. They have no thoughtful position on policies that affect people. They have no proposals to make to make this a better country. They wallow in old stories hoping they can throw mud and that is not what the Canadian people are after. They are going to remain irrelevant to Canadian government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### MARIJUANA

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the fears we expressed on Tuesday have been confirmed. Upon his return from Washington, the Minister of Justice, having been given his marching orders by the American government, did not introduce his bill to decriminalize marijuana.

How can the Minister of Justice deny having received instructions from Washington, when the series of interviews with the media scheduled for today has been cancelled and he is now talking about not introducing his bill until the end of May?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** Order, please. It is practically impossible to hear the hon. Minister of Justice, who has the floor. A question has been asked and we have to be able to hear the answer.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Martin Cauchon:** Mr. Speaker, first, a bill cannot be introduced before it has been put on the Order Paper.

Second, I have always been clear on this. We want to go ahead as soon as possible, and we said we would go ahead before the summer recess.

*Oral Questions*

Yesterday, I said very clearly that we will be bringing in the bill and the whole policy when we come back from the break week. That having been said, I will repeat that what we are doing, we are doing for the Canadian public, and we are doing it in our capacity as the Canadian government.

Moreover, we are motivated by the desire to send, with respect to the use of marijuana, the following messages: it is illegal, and it is harmful to your health. These messages—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier.

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg—Jacques-Cartier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, after this week's cabinet meeting, just before leaving for Washington, the Minister of Justice knew he did not have any money for the national drug strategy, but he went and consulted with the Americans anyway.

How can he hide behind any excuse whatsoever today for having been given his marching orders by Washington, when upon his return, he started working on a bill that takes the wishes of his buddy, Ashcroft, into account?

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that these are somewhat irresponsible remarks, given that developing a policy like the one we will be tabling in this place within a week takes time and requires extensive consultations.

When I talk about consultations, I mean that a number of departments are involved. The policy is ready. And so is the renewal of the national drug strategy.

The money is there, and it will be with great pleasure that, along with my hon. colleagues, I will be announcing a policy to ensure that the right messages are sent here, in Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, recent research found that the Atlantic cod population is at a perilously low level. The response has been mismanagement by DFO from the very beginning. Failure to deal with foreign overfishing has been one thing that has led to this problem. Why will the minister not get off the fence and take a tough stand against foreign overfishing?

• (1435)

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if the member does a thorough review of the evidence he will find out that overfishing generally has contributed to the perilous state of the resource in general. These are the actions that we have taken: tough decisions that we took on closing some cod areas; we have worked since this government came to power very diligently on the question of foreign overfishing, with incidents, as members will remember, from 1995; we have seen great, great improvements within the operations of NAFO, but not enough. We continue to work, we can improve further, and we will.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the fisheries committee recently tabled a report recommending that the

minister deal with this foreign overfishing in a much stronger way. The report was rejected out of hand by this minister. Why will the minister not show some leadership and organize an international response to this impending international conservation disaster?

**Hon. Robert Thibault (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what this government has done. We have been working with our allies, with other countries. There were some recommendations by members opposite that we should leave NAFO, thinking that all other countries fishing in international waters would cease fishing there. Quite the contrary, we would no longer be there to work with them.

We are working to strengthen the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. We are not 100% content with its operations, but as the forum of experts in Newfoundland told us, it is the best possible way to go forward.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING**

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister, during his speech in Montreal, skipped over a section confirming that the political financing legislation was a question of confidence in his government.

Can the Leader of the Government in the House tell us here today if the vote on political party financing will be a vote of confidence in the government? Yes or no?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate the hon. member's support for government bills and possibly for the government in general. I am delighted by his support for Bill C-24.

I will be happy to work with him and, of course, with the leader of his party in the House to support this legislation and pass it in the very near future, so that Canadians can benefit from even better legislation.

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île-d'Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am not happy that the Leader of the Government in the House has not answered a very clear question.

Since he refuses to tell us if the vote on this legislation is a vote of confidence in the government, does this mean that the Prime Minister is giving in to the President of the Liberal Party of Canada, who wants this legislation dropped, is giving in to the member for LaSalle—Émard, who is running a leadership campaign with a campaign fund that has been condemned by the other candidates? Is this not what is happening with the political party financing legislation?

*Oral Questions***NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member must have a bad memory. Less than one hour ago, he and I were talking in a House committee on this same issue. Of course, the government intends to proceed with the bill. If it were not my intention, I would not have appeared before a House committee for over two hours today, for the second time, to support this initiative.

Moreover, anyone who thinks that the Prime Minister is giving in for any reason does not know him very well.

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[English]

**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, in October of last year the government announced a softwood lumber aid package, part of which included money for a so-called community adjustment fund. In B.C. that amount was \$110 million: \$55 million for the north and \$55 million for the lower mainland and Vancouver Island.

That was over seven months ago.

Assistance was badly needed during the winter months, yet no money has ever been allocated. How much longer must British Columbian communities wait or will this be another failed Liberal promise?

**Hon. Stephen Owen (Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the community adjustment fund to deal with the softwood lumber pressures on resource communities in British Columbia and across the country has been established in British Columbia. The calls for proposals have been out and many are being received from resource towns all over British Columbia. These will be dealt with very quickly over the next two months.

• (1440)

**Mr. Andy Burton (Skeena, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, saying they will do something and actually doing it are certainly two different things and the Liberals have proven to be just big talkers. Two committees have been formed to accept proposals for how the money should be allocated, yet no decision on funding will be made until probably this fall. That is one year from the original promise of assistance by the federal Liberals.

Is this community fund really just a shell game? Or, given the timing, maybe it is just another election ploy to buy votes from financially hard hit British Columbians. Why the delay?

**Hon. Stephen Owen (Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the purpose of taking care to review through community future development bodies in resource based communities is to ensure that the proposals are realistic, that they are tested with due diligence, and that they are committed to by the people who will have to implement them and benefit from the adjustments that are made.

**Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our future as a healthy, prosperous and sustainable society depends upon using all of our natural resources wisely. My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

What is the Government of Canada doing to ensure that Canadians will continue to benefit from our valuable mineral resources which provide us with so much?

**Hon. Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan because he has taken a tremendous amount of interest in this area.

As members know, Canada is one of the world's foremost mineral producer and exporter, producing some 60 mineral commodities. We are also a world leader in the development and export of mining equipment, expertise and innovation. Our mineral exports earn approximately \$46 billion a year, and accounted for more than 12% of Canada's total domestic exports in 2001.

In the last budget, we put in more incentives to ensure that we continued to be a leader in the mining area. In fact we have more mining interests now than ever before. We will continue to be a leader in the world in the—

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Minister of Human Resources Development to meet with the representatives of the fish plants affected by the fisheries crisis, she refused. This region in crisis should be declared a disaster area.

When the President of Bombardier wants to meet with the minister, the answer is yes. When the managers of Auberge Grand-Mère want to meet with the Prime Minister, the answer is yes. But for the fish plant workers, the answer is no.

My question to the minister is this: is she going to meet with the representatives of the fish plants or do they have to contribute to the Liberals' campaign fund to get any service?

[English]

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I have not refused to meet with these important Canadians and I would hope the hon. member would see from my own track record that I do not shy away from meeting with Canadians wherever they live.

I would just point out to him yet again that every year this government transfers \$90 million to the province of New Brunswick for circumstances just like this to use in targeted wage subsidies, job creation partnerships, and skills development programs.

I would ask the hon. member to work closely with his provincial counterparts in his area to ensure that those moneys come to his constituents.

*Oral Questions***JUSTICE**

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice. In November of 2001, days after a gay Vancouver man, Aaron Webster, was brutally beaten to death, every attorney general in Canada, including the minister's seatmate, who was then the minister of justice, agreed to support the inclusion of sexual orientation in Canada's hate propaganda laws.

Since gays and lesbians are the only major group that is targeted for violence and hate crimes that are excluded from these laws, and there was another apparent vicious gay bashing in Saint John just this week, does the minister support the inclusion of sexual orientation in Canada's hate propaganda laws? Yes or no.

**Hon. Martin Cauchon (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yes, the bill is consistent with the government's position on sexual orientation. Having said that, there is a parliamentary process in place. The standing committee is seized with the bill, so let us see what its recommendations will be. It will report back to the House with its recommendations as well.

\* \* \*

• (1445)

**AUBERGE GRAND-MÈRE**

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Industry told the House that the relevant facts in the Auberge Grand-Mère case have long since been disclosed and discussed. One relevant fact is that the page which disappeared from the bank files was the page on which the name of the Prime Minister's private company may have been recorded. This has been neither disclosed nor discussed in the House.

Is the minister then saying that this mysterious disappearance of key records had been discussed among ministers? Would he tell us whether that discussion included the role in the disappearance in the papers of Mr. Jean Carle?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is again suggesting, based on facts that have been in the record for some time, allegations that are based only on speculation. I can tell the House that the relevant facts of this matter have been gone into, as I mentioned, time and again and are on the record.

**Mr. Loyola Hearn (St. John's West, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the minister also said, "All the concerns have been examined and put to rest". He just reiterated that. The House now knows that the affidavit sworn by the RCMP in the *National Post* case contained only half the testimony of the bank official responsible for the Auberge loan. It left out the categorical testimony that the only reason the loan was approved was because the Prime Minister intervened.

If everything had been examined, would the minister tell the House why the RCMP affidavit contained only half the evidence?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I have answered this question twice already. The RCMP did an investigation. It handled the investigation appropriately, and that is where the matter should stay.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, taxes are 50% of the cost of a litre of gasoline. That is the equivalent of every second fill-up at the pump for travellers of all that money going straight to the taxman. Some 92% of provincial gas tax revenues are reinvested into roads but this Liberal government only reinvests 2.5% of all gas tax revenues back into roads.

How can the Liberals defend ripping off Canadians so badly at the pumps when they return virtually nothing back in terms of infrastructure?

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, it is this government that brought in the national infrastructure program in 1994 and has had two since. Second, in the year 2000 this government wrote to the provincial premiers saying that we would suspend the GST if the provinces would do the same. Only one province replied.

I would say to the hon. member we are reinvesting. When we talk infrastructure, we act. The opposition never talked infrastructure until the last couple of years when it became fashionable.

**Mr. James Moore (Port Moody—Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals talk reinvestment, they talk reinvestment but they do not in fact do it. They have gone from 2% to 2.5% which is a complete rip-off, when we consider the fact that over 90% of all provincial gas tax dollars that are raised across Canada goes back into roads. The federal government in the U.S. puts 84% back into roads. This government puts 2.4% back into roads.

If the government is opposed to fixing gas tax dollars going straight into revenues, then why does the government not eliminate the one and a half cent a litre tax that was imposed to reduce the deficit? The deficit is gone but the tax is still there. We want to know why?

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is fairly obvious. The money goes into consolidated revenue. We know that goes to things such as health care. It goes into social programs. However we do not need any lessons from the opposition. When it comes to investing in urban communities and in rural communities, the government has stepped to the plate and has hit a home run every time.

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[*Translation*]

**EXCISE TAX**

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, despite the Bloc Québécois' attempts to amend Bill C-28, the budget implementation bill, the federal government is going ahead with its plan to retroactively amend the provisions of the Excise Tax Act as it relates to school bus transportation.

Can the parliamentary secretary tell us why, when his government brought in legislation regarding the transfer of family trusts abroad, it was content to legislate for the future, without retroactively reversing the decision made earlier by public servants, but in the case of school boards, it overturns court judgments in favour of the other side?

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well that when the Minister of Finance on December 21, 2001 issued a press release with regard to this issue, it said that we would be bringing in legislation which we have in Bill C-28. The member also knows that the 29 cases in Quebec are not affected prior to December 21, 2001.

The solicitors for those school boards have a letter dated December 16, 2002, knowing, notwithstanding any decisions by the court, that retroactive legislation would come in. The member knows that. I have repeated it umpteen times.

• (1450)

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that did not prevent the government's attorneys from making agreements with the school boards in January and in April.

Having received a letter from the Barreau du Québec and the Canadian Bar Association denouncing this retroactive measure, which seriously erodes the principle of the authority of a final judgment, is the Minister of Justice finally going to assume his responsibilities and stop his hon. colleague from finance before he causes irreparable harm?

[English]

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again I point out to the hon. member that the letter of December 16, 2002 clearly says, notwithstanding those decisions, that retroactive legislation would come in. We know that the courts have upheld that. Parliament has the right to do that. The member knows that. We have debated that.

The fact that the member has not won the debate has obviously not stopped him from raising the question, which is fine, but the answer remains the same. We are moving ahead with Bill C-28 and that provision is in the bill.

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**CANADIAN INSTITUTES OF HEALTH RESEARCH**

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research has announced that it will soon begin funding embryonic stem cell research. This announcement comes even as legislation on the issue is before Parliament. It should be the Parliament of Canada that sets the rules for embryonic research.

Will the minister demand that the institute cease and desist until Parliament has spoken?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member is well aware, we have been debating Bill C-13 in the House for some time now and that deals with, among other things, embryonic stem cell research. I would encourage all parliamentarians to pass this legislation as quickly as possible.

The CIHR is a body that operates at arm's length from the government. Last April it indicated it would not proceed with stem cell research for a one year, or 12 month period, whereupon it would put in place a steering committee which would then, at some time in

the future, receive applications that would potentially deal with embryonic stem cell research.

As I understand it, it is in the process of putting that-

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.

**Mrs. Carol Skelton (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time the CIHR has attempted to ignore Parliament. In March 2002 the institute wanted to fund embryonic research, even though legislation was pending. Opposition protests forced the institute to back down.

Is the minister going to allow the institute to continue on its own agenda?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the institute has no agenda of its own in the sense that it has made it very plain that it is well aware of the legislation before the Parliament of Canada. It has indicated that if there are any inconsistencies between its guidelines, as developed by its oversight committee, and the legislation, the legislation will take precedence. It is very simple.

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[Translation]

**CANADA LABOUR CODE**

**Mr. Gérard Binet (Frontenac—Mégantic, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour.

In light of a question asked yesterday in the House by the opposition, which gave an inaccurate depiction of the labour situation at Cargill, could the Minister of Labour inform us of the true status of the dispute between Cargill Ltd. and the Syndicat national des employés de Cargill Ltd.?

**Hon. Claudette Bradshaw (Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to provide the proper information on Cargill. The Cargill union and employers have accepted the mediator's recommendation on settlement of the collective agreement and the back to work protocol.

The parties ought to be signing the new collective agreement today or tomorrow, and the return to work is scheduled for May 19, 2003.

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[English]

**AGRICULTURE**

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, 2002 was a challenging year for farmers. They faced drought, grasshoppers, frost and floods. However their greatest challenge has been the Liberal government. Farmers are already out seeding and they still do not have a risk management program. They have no program, no details, no way of knowing what their 2003 coverage is.

When will the minister release the details of the agricultural policy framework so farmers can make good business decisions for 2003?

*Oral Questions*

● (1455)

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member was in the standing committee on agriculture a few weeks ago when I went over the proposed program for the producers. That program is out there with the provinces. I have authority from our government to sign the agreements with the provinces, and we will put that in place. One province has already signed so their producers can have that protection for this year, and I await the signatures of all the others.

**Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, farmers are frustrated beyond belief. They did not have much of a program last year and they do not have any program this year. Farm organizations are frustrated. The requests for a one year delay have been totally ignored. Provinces are frustrated. Only one province has signed the implementation agreement for the APF.

The entire agricultural support system is changing without the average farmer having a clue what the government is doing. When will the minister let farmers know the details of the proposed new risk management program?

**Hon. Lyle Vanclief (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over a week ago I sent a personal letter to every holder of a NISA account in this country to explain the program. That is 160,000 letters that we sent out to explain it to the farmers. At the request of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the farm organizations we completed a third party review. The results of that have been published. They said very clearly that the proposed program was better than the programs that we had in the past.

I repeat that I am awaiting the signatures of the provinces. As soon as the provincial governments sign it, that program will be there for the producers. I urge the hon. member to get—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Jonquière.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GASOLINE PRICES**

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq is over. The price of crude oil has scarcely increased. Yet in Montreal yesterday all gas stations jacked their prices up 10¢ a litre on the same day, at the same time. Just coincidentally, we have a long weekend coming up.

Will the Minister of Industry agree that the oil and gas companies' behaviour raises a competition issue, and that competition is one of his responsibilities?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Competition Bureau has already looked at the issue of competition in connection with the oil companies several times in recent years.

The matter raised by the hon. member involves retail prices. I would like to point out that retail price hikes are a provincial jurisdiction. The provincial governments must, therefore, be the ones asked to deal with this issue.

[English]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, CF-18 fighters have performed admirably in patrolling Canada's air space and conducting overseas operations. Yesterday the first upgraded CF-18 was delivered.

Could the Minister of National Defence explain what the modernization of the CF-18 fleet means for the Canadian Forces?

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yes, yesterday I was very pleased to receive the first modernized CF-18. This is a major program costing more than \$1 billion but it is a very cost effective way in which to upgrade and modernize our fleet so they can operate very efficiently and seamlessly with our allies. The CF-18s will be able to fly extremely well for many years to come.

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**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the softwood lumber industry in Atlantic Canada has managed to maintain an exemption from countervail charges and from export taxes for years but now the department is sending out mixed signals and the industry is getting very nervous in Atlantic Canada.

Will the government assure the Atlantic Canadian industry that it will maintain its exemption from any export tax that it is now negotiating with the United States?

● (1500)

**Mr. Murray Calder (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the softwood lumber issue, we have always maintained a two track approach to it: our challenge at the WTO, which is going very well, and back at home where we are in consultation with the industry and the provinces to get the best deal on this.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, earlier the Solicitor General said that there were very good reasons for not making the sex offender registry retroactive. Let me assure everyone that there are no reasons ever good enough to justify being brutally attacked and killed by sex offenders who could and should have their names on a list.

Why does the government hide behind the privacy of predators rather than the protection of the public?

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I really fail to see where the Canadian Alliance is coming from on this particular issue. The fact is that when we on this side of the House put legislation forward we believe in ensuring that all the safeguards are there for it to stand up to the court system and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

What we are trying to do through the legislation is to provide the police with the tools to do better investigations in terms of sex offenders. We have been asked by the provinces to do that. We have been asked by the territories to do that. We have been asked by the police forces to do that. The government is doing it.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on May 5, the Colombian army launched a military operation to free the hostages being held by FARC, an operation that ended tragically with the assassination of 10 hostages.

The President of Columbia's approach is seriously jeopardizing the lives of hostages, including Ingrid Betancourt.

Does the Minister of Foreign Affairs plan on intervening with the Government of Columbia to obtain the assurance that negotiations will be favoured over military operations, which endanger the lives of the hostages?

**Hon. Bill Graham (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important issue for us. We have had regular contact with the Colombian government on this issue and have asked it to intervene, to negotiate with FARC and other rebels in Columbia.

This is a very tense and very difficult situation. The Colombian government assures us that it is working with the United Nations. We are always there to work toward finding a solution to a problem that is threatening the lives of several people.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. John Reynolds (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government House leader the business for tomorrow. The House, of course, will then recess, the members will go home to work very hard for seven days in their constituencies and then we will be coming back. Could he tell us the work that he has planned for the week we return?

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will continue with the opposition supply day motion that we commenced this morning.

Tomorrow we will resume the debate on Bill C-28, the budget implementation bill. This would be followed by Bill C-31, the pension bill of certain veterans and members of the RCMP. If and when this is completed, hopefully tomorrow, we would then resume consideration of Bill C-36, the archives bill, and possibly Bill C-17 on public safety.

Next week, as the hon. leader of the opposition in the House has stated, is a constituency week.

I have designated May 26 as an allotted day, although we are willing to have further conversations about that this afternoon.

#### Supply

On Tuesday, May 27, if Bill C-28 has not already been disposed of, we would at that point have to return to it. We would then turn to Bill C-25, the public service bill, followed by business not yet completed from this week.

This is the program at this juncture.

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#### POINTS OF ORDER

##### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Hon. Stephen Owen (Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In a question during question period the hon. member for Skeena made reference to the softwood lumber community adjustment initiative as being \$110 million for the Province of British Columbia.

The national program announced earlier by the Minister of Natural Resources is actually for over \$340 million for the country, \$110 million of which is for softwood adjustment across the country. Somewhat over 50% of that would be available for community adjustment in British Columbia.

• (1505)

**The Speaker:** I am sure the House appreciates the clarification offered by the minister of state but I do not think it was a point of order he was raising. It sounded like—

**An hon. member:** a footnote.

**The Speaker:** I would not call it a footnote, but a clarification.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS, NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Calgary Centre, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am not rising to clarify or elaborate on my question of earlier today.

I had the opportunity this morning to attend at the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources, where the bill under consideration would alter the rights of Canada's first nations and the relationship with the Crown. It was an interesting meeting that ended rather abruptly.

Mr. Speaker, the transcript from the committee is not yet available to me but I want to reserve my right to raise both a question of privilege and a point of order with the Speaker when the records of the committee do become available.

**The Speaker:** I am sure there are reservations right, left and centre. The right hon. member certainly is entitled to reserve rights. I am not sure what the point of it is but if we need to hear from him later, I am sure we will and we will all look forward to it.

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#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

#### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—UNITED STATES MISSILE DEFENCE PLAN

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

*Supply*

**Hon. John McCallum (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Yukon.

[*Translation*]

As I begin, let me say that I believe this is a very important issue for Canada. I am pleased that we have the opportunity to debate it today. However, I would like to make it clear just where we are in this process.

We are simply discussing the significance of taking part in negotiations.

Many Canadians have already expressed their opinions on this subject. I am pleased that we can discuss it in greater depth today, and I will take this opportunity to explain why our government is planning to participate in negotiations regarding the ballistic missile defence system. It goes without saying that I do not support the motion currently before us.

[*English*]

The U.S. announcement last December confirmed what we have known for some time, that the Americans will deploy a missile defence system. In light of this decision, Canada stepped up discussions with the Americans to try to identify what implications this could have for us.

The most recent talks involving officials were held in Washington in January. For Canada the issue at this point is relatively simple: if missile defence may enhance our security, we should explore it. In fact, we have a duty to keep an open mind about any actions we can take that would better protect our citizens and our territory.

Timing is now a primary consideration, particularly if we want to examine options for having Norad play a prominent role. In my view there are a number of reasons for Canada to consider participating in BMD. By far the most compelling one is to protect Canada and defend North America. Before elaborating on this, I would like to set out some of the facts on what BMD is and what it is not and why it is such a priority for the Americans.

[*Translation*]

Canada, like the United States, believes that weapons of mass destruction and missiles are growing in number and falling into the wrong hands. Moreover, the range and accuracy of these missiles are constantly increasing.

Thus, there is an emerging threat against which the United States has decided to protect itself.

[*English*]

For the Americans, BMD has moved beyond the controversy that characterized it in the past. In fact, it has received wide bipartisan support. They know how much the world has changed and they are well aware of the new threats they face.

They also understand that BMD is not star wars of 20 years ago. It is a much more modest system designed to defend against a limited ballistic missile attack. For now the system will use satellites and radars to detect missile launches, with interceptors launched from U.S. territory or U.S. ships.

In 2004 there will initially be six interceptors, followed by 14 more land based interceptors over the next year or so. There will also be up to 20 sea based interceptors. It is not, however, the tens of thousands envisaged under star wars, which was aimed at defending against a massive Soviet missile assault.

Another reason that the Americans are more supportive of this initiative is they recognize that the strategic environment has changed. As we know, Russia does not perceive BMD as a direct threat. My colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs spent some time earlier today going into some detail on the changing geopolitical situation.

● (1510)

[*Translation*]

The United States has also shown great openness by approaching its friends and allies on the subject of ballistic missile defence, including Russia.

This is an issue which is gaining more and more support among the allies; some of them have designed their own programs to meet their own needs.

The issue has been studied very seriously by NATO. At the Prague summit last November, the NATO heads of state agreed to broaden their examination of the issue. That is why NATO has begun a new study on antimissile defence, in order to examine various options to protect people and territories against the whole range of threats related to missiles.

[*English*]

As I said, there is an increasing threat and the Americans will deploy a missile defence system in any event. Now it is up to us to consider whether it is in our best interest to explore the issue further through negotiations.

Specifically, what we have to consider is would this system help us to defend Canada and Canadians, help us to defend North America, and maintain our influence and protect our sovereignty.

While the ballistic missile threat to Canada itself may not seem to be high at the moment, it will become greater as the range and accuracy of missiles armed with weapons of mass destruction increase and as they proliferate. As we have seen, the rapidity with which potential threats can emerge, even with tight non-proliferation controls, is often surprising.

Ballistic missile defence could therefore be considered akin to an insurance policy against future threats. It could also be a defence against errant missiles aimed at the U.S. that could end up hitting Canada, as well as unauthorized and accidental launches.

As members know, one of our defence missions is to cooperate with the United States in the defence of North America. In this regard, negotiating on BMD would be consistent with our cooperation to date.



*Supply**[Translation]*

I will repeat here what I said when I announced the creation of the Canada-U.S. Joint Planning Group within NORAD. To envisage this option would mean real progress in the evolution of our defence relationship with the United States and in our joint efforts to adapt to the new security environment.

*[English]*

Canada has been a full partner with the U.S. in the defence of North America for over 60 years. It could be argued that ballistic missile defence would be a natural extension of this partnership.

There are also some other practical bilateral reasons that would underlie such negotiations. Canadian participation could build on the role of Norad. We would want to explore the option of having command and control for BMD reassigned from Northcom to Norad which, from our perspective, is the main pillar of the North American defence relationship. If we are not partners in BMD, we may not have access to sensitive information and intelligence to the extent we do now.

In addition to enhancing our security, which in my view would be the most compelling reason to participate, there are some other important considerations.

Participating in BMD could provide some degree of Canadian influence over the development and functioning of the system. It would give Canada a say in the defence of its territory. The alternative could allow the U.S. to make all the choices concerning the missile defence of the continent on its own with implications for our sovereignty.

- (1515)

*[Translation]*

It should be noted that Canada is not the only country studying this issue. Some NATO countries and other allies may soon announce their intention to play a part in the ballistic missile defence.

The United Kingdom, in fact, has already agreed to modernize its radar installation at Fylingdales, and Denmark has just announced that it will permit the United States to modernize a radar station at Thule.

*[English]*

In conclusion, it is for all of these reasons that we should consider entering into negotiations with the United States. Let me be clear on this point: these negotiations would not mean that we have agreed in advance to take part in missile defence.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

*[English]*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Hon. Don Boudria (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there

have been consultations among all parties and I would like to put before the House a motion for travel authorization. There was all party consultation on it. This was initially a two part motion, but one part has been removed because there was only unanimous agreement for the first part. That is the only part I am putting before the House right now. I mention that so everyone is clear.

I move:

That, in relation to its comprehensive study on a National Identity Card and review of the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, six (6) members of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration be authorized to travel to London, Berlin, Warsaw, Rome, Athens and Madrid from June 21 to July 6, 2003 and that the necessary staff do accompany the Committee.

And those are not the original dates.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

*[English]*

### SUPPLY

#### ALLOTTED DAY—UNITED STATES MISSILE DEFENCE PLAN

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Lakeland, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the minister make his comments and all of a sudden it sounds as if the government is on side with missile defence.

We have been encouraging the government for three years to say to our American friends and neighbours that this sounds like an interesting idea because it will provide security for Canada and that we will sit down and work something out. The government has responded to that by making statements like the one from the foreign affairs minister that terrorists are not going to get their hands on ballistic missiles except in James Bond movies and things like that. The government has said that we do not need it, that we are being alarmists in raising the issue of a possible ballistic missile attack. It has said that we are just catering to the Americans and that anything they say we want to go along with. That has been the government's defence over the past three years.

Now the government is saying that conditions have changed, but it has not given one example of what condition has changed in the last few years. Before September 11 the terrorist problem was well known. That was no surprise. It was widely debated around the world. I attended meetings for six years at the OECD where we discussed the terrorist threat. That is not new.

What has changed all of a sudden to make the government come on side with what the Canadian Alliance has been proposing for three years? Why did the government wait three years? Now the benefit to this country will be less than it otherwise would have been and the harm to our relationship will be greater than what it would have been.

*Supply*

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, in the first place I would like to clarify that the government is not on side with missile defence at this time. The government has not taken a decision, but the government is considering the possibility of entering into discussions or negotiations with the United States.

As for the hon. member's question as to whether anything at all has changed in the last three years, I suggest he must have been asleep if he has not noticed. The whole geopolitical context has changed in ways that were ably explained earlier by my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs and which a number of us have been talking about for some considerable time.

For example, three years ago the anti-ballistic missile treaty was still in place and many believed that the ballistic missile defence system would cause an arms race. Since that time, that situation has evolved to the point, as we have discussed many times, that Russia no longer considers that the system is destabilizing. That is just one example of many things that have changed.

I can only conclude that the Canadian Alliance must have its head in the sand if it thinks that nothing at all has changed in the last three years. Things have changed to the point where the Democratic Party in the United States is solidly on side, which was not the case before, as evidenced by the fact that it voted in the senate 97 to 3 in favour of ballistic missile defence in 1999.

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister. Why would he want to enter into negotiations at this time?

My colleague raised this question, but I have a theory and I would like the minister to tell me if it makes any sense at all. Could it be that he is afraid that the Americans are going to tell him, "Either you negotiate with us or you have no place in NORAD any more"?

Debris are also a cause for concern. In fact, a study by the Department of National Defence emphasized the danger of debris. To ensure that debris do not come down on Canada, would the minister not consider positioning missile interceptors above the ice cap, in the High Arctic?

Are these two concerns—exclusion from NORAD and the need to prevent debris from coming down on Canada, hence the need to intercept above the ice cap—not his main reasons for wanting to enter into negotiations with the United States?

**Hon. John McCallum:** Mr. Speaker, as I explained, there are several reasons for the government to consider entering into negotiations.

The first one I mentioned was the security of Canadians, the public at large, and of Canadian territory. The member failed to mention it, but I think it is important.

He also spoke of the binational defence of the continent, which we have been ensuring since 1940 at least. Canada has been participating in a real way in continental defence. One might argue that continuing in that role, perhaps with NORAD, is another good reason to enter into negotiations with the Americans.

So, there are several reasons to want to do so. Another one is to have access to more information. The member raised the question of debris. If we start discussions with the Americans, we may have more information on that subject, among others.

[*English*]

**Mr. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, like many others, I have had a lot of information and input on this topic, especially as I am the chair of the foreign affairs caucus. I will try to present some of the points I have heard from each side.

Unfortunately, I have not been here for much of the debate today, so I will be repeating points. However, to ensure that some points are not missed, I will try to mention them now and if we get a chance to debate this matter again, I hope to get more of my points registered.

I listened, with a lot of respect, to those people during this and other debates who presented viewpoints on the benefits to Canada of either staying in the defence plan or not participating. It shows that they have looked at both sides of the situation. There are benefits of joining and benefits of not joining the system. It is probably the reason why my constituents have approached me from both sides of this issue. Some think there are greater benefits to Canada if we join. Others some think we should not join. There was even one demonstration to that effect in Whitehorse.

There are a number of things upon which everyone is in agreement. First, we need more information. The member who just spoke mentioned the technical application of the system. On our side of the House, it has nothing to do with our decision on Iraq, of which we were all supportive. The decision on whether we should join will be made by determining what is most important for the defence of Canada.

Many of us, including myself, agree that whether we join the program or not, we should enhance and continue our efforts with full vigour on multilateralism. We are involved in all sorts of forums such as non-proliferation and efforts toward disarmament. Those are very important contributions to the world scene. We should continue those with full vigour.

People should note that whatever way we decide to go, the proponents of joining or not joining suggest it will affect our sovereignty. If we were to become involved in such a system, the proponents for not joining suggest that the larger partner would be controlling our sovereignty. The proponents for joining say that we should have some control over the defence of our skies, not just leave it to another nation, to maintain our sovereignty. We should have more influence on whether the Americans weaponize space.

It is pretty clear to everyone that the Americans will proceed. In fact they have already started with the first stage, which is a limited stage of a few ground missiles and some missiles from ships. The Americans have started and they will proceed. Our decision will be based on the scenario that they will go ahead and on the advantages or disadvantages to Canada to be involved. In the latter stages of their plans they have included the possibility of the weaponization of space. Our decision to be involved or not to be involved depends on how we think we can influence those decisions most. Can we influence them more from inside the tent as a part of the system in the initial stages which are not related to space? Or, if we are not involved at all, will we have more influence to prevent them from weaponizing space? There are people who want to prevent the Americans from weaponizing space, including many Canadians. In other words, will we have more influence outside the tent?

Most people agree that Norad has been quite a successful system to date. No one has said to me that the system does not work or is not a benefit to Canada.

Right now we are talking about the initial system of maybe 14 to 16 land based missiles at Fort Greely Alaska, and perhaps a few others.

• (1525)

In theory, and hopefully it will never get to this, if someone were to launch missiles intentionally or by accident, they would explode high in the atmosphere, 100 to 200 kilometres, and would most likely be pulverized to powder or into small pieces, most of which would burn up on re-entry into the atmosphere. Anyone who I have spoken to feels that would be preferable to an atomic bomb or a biological bomb landing in their community or city.

There are over 20 nations in the world that have missiles and over 20 nations that have the capability to add nuclear warheads or biological or chemical warheads to these missiles. The recent interception of a ship in Yemen showed that such incidences and such threats are out there. As has happened on numerous occasions, it is not uncommon for states, which we would consider unbalanced, to support terrorism in various ways or give things to terrorists. Also, missiles have been used in over six conflicts since 1980, so it is not impossible.

Probably there is a two or three month window to decide which part of the American command structure the Americans will put this into, considering they have started already: one where Canada would have some say or involvement, like in Norad, or in U.S. Northcom where we are not involved.

It is also important to note the context it would go into if we were to join. Canada has dozens of military agreements with the United States. Being adjacent to it, being on the same continent, geographically having the same defence problems, challenges and objectives, we have all sorts of agreements and this would just add another one. However there is no invitation from the States at this moment.

My time is running out faster than I would have hoped. I have probably a couple dozen reasons for and against. To try to be balanced, I will present some of the leading ones.

### *Supply*

Remember, this is just a defensive system. It is only to defend Canada. It is clearly not star wars, which was back in Reagan time and was designed to defend us from Russia and hundreds of missiles. Russia is not a threat. It is not to defend against hundreds of missiles. It is in case of an accidental launch or if an unbalanced state launches an attack, and it is only a few missiles. However if we can protect against a few, would an enemy then try to produce more offensive missiles to overcome that?

In the world's view, it could link us to the United States again and therefore it would be hard to maintain our distinct Canadian foreign policy and values, at least visually and perceptually. It could diffuse our efforts toward multilateralism and drain resources which we use in our disarmament campaign and global protection. There are perhaps other things on which the United States and Canada could use their weaponization.

I am presenting points people have brought to me. I am not saying I support all of these points.

One of the major advantages is we always cooperate on intelligence gathering over our skies. We want to know what is happening in our skies. That comes through Norad and there would be a lot more through this new system. For little investment, we would maintain a partnership. We would have technology transfer and would be working in the same system. We would have control over input into the system, into missile trajectories, into who is computerized and how it is defended.

There are those who say we would have more influence on these things being inside the tent and being part of the system, rather than being outside the tent. We would have significant control like we do at Norad. Therefore, we could protect ourselves.

• (1530)

I just spoke to the American ambassador a few minutes ago. In such instances if North Korea sent a missile, it could easily hit Canada instead of the United States, Vancouver instead of Seattle, Toronto instead of New York. They are not always that accurate and this is what people say we should defend against.

I look forward to carrying on with much more input the next time we debate this.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member and I appreciate his remarks. They are very thoughtful. My question is the following.

This need for a missile defence system has been known for some years, as has been discussed in the House. The very facts that the member mentioned have been known in the House for some years. Why now all of a sudden is the government finally grappling with this issue and why is it still being so indecisive?

### Supply

It is not content with having delayed this important issue for several years. It is now saying that it is not really deciding but is going to talk about it. Where is the leadership? What does it say to Canadians and to our neighbours when all we can do is shuffle our feet, drag our heels and make these tentative little baby steps, instead of getting with the program one way or the other, taking a stand and letting everyone know what is going to happen?

• (1535)

**Mr. Larry Bagnell:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is an excellent question. First, what has changed that we would be reacting now instead of before? The member has suggested the need has been known for a long time. There are needs for a lot of things that have been known for a long time, but it does not necessarily mean that we had the priority or the ability to invest in them.

In particular, I was not saying that if we were the United States, and it is not up to us to tell it what to do, we would consider this the most important investment by it. Just like all countries, the Americans have needs for poverty, education and health care. Perhaps there could be other things for this investment.

We are not saying this is the highest priority need, but given the fact that the U.S. has decided to go ahead, there are a number of things that have changed just recently. First, the Americans are going ahead with the project. Now we are being pushed to a decision. As I said, we have two or three months to decide what part it goes into.

Russia and China have reduced their objections to the program. We have had the interception of the ship at Yemen. There are a lot of things that have occurred. Therefore under the scenarios where we have to act, as opposed to being indecisive I would describe our action as thoughtful because we have had very many meetings and we are getting input from both sides. I only put a microcosm of them forward today to show that there are very cogent arguments on both sides of the issue. I think Canadians would like all those arguments viewed and weighed before we made such a serious decision.

**Mrs. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague from Yukon has indicated that some of the things he is saying are not his views, that he is just repeating them. I am getting somewhat of an impression that he supports the process.

As we all go through the information we have, I want to read a little from the information I have. This came out of the United States Space Command, Vision for 2020, General Howell M. Estes, III. It states:

The increasing reliance of US military forces upon space power combined with the explosive proliferation of global space capabilities makes a space vision essential. As stewards for military space, we must be prepared to exploit the advantages of the space medium. This vision serves as a bridge in the evolution of military space into the 21st century and is the standard by which the United States Space Command and its components will measure progress into the future.

It does not sound too hot in my books. The rest of it states:

US Space Command—dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect US interests and investment. Integrating Space Forces into warfighting capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict.

It does not talk about the world or Canada or anyone else and it does not sound like any effort to keep a peaceful world.

**Mr. Larry Bagnell:** Mr. Speaker, that is precisely why I said in the first part of my speech that the United States was pursuing the

weaponization of states as one of its options. What we have to decide over and above the first stage, which is just land based, is whether we can affect those trends that we are against more by being inside the system and being a partner with the United States in the early stage and can we convince it that such steps are not what we are in favour of and not the direction we think would bring peace and security to the world.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel.

I am pleased to take part in this debate initiated by the member for Saint-Jean, a member of the Bloc Québécois.

My feelings are a mix of joy and fear, in expressing my concerns about this motion. The motion asks that this House “urge the government not to take part in the United States’ missile defence plan”.

When people talk about missile defence, I think of my grandsons, who watch the movies from the *Star Wars* series and go on and on about them. Sometimes I sit down with them and ask them, “Is this reality?” It is unbelievable.

What we in the Bloc Québécois want is to talk about this. We know that government members are talking about this together at this time. However, democratically elected members from all of the other parties in Canada are being excluded from this debate that is being held in camera. Several times last week and this week, the Bloc Québécois questioned the Prime Minister of Canada about what is happening and why negotiations were being held, if indeed they were, without Canadians, and elected members in particular, being informed.

The Prime Minister told members of the Bloc Québécois to use their opposition days to have a debate. Let it not be said that opposition members do not heed the Prime Minister’s good suggestions. We moved a motion for the Bloc Québécois’ opposition day.

I do not think the Prime Minister was being serious. If he were happy to have this debate, he would have allowed the motion to be votable. Yesterday, when the member for Saint-Jean asked for the unanimous consent of the House to make the motion votable, the Prime Minister did not even rise to respond. He let the government House leader answer.

There is an old saying we have back home. No one has ever died of ridicule. However, if ridicule did kill, it would certainly have killed the Prime Minister, because right now, he is not really saying what he is thinking. This is serious. Quebeckers do not understand. I do not know if Canadians understand. I think that members from the other parties in Canada will talk to us about it.

*Supply*

Quebeckers do not understand the federal government's sense of urgency here. We supported Canada's decision not to take part in the war in Iraq. I conducted a poll in my riding of Jonquière. Some 85% of my constituents opposed any Canadian participation in the war in Iraq. We supported the government because everyone was consulted.

But this is a new way of proceeding. I would not want the government to give in to the reasoning that developing new nuclear weapons will make the world a safer place. There are currently two opposing viewpoints. Is it true that new ways of developing weapons will provide greater security or is it the opposite?

The debate started with the events of September 11, 2001, in the United States. I also believe that a Pandora's box is being opened with this American missile defence plan. It would be normal for the members of the House, who represent the people, to ask them if they agree or not with what the members would find out and that could be debated frankly. They could be consulted.

That way, the Prime Minister of Canada could say that the majority of Canadians and Quebeckers agree with his position. But no, everything is being done behind closed doors.

• (1540)

I am very surprised at the statement by the Minister of National Defence. He appears to be in favour of this decision. That is odd. How can he be in favour when he also says that we are just at the preliminary stages, that we do not know?

There is a lot of money involved here. It is said that missile defence would cost a minimum \$60 billion to \$100 billion, in U.S. dollars. This is not peanuts.

If the government is involved in the discussions but does not know what is going on, because the Americans are the ones who are going to take the lead in this issue, what will happen when it wants to pull out, when it wants to say that it disagrees?

As hon. members are aware, the Bagotville base is in my riding. I have questions as a result. Will there be nuclear weapons on these bases? My area is in northern Quebec, so a lot closer to the North Pole than the South Pole. So what is the position, as a NORAD member? Will it remain within NORAD? Will there be changes in my area, in my riding, as far as nuclear weapons are concerned?

As hon. members will recall, from the days of the debate on importing MOX from European countries, people in my area were against it. I would like them to know we are all civilized people here. We are going to participate in the debate, examine what it is all about, and then make informed decisions. I do not think, however, judging by this government's actions, that there is any openness for a debate that would allow us to tell our constituents, "This is going to cost the government a lot of money". Yes, the Canadian government will have a say, but what is our involvement? What can we expect from it? What will the cost be? Let us not lose sight either of the issue of fallout, of debris. Where will that all go? What is going to be done to protect us from it?

There are all manner of questions. The greater the secrecy, the greater the feeling of insecurity. Much is made of the need to make people feel more secure in the aftermath of September 11 in the

United States. This government, however, is doing the opposite just now: making people feel less secure.

When we do not know something, we are not receptive to this particular thing. Instead of giving people a feeling of security and telling them what is really going on, the government is keeping them in the dark. It is also keeping parliamentarians in the dark. And when we ask questions, it feigns ignorance. It hides its head in the sand and says that it is none of our business. Strangely enough, all parties in this House were democratically elected by the people they represent.

There is a lot of talk about democracy, about transparency, about all we can do to make people feel secure. People in my riding are always telling me that they are afraid of the unknown.

This plan is bizarre. I do not think that we should be part of it. I support the position of the Bloc Québécois; we should not be part of it. I am feeling insecure and I am making my constituents feel insecure.

Therefore I am asking the government to put everything on the table, to tell us what is really at stake, what the implications are, what we can do, what is going on right now and what it is actually negotiating.

Was the government told, "You refused to join us in the war against Iraq and if you do not join us this time, we will retaliate"? We should never let fear and ignorance influence our decisions. But, right now, these are the only cards that the government is playing. I would ask it to show transparency, accessibility and accountability.

Even though this motion will not be voted on—which I find very sad—I hope that the government will listen to members of the opposition.

• (1545)

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from Jonquière. This is typical of her commitment. She is very involved, very close to her constituents. She is also a fighter and she understands that there could be implications, even in her own riding. I think that she has raised an important issue. We have to recognize that things could be happening in our own communities.

Indeed, when it comes to the plan before us, if the government tells us that it does not want to weaponize of space, it means that antimissile missiles could be launched from ships or aircraft. In her riding, F-18s sometimes take part in operations in the far north to see if Russian aircraft are not coming a bit too close. They have done so before. So they might be asked to play some role.

I know also that she is very committed. I find that the debate that we are having—and few people have talked about this—has to do with a societal choice. The technology being proposed to us—it is not reliable and will be hugely expensive—is characterized by a militaristic and belligerent vision. Is this the government's priority or should we not look instead for a society that would be much more just and based on mutual responsibility?

*Supply*

This would lead to other types of expenditures that would perhaps be more useful. So we have a choice. This is perhaps the reason why the Bloc objects to this technology. It is not only unreliable and costly, but the need for mutual responsibility probably lies elsewhere.

I would like the member to give us briefly her thoughts on this.

• (1550)

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Saint-Jean. His question goes straight to the heart of what a society should be thinking about at a certain point in its evolution.

Yes, this is a social vision. It is a social discussion that we must have for the sake of the future. The future is ever more with us, but we are not a part of it. It worries me. It is true that in my riding we are going to be affected. I remember that at one time there were nuclear weapons at the military base in Bagotville. People were very worried. They got rid of them and sent them somewhere else.

I do believe our society is sufficiently evolved and aware to be able to be fair and just. But this vision is under wraps for now. It is discussed in Liberal back rooms, at cabinet meetings, and in the Liberal caucus. The Prime Minister even told us that all we needed to do was participate in their caucus meeting.

I am proud to be a member of the Bloc Québécois. I am here to advance the cause of Quebec's sovereignty. I am not here for the Liberal Party. I ask the minister to have enough respect for the people I represent to be able to say that it is transparent, that yes, we have a new social vision, but we need to discuss it together.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague has, on numerous occasions, mentioned the somewhat secretive way in which the government has acted about Canada's future participation in the missile defence system. I would like her comments on this.

Today, the debate addresses whether Canada should participate in this American plan or not. Yet, the Canadian government has not waited for Parliament to vote. The government neither waited nor even permitted the House to vote on this question since it refused consent for the motion be votable.

However, by January 2003, it had already sent a Canadian delegation of military personnel and diplomats to the U.S. to begin discussions on Canada's possible participation. Does the hon. member not consider the government's behaviour in this matter to be unacceptable and high-handed? It is completely sidestepping the House of Commons to hold discussions directly with the Americans.

**Ms. Jocelyne Girard-Bujold:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for Rosemont—Petite-Patrie for his question. Obviously, I will not have enough time to give a complete answer.

In this day and age, information is readily available 24 hours a day. So, everyone knows what the government is doing, like when the government negotiates with the Americans. But the strange thing is that it sent people to negotiate in the U.S. without informing the duly elected members of Parliament.

Luckily no one has ever died of ridicule. Otherwise, there would be no more government and no more Liberal Party in the House.

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague, the member for Jonquière, for her excellent speech and for her realistic portrayal of the Liberal Party of Canada.

I would also like to thank my colleague, the member for Saint-Jean, who has worked very hard to bring this debate to the House today. The men and women across Canada and Quebec who are following this debate do not understand why we cannot discuss a certain subject.

Is this one such subject? We shall see; it does not augur well. This illustrates just how the Liberal Party politicizes all debate in the House.

The debate started with a question from the leader of the Bloc Québécois, the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, on Wednesday May 7. I will read the question so people can follow. He said:

—while the government is leaving parliamentarians and citizens completely in the dark when it comes to the American missile defence shield, the Prime Minister is already talking about the need to negotiate the terms of the shield with the Bush administration.

Before deciding and negotiating, will the Prime Minister acknowledge that the government has a responsibility to explain its position to the country and to debate the details of the missile defence shield project in the House?

The question was clear. The leader of the Bloc Québécois was asking the Prime Minister if he was going to tell Canadians what his position was on the issue of the missile defence shield.

The Prime Minister's answer was the following, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would like there to be a debate on the issue, that would be just fine with us. There are opposition days that are specifically designed to discuss this type of problem. We are in the process of discussing it within our party and our government, and we would be very happy, if the opposition deems it important enough, to use one of their days to debate it in the House. The ball is in the member's court.

That is already recognition of the work accomplished by the opposition. The Prime Minister said, and I quote him again:

We are in the process of discussing it within our party and our government—

He did not go to the public or to anyone with that, only to his Liberal friends. And he told the opposition that, if it wanted the public informed, all it had to do was to make it the topic of an opposition day. We did. We asked for an opposition day and got it, and we have made it our topic of discussion. The hon. member for Saint-Jean has put the motion forward, and this is where we are at today. We have set out our recommendation.

Our motion is being debated. It reads as follows:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

That is pretty simple. The motion before the House should at least be votable. Yesterday, the hon. member for Saint-Jean asked the government whether it would agree, with unanimous consent, not only to debate the motion but also to vote on it. We are all elected members representing the people in our ridings. As parliamentarians, since we are speaking on behalf of our constituents, the men and women whom we represent, it would have been logical that we vote on this today.

But no. The government decided that there would be no vote, that this is not an important enough issue. We can debate, but we cannot have a vote. Yet the Prime Minister himself suggested we bring the issue to the House for debate. He would not do it. He had discussions behind closed doors, with Liberal members, not Liberal supporters, only cabinet members. That was the choice.

So, today, we are debating this motion on which we cannot vote. I want those listening to know that we will not get to vote and find out where each member stands on an issue as important as not taking part in the United States' missile defence plan.

Our recommendation follows a certain logic. The Bloc Quebecois did not just wake up one morning and say, "Today, we are against missile defence". A House committee has issued a unanimous report. The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the House of Commons has addressed the missile defence issue. The critics for all the parties, the most competent in each party to understand the issue, met several times, called witnesses, made recommendations, and issued a unanimous report. One of the recommendations was as follows, Recommendation No. 12:

The government should not make any decision concerning the anti-missile defence systems being developed in the United States, because the technology has not yet been proven and the details on deployment are not yet known. It should, however, continue to monitor developments in the program in conjunction with the Government of the United States and continue to oppose the weaponization of space.

• (1555)

That was a unanimous recommendation, so why are we discussing this question today in the House, moving:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

Because the situation that has changed within the Liberal Party of Canada. It has changed since the report was released by the House committee. The Liberal members who were on that committee had given their unanimous support, but the situation has changed because the Government of Canada is at the mercy of the Americans.

Yet the situation was clear. Since September 11, 2001, there has been a war against terrorism. Bills were passed here in this House. What we want to attack is terrorism, not other nations. It is the Americans who decided to attack other nations. It was their choice to go to war in Iraq.

The people of Quebec and a majority of Canadians have told the government they did not want to take part in this unilateral war the United States was waging on Iraq. That is a clear position. The Americans got the message.

Why did we take that position? Because we, in Quebec, for instance, are a peace-loving people. We are against terrorism. We will do everything in our power to eradicate terrorism from Quebec and Canada, but we will not condone attacks on other peoples around the world. That position is simple enough. That is the reality. That is what the government had to explain to the Americans, that the Quebecers and Canadians are essentially peace-loving people.

That was the reality. It has not changed, and it was the same in the report of the standing committee mandated to look into the question of missile defence systems. We are a peace-loving people. The United States have made a different choice.

### *Supply*

In this respect, I will give an overview of the latest developments concerning the missile defence system. That is the reality and that is why we are discussing this motion now.

On December 17, 2002, the President of the United States announced that the fielding of missile defence capabilities was beginning, with the first 10 interceptor rockets to be put in place within two years, to protect the United States against a potential attack by a rogue state like North Korea or by terrorists. President Bush's news release read, and I quote, "—the United States will take every measure necessary to protect our citizens against what is perhaps the greatest danger of all—the catastrophic harm that may result from hostile states or terrorist groups armed with weapons of mass destruction, and the means to deliver them".

To the best of my knowledge, evidence has yet to be found, even in Iraq, of the existence of weapons of mass destruction. The American decision to attack was based on the assumption that these people had weapons of mass destruction, but none were found.

This is what Quebecers and many Canadians are concerned about. If we get involved with the Americans again, they will demonstrate their strength towards other nations. This is not what Quebecers want. We are a fundamentally peaceful people. We want to be able to guarantee our children and grandchildren that they will be safe on this planet.

We do not want to get involved in the American approach, especially when a report of a standing committee of the House of Commons tells us that it is too early, that we must not get involved in this because there is still room for improvement. I just read the recommendation a few minutes ago.

So why did the government change its mind? It is because it wants to try to please our big businesses in Canada who may think that they lost some money in terms of economic relations with the Americans since the war in Iraq.

• (1600)

I was reading recently that things are getting better. Economic relations and trade are going very well. Why is that? They will always go well, because we are a neighbouring country.

Because we are a neighbour, this does not mean that we have to shamelessly follow the United States if they decided to fight against all the people on earth. We have a right to tell the Americans, "Yes, we are ready, we are able to do business with you. The only thing that you have to understand is that we are a peaceful people. Quebecers and Canadians are peaceful and we will never support you when you want to set up, as you are doing now, an antimissile system that could upset the balance of the planet".

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I think that my colleague made a brilliant speech on this government's change of direction. He also raised a basic concept of Quebec society to which I want to return, namely pacifism.

### Supply

It is true that Quebeckers are pacifists. In fact, the largest demonstrations in favour of peace and in favour of Canada's non-participation in the war against Iraq took place in Montreal. This had repercussions everywhere, even in schools, where we are not usually invited.

I received several invitations from teachers to meet with young students, even at the elementary level, to listen to the messages and see the drawings that they wanted to send the Prime Minister when he made the decision not to go to Iraq.

I want to return to pacifism because it is a choice that was made by Quebec society. We have heard a lot about societal choice since this morning. I would like my colleague to elaborate on this subject.

It seems to me that being a pacifist means being in favour of a better world built on solidarity and mutual cooperation, whereas the plan being debated here has nothing to do with pacifism and solidarity. It is an attempt at invulnerability by a power, which may make it even more categorical.

I think that Quebeckers have made up their minds on this issue, but I would like my colleague to elaborate on this and tell me if he shares my view on the peaceful nature of Quebeckers.

• (1605)

**Mr. Mario Laframboise:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Saint-Jean. Yes, especially since president Bush is not even hiding his intentions.

On May 23, 2000, in a speech that he made with General Colin Powell by his side, he explained very well—and reporters summarized it—the ideology and new philosophy of the Americans. They said that this strategy:

—is based on the absolute superiority that the United States has acquired in all defence sectors... Its supporters conclude that it is in the Americans' interest to turn away from notions of mutual deterrence and parity... According to them, we have to reduce nuclear arsenals to the maximum... The United States' sole interest is to strike and to arm itself.

This is a fact. We cannot, as a peaceful people, as Quebeckers, follow the Americans. It is simple. They are our neighbours and they have a philosophy that is different from ours. This is quite simple to understand.

It is not that we are against the Americans. It is just that, deep down, in our hearts and souls, we believe that it would be easier to have peace if we did not arm ourselves with deterrents, as the Americans want to do with the space shield. This is quite simple, this is not so difficult to understand.

The Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs recommended that we say no, it is too dangerous right now. And the government has decided, for all sorts of other reasons, that Canadians and Quebeckers are fundamentally pacifists.

[*English*]

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking our colleague, the member for Saint-Jean, for the opportunity of having this debate. At the same time, I would like to thank, from the civil society outside the House, John Polanyi and Jeffrey Simpson for their contribution to this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Oakville. I will cover three items: Norad, the weaponization of space and the North American security theme.

Members must have heard the idea put forward by some that the issue of the missile defence system is a natural extension of the Norad agreement. This view has been propounded by many who have spoken inside and outside the House.

It seems to me that this notion is historically incorrect. We had Norad for very good reasons. When we had two super powers, Canada was sandwiched in between and it was therefore natural for Canada to seek the protection of the Norad umbrella during the cold war and tensions between the two super powers.

That situation no longer exists and Norad is dying, if it is not already dead. The question therefore arises, why should we continue to believe that there is room for the continuation of Norad if its *raison d'être* is no longer there? We now have one super power and a situation which is completely different in terms of the relationships between nations than the one which existed when the Soviet Union was around. The notion of Norad is the wrong idea to invoke as a reason for entering the missile system as a logical next step.

The next item is one that has been raised in some discussions before this debate, and that is the possibility of the weaponization of space. There are some people who say that this is unlikely. However, we have heard some evidence from discussions that have taken place before certain committees in Washington that weaponization of space, even if it is not envisaged in the near and immediate future, is a strong possibility 10 or 20 years from now, or later on, when the technology would be there. Or, when, perish the thought, the funds might be available and when the view will emerge that we have to do that for technological, military and other reasons.

In other words, the assurance being given so far to Canada that the missile system that is being proposed would not lead to the weaponization of space should not be taken as an assurance that would give us a sense of confidence.

On the contrary, there are good reasons and a good case can be made for the possibility of weaponization of space to take place eventually at a time that perhaps will emerge with the next generation of parliamentarians and government leaders. We should take that possibility very seriously now rather than shift it as a responsibility on the shoulders of the next wave of responsible people.

Then we come to the notion that I find particularly disturbing, that we should engage in a missile defence system that would protect North America, particularly the U.S.A. and Canada.

• (1610)

This concept means that we would attribute less importance to other continents and to the security of the rest of the globe. This concept leads to the conclusion that we would feel more secure in a fortress North America situation than in a global security system and that we would be better off by being secure as two nations entrenched in a defensive situation in North America against the rest of the world that might wish to attack us. I find that particularly disturbing.



The fact that we would enter the missile system proposed by the U.S., whose motives I do not question and which is a nation that has every reason to engage in any form of protection of its own territory, would mean that our security could be reduced by entering the system because we would attract attention by being part of that system should there ever be some form of attack on North America.

Our security would be greater by not being part of this American defensive system. The logic of that would then lead to the necessity of discussing the possibility of an initiative that would be an alternative to the one that is being proposed, namely the possibility of launching at the United Nations an initiative that would lead to an international convention for the destruction of nuclear weapons, long range missiles and so on. Then we would be talking in terms of global security and not just regional security.

What would be the purpose if we were to engage in a system to protect North America but leave out South America, Europe, Asia or Africa? Certainly we would not achieve that kind of global security which has been on the agenda and has been the purpose of intensive work on the part of government leaders and parliamentarians, and which led to the creation of the Helsinki agreement, the non-proliferation treaty and so on.

The number of initiatives that were initiated before our pages were born in the seventies is remarkable. All of a sudden we are abandoning that important thrust and retreating to North America, and saying that we had better protect ourselves and somehow the rest of the globe can take care of itself.

To conclude, I would like to put forward a number of questions. Where are the weapons of mass destruction that we are afraid of and where are they stored? Where will they really generate from? There is no evidence so far that there is a danger to North America that is visible on the horizon.

Who is the enemy? This is also an important question that we ought to examine. We have heard a lot of theories, but we still do not know who the enemy is. One of the two superpowers has disappeared. It was considered to be the big enemy, but it has evaporated and no one really has taken its place in the form of a government, a state, an army, or a threat by a nation that is threatening other states with its missile system.

• (1615)

The third question is, when will we initiate the kind of multilateral initiative? The missile defence system is a bilateral possibility which I hope Canada will not engage in because once we are engaged in it we will have much weight at the table, as some speakers before me have indicated.

When will we develop an alternative initiative that will be of a multilateral nature that will attempt and endeavour to give the rest of the world, and not just in North America, the sense of security that is needed against this proliferation of arms and the potential missiles that are being waved around to produce this environment of fear and uncertainty about the future?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to tell my Liberal colleague that I have always admired his great

### *Supply*

experience in international relations. He has just delivered a speech that demonstrates his extensive experience.

If I understand his approach correctly, he is a strong believer in multilateralism as a solution to international problems. His position that we cannot defend just North America and let the rest of the world fend for itself is therefore certainly reflective of his way of thinking.

Does he not think that, with this multilateral approach, we should, as a country or as a member of the UN and other international fora, be pressing for a reduction in the world's nuclear arsenal as well as the number of delivery systems? Could I take this further and say that we should be insisting on a reduction in the number of nuclear warheads and delivery systems instead of implementing a missile defence system?

• (1620)

**Hon. Charles Caccia:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Saint-Jean for his kind words.

[*English*]

My competence is not as great as he thinks. I am just talking as another parliamentarian.

I believe in multilateralism. It has served Canada well. We have pursued that through the United Nations quite effectively in the sixties, the seventies and the eighties. We are now facing a situation which is so difficult and dangerous mostly because of the bellicose policies emanating out of Washington than any other reason. This is why we are facing this kind of dilemma.

If the policies emanating out of Washington were of a multilateral nature, I do not think that we would be facing this problem. We would not be talking about this form of defence where we do not know who the enemy is and what the alternative is. There is no parallel initiative being taken to the United Nations by the United States and I hope that Canada will perhaps take it in order to develop a parallel measure to counter this bellicose atmosphere that will lead eventually to an international convention on the gradual phasing out of the weapons system.

**Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the mover of the motion for putting the question of Canada's participation in national missile defence on the agenda of the House.

We all know that debate has raged in the media, in the corridors of power and in the private caucus meetings of the various political parties. It is time now for the debate to become open to the people of Canada.

Canadian proponents of our participation in the missile defence system are low bridging the concept by saying, first, it is "not a big deal"; second, we are "just considering talking"; third, that our participation would "keep Norad viable"; fourth, that it "won't cost anything"; and, fifth, that it is "merely defensive".

They are characterizing this possibility as a small, benign issue as in the vernacular, no big deal. I disagree. It is a big deal for a variety of reasons. Since the second world war, enlightened nations, including Canada, have worked to establish international treaties and institutions to deal with threats to peace through diplomacy, aid packages and an atmosphere of hope and co-operation.

### *Supply*

We were not always successful, particularly when it came to bloody civil wars, but one could feel some progress.

Terrorism has arisen as a knife to puncture our hope. We are right to be fearful of terrorism but we should not let that knife puncture all the mechanisms we have developed in our search for peace on this planet.

In the past few years there has developed a new way of looking at the world, a world with lists of rogue states, failed states and willing states, good states and evil states; a world of increased military security and decreased human rights, a world with the threat of pre-emptive strikes hanging over our heads. This is a world of no hope, of little optimism and seems to me to be based on fear and paranoia. All this is a massive change in the evolution of our civilization and, to me, represents a large step backward in time, back to an era when might was right.

Unfortunately, the proponent of most of these phrases and of this world view is our potential partner in national missile defence. If we agree to participate, do we not indicate agreement with this fear motivated view of the world? This would be a radical change in Canada's outlook on the world and therefore it is a big deal.

We have been told that Canada is just considering talking to the Americans about it. On the other hand, the American ambassador on television characterized it as "serious negotiations". Surely no one expects that they will hold talks about an advanced, highly technological project without a firm commitment to participate. If we get in by giving a commitment, how do we then honourably get out? If we do not like what we hear halfway through the process, what is our exit strategy?

We have also been told that this project with our participation might keep Norad viable. The American ambassador has implied that if we participate the project would stay within Norad and if we do not that it would go to Northcom. He has implied that but an implication is not a guarantee.

In an age of unmanned aircraft and smart missiles, is Norad the organization of the future or is the United States planning to abandon it and fold MDS into Northcom, and, as a partner in MDS, might Canada not be folded in as well? That would accomplish its stated goal of a continental security perimeter, and possibly integration of our armed forces for land and sea, as well as air and space. Is this in the best interest of Canadians?

Some might say that this is fantasy but all speculation about the future is fantasy and, as parliamentarians, it is our responsibility to consider all possibilities.

●(1625)

We also have been told by the proponents that it will not cost anything. Right now that seems to be true in the monetary sense, but there is a potential piece of legislation circulating in the congress called the missile defence burdensharing act, an act that requires the president to name which countries are protected by MDS and an act which requires the president to seek contributions from those protected nations. This act is on the back burner right now but will it stay there when American citizens realize the state of their economy?

Here are some current facts on that front: 49 of 50 states experienced net job losses last year; the annual deficit is now higher per capita than ours was in 1993; budget plans show no attempt to rectify the situation. Instead they show less money coming in to the treasury because of tax cuts and a massive outflow of expenditures on the military. The media report that there exists over \$30 trillion in unfunded pension liability in the states. Right now the United States has to raise \$1.5 billion a day from foreign sources. This makes the Americans very vulnerable, as they are economically dependent upon the savings of others.

As a Canadian, these economic indicators worry me. I hear a loud warning trumpet heralding a transfer of money into the pockets of the rich through tax cuts and outflow of funding to the military and MDS, and away from health, education and social security. How long will it be before American citizens demand that countries under the umbrella of MDS pay their fair share? Only the very young think that anything in this world is for free.

In addition, the cost is not just calculated in dollars. Travellers know our Canadian passport is welcomed around the world. Canada has a long tradition of peacekeeping and peace seeking. Our history includes such statesmen as Lester Pearson and Lloyd Axworthy, who helped to establish our good reputation around the world. Are we willing to jeopardize it by partnering in a project like MDS? If we give our seal of approval by participating, what would be the long term cost to our reputation?

Proponents of MDS claim that it is not star wars, that it does not include the weaponization of space. Right now that appears to be true, but will it last? How can we trust that to continue when the United States has a new basis for its foreign affairs and defence policy?

This document, called "A New Security Agenda for the United States of America", is based on its self-declared right to conduct pre-emptive strikes or military aggression against any nation that it deems to be a threat. This is a policy based on offence, not defence. How could one possibly keep one section of a military arsenal strictly defensive when the national defence policy is stated in the document as offensive and aggressive?

Another clue to this question of offence or defence can be found in American budget estimates for 2004 which propose spending \$2.5 billion in rebuilding the country's nuclear weapons manufacturing industry. One example is \$320 million to build new plutonium cores for nuclear warheads. Another example is \$135 million to restart the production of tritium, a development seen as the first tangible action which shows a commitment to expanding the nuclear arsenal, not just maintaining it. For those of us concerned about the proliferation of nuclear weapons, these budget estimates are ominous.

If any doubt remains, the United States space command vision statement makes it clear. Its "Vision for 2020" document says that "NMD will evolve into a mix of ground and space sensors and weapons".

The only way to deal with the threat of ballistic missiles is to negotiate disarmament measures that will get rid of them. Canada should work for a global ban on missile flight tests, which are essential for the development of missile technology but are easily detectable by satellite. The way forward lies in supporting international law and implementing a negotiated agreement, such as the non-proliferation treaty.

With all the problems in the world which the international community must urgently address, from the growing gap between rich and poor, a gap which feeds the recruitment of terrorists, to serious environmental degradation which threatens us all, joining in a costly and so far technologically deficient system which might seal interoperability of Canadian military forces with the Americans is not a small matter but a huge question and one that should be explored from every possible angle before a decision is made.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank my colleague for her presentation, which I think was well researched. I want to thank her for bringing new information to this debate. There is the whole issue of the integration of armies should we take part in the missile defence system. It is very interesting.

I also want to tell her that we totally agree with her when she says that we will be caught up in the process. From the moment we sit at the table and say that, if the missile defence system is only ground-based or on ships, we agree, there will be no turning back. It will last a few years, and then it will be time for the space shield. It will be very difficult for us to walk away from the table. I totally agree with her on that.

She raised another interesting point, and that is the cost of the space shield for those countries that will participate. But there is not only the financial cost of Canada's potential participation in the space shield, there is also the integration of armies that could happen at some point. So there is more than the financial cost.

I often ask this question. Here, everyone knows my political views and the colour of my political blood. There is no doubt about the fact that I am a sovereigntist. I think that any attack on Canada's sovereignty is not good for Quebec.

When part of our army is integrated, when we take part in the missile defence system that covers the United States and Canada, we become very vulnerable. We can become the target of blackmail. I believe that this can jeopardize Canada's sovereignty, and it is a sovereigntist who is saying so.

I want to know if my colleague believes that there is a higher price to pay than the financial cost, namely the loss of Canada's sovereignty.

[*English*]

**Ms. Bonnie Brown:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague touches on two or three points.

### *Supply*

On the cost factor, I would like to say that not only might we be expected to help pay our share, but we also have to keep in mind that the very bad economic indicators coming from business journalists in the United States suggest to me that we, whose economy is so integrated with the United States, those people are our best customers and our best trading partners, it worries me about the effects on our economy if their national treasury does not have enough money in it if in fact these huge tax cuts drain it at the same time as they are making massive military expenditures.

It would seem to me that has a very negative effect on our economy and the ability of our people to sell products to a nation which has been characterized by some as not only the world's super power, but essentially the world's super debtor right now.

As to the integration of our army, navy and air force, I raised that only as a possibility. I am not sure that would happen but that would have serious effects on our sovereignty.

I would like to take the questioner back to the basic question. When one is thinking of taking on a partner in any realm, whether it is a military or economic thing, does it not help that the partner has a similar world view? As one Canadian, I reject the fact that any nation or any group of individuals can make a judgment as to who is a rogue, who has failed, who is good, who is evil, et cetera. That is a very negative way of looking at the international community. I prefer a view that gives credit where credit is due, that has international institutions that deal multilaterally with problems that arise and not use these very judgmental phrases when what we really should be seeking is co-operation, not putting others down.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, National Defence.

**Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral (Laval Centre, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in consulting the debates held in this House in recent months, indeed over the past two years, we see that questions relating to security have occupied a predominant place in our deliberations. Although perfectly normal in the present context, what perplexes me is the tack these debates are taking. We need to keep clearly in mind that sometimes there is but a very fine line separating legitimate prevention from paranoia, and that line can be easily crossed if we lose sight of common sense. Ensuring security is not synonymous with increasing existing tensions, which is what may happen if the missile defence system is put in place.

### Supply

In order to understand the various issues raised by this plan, and its consequences, I will start with a brief overview of a few historical facts. After World War II, two superpowers were at loggerheads on the ideological and psychological fronts. This so-called cold war between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. plunged the entire world into an atmosphere of mistrust. At the time, with the known technological advances in the nuclear field, it was clear that each belligerent had the capacity to attack the other and provoke a catastrophe that would have had a terrible outcome.

With the increase in international tension, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, it was inevitable that sophisticated means of defence would develop, such as the antimissile missiles. Their mission was simple: destroy all enemy missiles heading for either of the two great powers or their allies.

This situation led to so much escalation of tension and risk of attacks that in the 1970s, treaties and agreements were signed. One of them was the anti-ballistic missile or ABM treaty, signed in 1972.

The purpose of this treaty was to reduce the number of anti-missile missiles stocked by each of the great powers in order to maintain a certain balance, through a theory with the very reassuring name of "mutually assured destruction". In short, these treaties succeeded in reducing the risks that a nuclear war would break out.

In the 1980s, U.S. President Ronald Reagan renewed the debate on anti-missile missiles with his strategic defense initiative straight out of Hollywood, nicknamed star wars. The objective was ambitious: nothing less than the militarization of space through laser-equipped satellites, or other such futuristic technologies, capable of intercepting nuclear missiles coming from the U.S.S.R. Since the technology was not yet advanced enough to support such a project, star wars faded into oblivion.

More recently, President Clinton brought the issue back to the table by approving the National Missile Defense Act in 1999. In recent months, we have been hearing about President Bush's plan, a sort of modified and updated version of star wars with anti-missile missiles.

All through these events, Canada has always taken the position that it was not appropriate to establish a missile defence plan, particularly because of the risk that it would pose in terms of an arms race.

I must make an aside here, Mr. Speaker. I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Joliette. He is not in front of me and so I forgive him; that is quite unforgivable.

I continue: there is no justification for the missile defence plan, because of the risk it poses in terms of an arms race. We note in passing that such a plan absolutely contravenes the spirit of the ABM treaty. Even if President Bush recently decided to no longer respect that treaty, the American decision does not make this justification less relevant.

In asking the government not to take part in this American missile defence plan, the Bloc Québécois is opposing a renewed nuclear arms race, an inevitable consequence of the current military rhetoric. However, why must we ask the government not to take part, since Canada has always been opposed to missile defence?

• (1640)

There seems to be a significant reversal on the other side of the House. At least, so it seems based on some statements, particularly those by the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Here are a few reasons justifying our position. First, as we mentioned earlier, implementing this kind of plan could cause a renewed arms race, at a time when the United States wants to declare war on everyone it considers too heavily armed.

Already, we know that countries like China, North Korea, Russia, as well as several European Union countries, disapprove of this kind of plan. Each is well aware of the fragile balance in which the world now hangs. A single spark could blow things sky high. Furthermore, if we support the American missile defence plan, should we adopt a similar position if European or Asian countries want to do the same? By agreeing to this plan, we are embarking on a slippery slope, down which we are sure to fall. I cannot vouch for the person taking the first step.

In addition, this is sending the wrong message to countries that are already brandishing the nuclear spectre in their psychological warfare and shows of force. India and Pakistan, which have been in a conflict for many years, could be tempted to intensify pressure on one another, should international tension increase. The consequences for global stability are still unknown and too risky.

One of the justifications for their action is the need the Americans feel to protect themselves against rogue states like North Korea, Iran, Iraq and any other country that could be a potential threat to their security. How do they reconcile renewing the arms race and their barely concealed desire to disarm the planet, or at least any country they consider a threat? The danger with such an aberration is that it fuels the anti-American sentiment that already exists in many parts of the world.

While we must recognize that every state has the right to protect its citizens from threats against them, it is important to know that this system will never guarantee 100% safety. Let us not forget that the events of September 11, 2001, had nothing of a conventional attack and that a missile defence system could not have prevented this tragedy. The same could be said about the threat of biological attacks.

Clearly, the missile defence system will only give the impression of security. However, the costs for the plan will leave much more than an impression. The cost estimates vary between \$60 billion and \$240 billion, in U.S. dollars, of course. Since 1983, more than \$70 billion has already been spent on the initiative. We can just imagine how much this money could have done to reduce the extreme poverty in which hundreds of millions of people live, a situation that provides a fertile breeding ground for terrorism.

*Supply*

In conclusion, it is important to keep in mind that this plan could very well have more adverse effects than benefits. In addition to contributing to a renewal of the arms race, it will provoke anti-western and anti-American sentiment among certain groups that have very little understanding of what is happening on this side of the Atlantic. The Government of Canada must not yield to pressure, it must stand firm. Unfortunately, its determination so far has been far from convincing.

Perhaps these words, from a much celebrated intellectual among the federal Liberals will influence them, and I quote, "I do not recall ever having seen, since I started following politics, a more degrading spectacle than that of all those Liberals who flip-flopped in unison with their leader".

Who was it who dared to utter such a comment, you may wonder? None other than Pierre Elliott Trudeau, in *Cité Libre* in 1963, during the Cuban missile crisis. Perhaps a little soul searching is in order for this government and for a number of its members.

● (1645)

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Laval Centre for her presentation. I know that she is also a very socially committed woman. She is a former nurse, she is very open minded and she is also very knowledgeable on social issues.

I asked this question earlier, but I would like to ask it again to her, because I think that she can easily answer it.

For all of us from Quebec, does the member think that the government's position on the missile defence plan is shared by a large number of Quebecers? Given the pacifist approach of Quebec society, would Quebecers not prefer that money be spent in other areas of society?

Quebeckers all stand together. They support mutual assistance concepts. They do not see their future with a missile defence plan. Given the member's experience in the social area, I would like her to comment on this.

**Ms. Madeleine Dalphond-Guiral:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Saint-Jean is giving me credit for more skills than I have, in fact. He will be very disappointed by what I have to say.

As for the position of Quebecers on war, poverty and collective responsibility, ours is probably a slightly distinct society with its own point of view. In many conflicts, Quebecers always vehemently resisted going to war. Basically, we dislike war. In the end, we prefer discussion, dialogue and compromise.

I think it is fair to say that Quebecers would be infinitely more comfortable with a decision by international organizations where everybody has a right to participate in the debate and express their opinions. This way, we make decisions that not only do not add fuel to the flames, but defuse explosive situations.

As I see it, the U.S. missile defence plan answers the very strong need for the American people to claim to be the strongest. History shows that for thousands of years great empires have always fallen in the end. Basically because of their excesses. The U.S. missile defence plan will go down in history as an attempt to rule the world, but it will be the beginning of the end for the Americans.

● (1650)

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to take part in this debate. I first want to congratulate the hon. member for Saint-Jean on his motion, which reads:

That this House urge the government not to take part in the United States' missile defence plan.

I want to thank him for this motion, because it is an opportunity to hold a debate that the government, unfortunately, did not allow us to have other than on an opposition day. This motion is not a votable one. If the government had been serious here, I know that there would have been unanimous consent to make this a votable motion.

That said, the way in which the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Government in the House are treating this issue shows their lack of respect for Canadians and Quebecers. People are extremely worried about this missile defence plan. They are perhaps much more worried than the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party of Canada realize.

I would not be surprised, over the next few weeks, particularly with regard to the federal Liberal leadership campaign, but also the next federal election, if the missile defence plan were to become a major issue.

I am therefore asking Liberals to be cautious. It is rather paradoxical for a political opponent to do this, but I am doing so in the interests of Canada and Quebec. By making too hasty a decision, the Liberal government, the Liberal party and future Liberal party candidates must not be made to pay the price during the entire election campaign.

As one of them said in *Le Devoir*: "A yes now makes a no more difficult later". So, at best it is leaving itself some leeway, taking the time to think and seeing where things lead. At worst, it is adopting a difficult to defend position that it would probably abandon in the face of concerted opposition from Canadians and Quebecers.

Of course, these are political considerations, but they are extremely important. The Prime Minister understood this very well. No one was fooled by the fact that he made his decision about the war on Iraq during Quebec's election. I do not think that this was the only consideration, but I think it had a strong influence.

It was quite clear that an election campaign with a federal government that supported the American offensive in Iraq would have turned out differently than what we saw in recent weeks, with demonstrations every weekend. I organized demonstrations; I took part in demonstrations; I myself was astonished, and I think that other organizers were also astonished by the response from Quebecers, by their call for peace, weekend after weekend.

### *Supply*

Once again, I would like to thank the member for Saint-Jean for giving us this opportunity to discuss this extremely important issue. However I am disappointed that the government did not consider the issue serious enough to organize a real debate and allow a vote.

I hope that this Bloc Québécois opposition day will allow the Liberals, the Prime Minister and the cabinet to reflect on the impact of support for the American proposal.

First, I think it has been mentioned—and I am no expert on these issues—but clearly observers and experts in this area have called into question the proposed technology, even the latest technology, in Mr. Bush's plan. So, we would be getting involved in something that might never come to pass because the technology will not work, even as modified by the American administration.

Then, and this was also mentioned, there are the astronomical costs: \$60 billion to \$120 billion. This money could easily be used for other purposes. The member for Laval Centre just mentioned some of these purposes. I am always surprised to see how our governments, that of Canada, but especially the Government of the United States, are able to come up with staggering amounts of money for war and military spending, yet they are unable to find money for international aid. That is particularly true of Canada. Unfortunately, it is also true of the United States, which is the most powerful country in the world.

How is it—I cannot wrap my mind around this one—that a government can consider a project that will cost between \$60 billion and \$120 billion to create a missile defence system, the effectiveness of which is far from having been proven, when it cannot find a few billion dollars for international aid at a time when the gap between northern and southern societies is growing, or even the gap within our own societies?

• (1655)

We have seen from the census and the figures released yesterday that the gap is increasing between the top 10% of our society and the bottom 10%.

I cannot accept priority being given to a plan that will take away billions of dollars, not only from the U.S. Treasury, but also from the Canadian consolidated revenue fund, when the priorities lie elsewhere, for example the fight against poverty, application of the Kyoto protocol, the search for solutions to the fiscal imbalance between the federal government and the provinces. There are other priorities far closer to Canadians than this missile defence plan.

As I have said, its usefulness will be dubious. I am sure, as all opposition members have pointed out, that the existence of such a defence system would never have stopped the September 11 attacks nor will it ever stop terrorists who use more conventional weapons. If Al Qaeda had had the means that some even secondary powers possess, it would not have needed to hijack planes to do what it did. It would have had weapons to attack American interests in another way. We do not know what means they will make use of in future to put across their point of view via methods all of us here oppose.

Not only is it an unwieldy and extremely costly technology, but it is also not up to the challenges identified even by the Americans in their fight against terrorism.

Looking at the existing countries, even those labelled rogue states, what can the Americans be so frightened of? The cold war is over, the great European economic powers are certainly not a threat. The former U.S.S.R., that is Russia, is facing terrible problems. China too is having a lot of problems. We have seen that with the SARS epidemic, which has shown the world the real problems their system is experiencing. It is certainly not North Korea, despite its showy foreign policy, which frightens no one. In this matter, it is playing along with the U.S. authorities. So let no one try to convince us that North Korea, Syria or the Iraq of yesterday are powers that represent a real threat to the Americans.

We must not let ourselves be taken in. As has been said, this is a strategy of the U.S. government, of President Bush, to impose U.S. authority on the world, to pass itself off as the world's policeman. This we cannot accept. The Canadian government has never accepted that in the past, and Quebeckers will not accept it either.

We must not have any illusions. It is clear from the pre-emptive attack on Iraq. It is clear from the decision of the U.S. government and the coalition to rebuild Iraq, with the UN almost outside the process instead of occupying a central role. In supporting this plan, we are helping to marginalize the United Nations, and all multilateral activity in the world, particularly in the west.

Furthermore, it is part of an industrial strategy. I find that the Canadian government is being incredibly naive. It is clear that all of national defence and all the spending on the missile defence plan will not be covered by the WTO or the FTAA.

We already know that there are American farmers whose fields are irrigated by the U.S. army. That is not a subsidy because it is not covered by international treaties on international trade.

The \$60 to \$120 billion that will be spent will be spent outside multilateral trade treaties. And who will pay for all that? In large part, it will be the Canadian economy.

This is nothing new. The Americans have always wanted to use the conquest of space and the military-industrial complex to develop their civilian industries.

I will conclude by saying that this might isolate Canada from the main partners with whom we agree on a multilateral approach to international trade. Therefore, I call upon the Prime Minister, the cabinet and the government to demonstrate good old common sense and refuse to go along with this plan, as the hon. member for Saint-Jean—whom I congratulate once more—asks in his motion.

• (1700)

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have always admired the member for Joliette for his agile mind, an example of which he has just given us.

My colleagues will recall that I had the privilege, as a member of a great labour confederation in Quebec, the CSN, to rub shoulders with the member for Joliette. Besides, at that time, we also had a similar debate, maybe on another subject than the space shield.

*Supply*

I also know that the member is a quite well-known economist. I remember that, at that time, we pointed out that investments, in defence for example, had fewer spinoffs than other types of investment.

I believe that, at the time, the ratio was one dollar for seven dollars of economic spinoffs, on non-military investments, and almost no spinoffs for investments in national defence. I would like to hear what the member has to say about that.

**Mr. Pierre Paquette:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Saint-Jean for his question, because I was unable to get to the last part of my speech.

As he mentioned, in this debate that is just beginning on the missile defence system, some will emphasize the economic spinoffs from the money spent on the system, especially for the aerospace industry, which is concentrated in the Montreal area, to a large extent.

We could be parochial and say that we should jump on board because the Montreal area will benefit a great deal. But if we do join the missile defence plan, the Americans will not guarantee any economic benefits unless we invest also. We will be asked to spend billions on this.

As the hon. member for Saint-Jean mentioned, these billions of dollars will have far fewer spinoffs and much less of a multiplying effect than if we spend them on social housing, our \$5-a-day day care system in Quebec, public transit, implementation of the Kyoto protocol—since we have projects to harness renewable energies like the wind—and on education or health.

Thus, from a strictly economic perspective, it is better for Canadians and Quebecers to invest in these types of economies, in these types of industries, services or products, than to invest in this plan.

I remind the House that even down the road, presuming that we say no to the Americans—I repeat that I hope we will do so—if we do not invest money in the missile defence plan, we will still get spinoffs. We must keep in mind that 40% of trade between Canada and the United States is within firms. This is called intrafirm trade.

For example, if an American firm that has a contract with the Pentagon concerning the missile defence plan has a subcontractor or owns a business in Canada, and if this business is more productive and better able to build part of the components required, this firm will not do without because the Canadian government and the people of Quebec and Canada have said no to the plan. Obviously, business interests will prevail.

I will conclude by saying that it would be very much to our advantage to say no to President Bush. We are not saying no to the American people, because I am convinced that many Americans are concerned and oppose this plan. But, at the same time, we have nothing to fear in terms of economic spinoffs. I think that we could choose our investments. In any case, if it is in the interests of American firms operating in Canada to use their subsidiaries in Canada and Quebec, I am convinced that they will do so.

[English]

**Mr. David Pratt (Nepean—Carleton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to participate in this debate. I have listened with great interest to some of the previous speakers. I am not referring specifically to the previous speaker, but to listen to some of the comments and arguments one would think that somehow or other the United States has morphed into Canada's evil twin, that it has evil nefarious intentions throughout the world. This does not sound to me like the country that is right next to us and which is our best ally and trading partner. It does not sound to me like the country right next to us where we have so many business contacts, social contacts and family contacts.

It leaves me a little confused to say the least in terms of some of the motives that have been attributed to the United States through the course of this debate. We have heard a lot of what I would describe as cold war rhetoric, rhetoric that really fails to appreciate the current situation in terms of where we are at strategically today, post 9/11, where the world has evolved to since the end of the cold war.

We know that there is a threat. There is clearly in my view a threat out there and it is posed by two things principally. It is posed by cell based terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. I do not have to go into the various incidents that have occurred internationally over the last number of years, but I could enumerate some of them: the bombing of the USS *Cole*; the embassy bombings in east Africa; the bombing in Bali; and of course the events of September 11.

What many people have failed to appreciate in terms of this changing environment was very well summed up in an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* a number of months back. It was written by a fellow named Thomas Friedman. He talked about the new strategic environment that we face as being the world of order and the world of disorder.

The world of order in his view, and I share this view, is constituted by North America, Europe, Russia and China, that is, countries that have a stake in terms of allowing their economies to grow, that are based generally on the rule of law, which are making projections into the future in terms of economic growth and the welfare of their people. These are the countries of order.

The countries of disorder on the other hand are countries that fall into three categories principally: rogue states, failed states, and what Friedman termed as messy states. Clearly Iraq, although it is not now, would have been in the rogue state category, along with North Korea and to a large extent Iran as well. He looked at the failed states as well, states like Liberia. Until a few years ago we could probably have put Sierra Leone in that category also, and perhaps states like Somalia. The messy states are where there is certainly a problem with proliferation of weapons, confrontation and terrorism and sometimes organized crime is involved in terrorism as well. He enumerated countries like Colombia, India and Pakistan, states that are to a certain extent largely or somewhat unpredictable in terms of where they might be going.

### Supply

We know that in terms of weapons of mass destruction there has been a quantum change in the strategic environment since the end of the cold war. The end of the cold war, in terms of the destruction of the Soviet Union, threw open the floodgates in terms of the knowledge of weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

• (1705)

We have certainly seen that in the case of what has been called the 10 plus 10 over 10 agreement that was discussed at the G-8 last year. It involves bringing more and better controls over the Soviet Union's former nuclear, biological and chemical arsenal as well as the delivery systems for those sorts of weapons.

We have seen literally billions of dollars invested by the United States and Canada and other countries of the western world to bring these weapons of mass destruction under control. We know that there are at least 30 to 35 countries that have all sorts of ballistic missile technology. We know there are at least 25 countries that either have sought or have acquired weapons of mass destruction in terms of nuclear, biological, chemical or radiological weapons.

This is a serious problem to say the least. It boils down to the knowledge that is out there in terms of weapons technology and how best we as the world of order can deal with some of this weapons technology and protect our citizens. For me, protecting our citizens is the bottom line. There is a threat out there and it has to be addressed.

Another point I wanted to raise in connection with this debate is the fact that this is a defensive system. In fact many elements of the system have been in place for a number of years now. The ballistic missile defence system essentially is composed of five elements.

The first is a ground based radar which has been around since the 1960s. The second is space based sensors which have been around since the 1970s in terms of the U.S. defence support program. We tie into that as well through Norad. We have the benefit of those systems through Norad in terms of the ground and space based sensors. Canada has been part of that thus far.

There is also what is called an X-band radar. The capability of this radar is such that it allows the United States when tracking a missile to determine what is a warhead and what is a decoy. That is the third element. It has been around for about the last eight years and has been tested significantly over that time. The tests have yielded quite good results.

The fourth component is what is referred to as the battle management command, control and communications which essentially lines up the interceptor with the incoming missile. It is a series of software and hardware that is essential in order to be able to intercept the missile. That is where most of the research and development is headed. That is where the dollars will be invested in the coming years.

The final element of the system is the ground and sea based interceptors, some of which are largely in use right now. As a matter of fact some of these systems are in use by the Canadian Forces themselves. When we look at the American system in terms of the Aegis class destroyers which fire a standard missile, an SM-3

missile, the Canadian Forces in our Iroquois class destroyers have the SM-2 missile.

With respect to our own missile defences, we purchased in the 1980s what is referred to as the ADATS system, the air defence and anti-tank system, which has the capability to intercept missiles in their final phase before hitting earth. In terms of the ground based system, the Minuteman II missiles are being used, which have been around for many years.

A lot of this technology is not new. A lot of it has been around for a long time. What we are talking about is simply upgrading the current systems that are in place and giving them the additional capability to do the job in terms of intercepting missiles.

Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time with the member for Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies. I look forward to hearing his comments.

• (1710)

I have just a couple of minutes left and I have not begun to address some of the other issues I would like to address. I hope there will be some questions, but I will conclude simply by saying that Canada has to be involved in this initiative. It is part of our defence policy in my view and it is essential for the protection of Canadian sovereignty.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on his knowledge of this issue. Everyone knows that he is the chair of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. He has just demonstrated, very convincingly, a great understanding of the subject. In fact, there are many kinds of missiles. He will agree with me that the space shield would intercept a specific type of missile known as the intercontinental missile.

I do not think that Pakistan or India have intercontinental missiles. They have short-range missiles. This limits the spectre of an attack against North America. This narrows the field quite a bit. Even though 25 countries have weapons of mass destruction, they need to have delivery systems to send them across the world. This therefore eliminates many of the countries in question.

I think that China, Russia and North Korea would be able to launch an intercontinental missile to North America. For now, I am excluding the possibility that China and Russia would do so, because the concept of mutually assured destruction remains a factor. If they do launch a missile, that will probably be the end of it for them: they will be wiped off the map.

Where things may get trickier is with North Korea. However, they too are subject to the same policy. Why would North Korea launch one or two missiles that could reach the United States when they are sure to be wiped off the map in the minutes that followed?

I would like our colleague to make this distinction and to acknowledge that not everyone has the capabilities to launch missiles that could reach North America right now. Considering the costs involved in the missile defence system, we feel it would not be worth it.



There are other types of approaches that were mentioned this afternoon. There is multilateralism and international fora. That is where this should be solved, rather than trying to establish the invincibility of one country, the United States.

• (1715)

[English]

**Mr. David Pratt:** Madam Speaker, the point of some of my comments was certainly to enumerate the fact that a lot of the system in terms of missile defence is in place.

The important thing for the hon. member to keep in mind is that at the present time it is very clear that it is unlikely that any state in the world that could be categorized as a rogue state for instance, would have the capability to hit continental North America with a missile. That is a given.

What is not in question is that the missile technology which exists right now and what is being proposed in terms of national missile defence is a layered system. It attempts in some cases to get the missile at the launch or close to the boost phase when the missile is rising in the air in what is called the mid-core space when it actually, in the case of an intercontinental ballistic missile, is travelling in space, and in the terminal phase.

I would agree with the hon. member that at this point there is no state that has that capability. However, there are many states which are working toward that capability and in the next 10 to 15 years will clearly have that capability.

It is not just the states that possess these weapons of mass destruction, because we have seen in terms of proliferation, countries like North Korea selling missile technology to other states. Perhaps the hon. member would agree with me on this point, that in the case of short range or shorter range missiles that are launched from cargo ships, at this point they probably present a more dangerous threat to continental North America.

What the Americans are trying to do is not something in which just the Americans are interested; it is something that NATO has bought into through its strategic concept and it is something that was declared in the Prague summit last November as being important, not just theatre missile defence, but expanding that to protect populations. The British are certainly on side as are many others. The Danes are on side. The U.S. is working right now with Asian powers in terms of Japan and South Korea to protect those countries as well.

What we are seeing is an attempt by the United States to protect its own populations certainly. However, it is one which in terms of the investment is able to protect the continental United States and the friends and allies of the U.S. over the course of the next 10 to 15 years as some of this missile technology evolves.

We saw it with Iraq. I will conclude with this comment. We know that in a state like Iraq, it evolved from liquid propellants to solid fuel propellants. The proliferation of that sort of missile technology does present a serious threat.

### Supply

• (1720)

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, first, I want to commend the Bloc Québécois for having raised in the House the issue of the American proposal asking Canada to take part in the U.S. missile defence plan.

I also congratulate them on following up on the Prime Minister's suggestion that this be a public debate, because it could well have been limited to a few parties within Parliament. After this opposition day, many Canadians will be paying closer attention to these very serious questions.

I also wish to recognize the very careful work of the hon. member for Yukon, who chaired the committee of our national caucus on these questions, whose report was tabled in the House earlier. This is a very balanced report, which reflects the differing and totally legitimate points of view we hear when we embark on this kind of a debate.

In our parliamentary system, it is incumbent on the government to make decisions in these matters. But the government bases its decisions on debates within the Canadian public, in Parliament and within its own ranks; it has done so and is doing so now.

Personally, I am totally comfortable with the positions taken by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, as set out previously by our party, against the militarization of space. In other debates, we have stressed the importance of mobilizing against terrorism. We also strongly support mobilization against the doctrine of pre-emptive war inspired by unilateralism, which the government of our neighbours to the south is promoting.

What we want to know is this: how useful will the missile defence system contemplated be against hostile countries, or rogue states as they are called, terrorism in all its forms and weapons of mass destruction? Can one seriously claim that this system can be used and have some degree of effectiveness against these threats? Some paint the world in terms of good states and evil states. Could missile defence be of any use in this context?

I think that there is a great deal of confusion between defence and security. We say that we want to achieve security through increasingly sophisticated technological defence systems. In my opinion, there is a certain imbalance in the debate that has to be emphasized at this point.

We are saying, "Will this work? Will there be so many missiles of such and such a category? Since when have they been around? Approximately how much will that cost? What are the advantages and the disadvantages?" We are fixated on technical considerations when the issue is much more important than that. It is a matter of security. And it is a matter of security not only for the United States and the northern part of the North American continent that includes Canada and United States, but for humanity.

*Private Members' Business*

In my opinion, it is not through the building up and the escalation of technologies, however sophisticated they may be, that we will achieve greater security in Canada, in North America or on planet earth. It is not through such escalation that we can reduce the gap between good states and evil states. I do not think that building a fortress here in North America will solve these sorts of issues, which are vital to the long-term security of humanity.

We are in a situation similar to the one in which those people living behind barricades and in fortresses find themselves. Sometimes, when we visit certain countries, we realize that rich people have beautiful residences that cannot be seen from the street because they are hidden behind high walls. Are these people really safe behind those high walls? They claim they are. And when things get bad, they simply add a few more rows of blocks and make the wall higher.

• (1725)

Then they install barbed wire, control towers and radar to watch over everything. But when they leave their fortress, are they safe? They have to be escorted by armed guards to get to an airport to travel. They have to be escorted for their own safety to get to their offices downtown. Are they safe? They can defend themselves as long as they are inside their fortress. Once they leave, real life is waiting for them.

The same thing is true on an international level. It is possible to build a system where you are almost invulnerable as long as you stay inside your own walls. As soon as you leave, real life is waiting for you. Is it really any good to have a fortress in which we see ourselves as invulnerable? If, in the future, we run out of water, if the land around becomes a desert, if disease devastates the entire country and other continents, where is the security in that?

Some people, some countries and some elite groups can believe they are safe, but this does not move the planet forward. In my opinion, we are all in the same boat. As earthlings, we are on a space ship. The survival of one means the survival of all. We will all live or we will all die.

All the escalating and ruinously expensive technologies will not help us one bit in this regard. Instead, it will take international cooperation, the development of multilateral tools, rebuilding the UN and the Security Council, a better balance between the haves and the have nots and between the continents and the superpowers. The creation of new tools will put us on the road to achieving this security, which is much more important and encompassing than the stockpile of defence weapons that only temporarily protect our own fortress.

There are battles ahead. The battle for a clean environment and for sustainable development around the world, for the eradication of poverty afflicting pockets on each continent, for access to water, food, shelter, physical security, and education. These measures are the ones that ensure security in the middle and long term.

Canada should send this message to the U.S., international public opinion and UN forums. It should send the message that this is our first choice. Those are the terms of this debate, in my opinion.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, earlier, I wanted to praise my colleague from Joliette for his active

participation in central labour bodies. I see that we also have friends who are very articulate and who come from other central labour bodies. It just goes to show that the labour movement is favourable to this type of debate.

I wanted to commend my colleague for the ideas that he just presented to us. I find the analogy between the fortress and the missile defence system very relevant. I think that he is also right when he says that what we need on this planet is long-lasting and pacifist solutions, instead of trying to build the biggest shield possible to protect ourselves against a big missile.

This morning, I began my speech with an analogy with Cro-Magnon man. In the movie *2001: A Space Odyssey*, we see a Cro-Magnon man clubbing another man. Those who witnessed the incident thought that maybe people should don a helmet and use a shield. This is in fact the same discussion.

I want the member to elaborate on the societal choices that we have. Would it not be more relevant to invest in multilateralism, in notions of solidarity and mutual cooperation, instead of investing in sophisticated defensive and offensive systems?

• (1730)

**Mr. Yvon Charbonneau:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Saint-Jean for seeing the central element of my speech. I am pleased to see that this speech is shared by many other people.

I believe we must invest in plans for cooperation, which might touch on education, health, development and also arms. I am talking about plans that should go just so far, and not far-fetched plans where anyone can do anything to get around them. There must be plans that apply to all states who have these weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, biological or other kinds. They must apply to both the big countries and the small countries, in all regions of the world. I think that we can develop such plans and that they are the road to security.

I believe that Canadian sovereignty is important. We are ready to make adjustments on matters of sovereignty with other countries, in order to produce valid international tools.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** It being 5:30 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that proceedings on the motion have expired.

[*English*]

The House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

### CHIEF ACTUARY ACT

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Canadian Alliance)** moved that Bill C-421, An Act respecting the establishment of the Office of the Chief Actuary of Canada and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

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She said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to the House this private member's bill called the chief actuary act.

I would like to tell the House what I will cover today. First, I will go over the purpose of the bill. Second, I will talk about what an actuary is because I did not really know what an actuary was before I became involved in this and maybe others have the same question. Third, what does the chief actuary of Canada do? Fourth, why do we need an independent chief actuary? The fifth item I will address is how an independent chief actuary will benefit Canadians. I have 15 minutes to cover those five points and I am sure you will hold me to my time, Madam Speaker, so I will get on with it.

The purpose of the bill is quite simple. It is set out in clause 3 of the bill, which reads as follows:

The purpose of this Act is to provide for an independent Chief Actuary of Canada who will report directly to the House of Commons on the activities of his or her office.

The purpose is to have an independent chief actuary. What is an actuary? An actuary is a professional who evaluates the financial implications of uncertain future events. An actuary is part scientist and part crystal ball gazer, I guess. A chief actuary's principal work is the design, the pricing and the financing of insurance plans and pension plans.

The qualifications of an actuary are: an innate analytical ability; an expertise in demographics; a focus on insurance systems and their actuarial soundness; and a unique training in quantifying and projecting the costs of multiple complex factors and contingent events. An actuary must have a proven professional objectivity in making quantitative assessments. An actuary is a professional business person skilled in the application of mathematics to financial problems.

The principal role of an actuary is the application of probability analysis, risk theory and statistics to the financial environment. Actuaries are a cornerstone of the risk management mechanisms of insurance companies and pension plans in Canada. So all who would like to be an actuary should please raise their hands; it sounds like there is a great deal of ability and expertise that would be required of an actuary.

The third question I would like to answer is, what does a chief actuary of Canada do? I will read from the web page of the chief actuary of Canada as to the mandate of the chief actuary:

The Office of the Chief Actuary (OAC) estimates long-term expenditures and revenues and current liabilities of the Canada Pension Plan and of federal public sector workplace pension and insurance plans. It also estimates long-term future expenditures for Old Age Security programs. It prepares actuarial reports on the financial status of these programs as required by legislation, including reports on proposed changes to the Canada Pension Plan introduced in Parliament and submits them to the responsible Ministers. The Office of the Chief Actuary also provides actuarial information to responsible government departments to assist these departments in the design, funding and administration of these programs.

Also, the chief actuary of Canada has the responsibility to give actuarial information concerning the performance of the public service pension fund and the RCMP and Canadian Forces pension funds. Public servants and those who have participated in defending our country, as well as members of Parliament and judges, all of us, have an important interest in ensuring good oversight of these social programs.

• (1735)

The fourth question that I want to answer is why we need an independent chief actuary. We have talked about the purpose of the bill, which is to install an independent chief actuary. We have talked about what an actuary is and what an actuary does. We have talked about what the chief actuary of Canada does and now we need to talk about why we need to make that individual independent.

The bottom line is there is a need for Canadians to be absolutely sure that the true state of their public pensions is not being hidden because the pension watchdog is not independent. I want to make four quick points on this issue.

First, the lack of independence of the current office of the chief actuary has resulted in events which have led to questions about the level of confidence Canadians can place on the oversight of their pensions. I speak specifically about the fact that the former chief actuary of the Canada pension plan and of other public pension plans and other important social plans was fired by the finance department. This individual had been in office for seven years. This individual was just about to bring out a report on the state of the Canada pension plan. This individual was fired after seven years in office and came forward and publicly said that he was fired because he would not validate the figures that were being put forward by the finance department about Canada pension plan projections.

I do not know what the right and wrong of this is, but the fact is that this individual, who had held the post for many years and who was very highly qualified and respected, took the matter to court, sued for wrongful dismissal and won a settlement of over \$300,000. This raises legitimate questions as to whether the fact that he insisted on a measure of independence, which the finance department was not prepared to give him, was a factor in this whole very unsettling series of events.

This is one example of the kind of questions that can arise when an important post like the chief actuary is not independent.

The second point I would like to make is with respect to a controversy that arose a few years ago with respect to the public service pension plan. What occurred was there was a controversy over the government's management of the public service pensions during the period 1997 to 1999. The government introduced a bill and there was a real uproar about this. The Auditor General's office said this about the management of the public service pension plans at that time. It stated:

Indeed, the government employees—public service, armed forces and RCMP—pension fund is a 'phantom fund' in that it exists as a set of bookkeeping entries rather than in the form of an investment portfolio of various stocks, bonds and other financial assets.

The bill the government introduced affected all these pension plans, including the members of Parliament retirement allowances. It basically took money out of those plans to help pay down the deficit. Our Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce reported in September, 1999 the following opinions. It stated:

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● (1740)

The committee re-iterates our view that a joint pension management board and risk-sharing agreement is the preferred option for the future. Nevertheless we also note the point made in our June 1999 report that, if no agreement is reached, some Committee members feel that additional safeguards should be introduced to protect the interests of both taxpayers and plan members, including appointing the Auditor General as the primary auditor of the funds, ensuring that a majority of the members of the proposed Pension Investment Board have significant pension fund expertise, requiring the proposed Board to liaise with the actuary so as to understand the nature and timing of plan liabilities, and increasing the amount of information that may be requested of the proposed Board and the anticipated joint pension management board by plan members.

The Senate at that time saw an expanded actuarial oversight role for public service pensions, including your pension and my pension, Madam Speaker.

The third point I would like to make, under the need for an independent chief actuary, is the growing calls for an independent oversight of critical social programs on which Canadians depend. For example, the Canadian Institute of Actuaries recently called for an independent medicare actuary for Canada. It believes we need to use the actuarial discipline to help ensure a sustainable health care system. It states that an independent medical actuary is needed to provide professional, unbiased, non-political advice to policy makers and legislators at provincial and federal levels on design, funding, impact of possible changes, et cetera.

Therefore this is a time when professional expert people in our country are calling for more independent actuarial input into the way our social programs are managed and designed.

The fourth point I want to make is that this call for an independent chief actuary is very consistent with the direction government is taking. Government is recognizing in a variety of ways that it needs to have measures to respond to a growing demand for greater openness and accountability in the operations of government. The new political financing bill is an example of this and there are other examples.

Therefore this is a time when the growth in demand by the public for more independent oversight is starting to generate a response from government and from members of the House. I believe this bill, a simple measure, would be another step in the direction of greater openness and accountability.

The next question is how to go about installing an independent chief actuary. It is not very difficult. The independent chief actuary would be chosen by a resolution of the Senate and the House of Commons. That individual's office, which is already operating, would simply report not to the finance department but directly to the House of Commons. That would allow much greater independence and a much greater level of confidence in the information and the oversight that is being exerted on these very important plans.

Therefore I would like to end by saying there is a real benefit to Canadians, in the House passing this very simple measure of making the chief actuary of Canada independent of government and reporting directly to the people's representatives in the House of Commons. It would generate much greater confidence in important programs. It would allow a better set of checks and balances on these operations of government and increase the confidence in how the checks and balances operate.

Of course the real winner would be our democracy because Canadians who are concerned, who perhaps feel alienated, or uneasy or uncomfortable with just how open and transparent our system is would be further reassured by making this very important critical post entirely independent, reporting directly to us in the House of Commons.

I hope members of Parliament will support this very simple measure and I look forward to the debate on the bill.

● (1745)

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I have a quick question for the hon. member. I think this is a great idea.

I pretty well understand what actuaries are all about, having worked in the insurance business for awhile. They are real number crunchers and they seem to be very accurate in their work, especially if they are not influenced by outside bodies. Therefore I certainly agree with the idea of an independent chief actuary.

The member spoke a great deal about the pensions plans, public and private. I understand that because that is what they work for in the insurance business, in retirement planning for most Canadians. That is their job.

Does it also apply to such things that would be of assistance to a member of the cabinet when he rises to announce a program and says that it will cost \$2 million but instead it ends up costing \$1 billion? Could the minister have used this kind of advice before he introduced such a ridiculous setup?

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy:** Madam Speaker, I hear the sound of an axe being ground. The fact of the matter is that under the terms of this bill, the act would allow the independent chief actuary to provide advice, opinion, analysis or recommendation, not only to a minister of the crown but also to provincial governments participating in any prescribed social insurance program or public pension plans established by Parliament, as well as to any member of the Senate or the House of Commons.

Whether the program the member is referring to, although he did not name the program I think I can guess which one it is, falls into the definition of a prescribed social insurance program or public pension plan established by Parliament, I very much doubt. Perhaps members would be able to persuade an independent chief actuary to take bit of time to give some kind of input, advice or recommendation with respect to other programs even though they are not explicitly mentioned in this bill.

I think we could all benefit by looking ahead and having experts help us to understand not just what is happening today but what could happen, given a whole set factors on any number of important programs.

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to oppose consideration by the House of the proposed legislation put forward by the hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill respecting the establishment of the office of the chief actuary of Canada and to amend other acts in consequence thereof.

It is essential that confidence in Canada's public pension system remains high, which, without question, it is. This is for good reason.

Canada has been recognized internationally as a model in providing adequate retirement income for seniors while maintaining the affordability and sustainability of the retirement income system in the face of population aging and economic change. The strength of our public pension system was an important factor in this conclusion.

Sound actuarial reporting is key to ensuring that the high confidence Canadians have in our public pension system continues on an ongoing basis.

Let me take a few moments to review the important role the existing chief actuary fulfills.

The current office of the chief actuary estimates long term expenditures and revenues and current liabilities of the Canada pension plan and of federal public sector workplace pension and insurance plans. The chief actuary is also responsible for estimating long term future expenditures for old age security programs, an issue which is of growing importance to all Canadians.

The office of the chief actuary prepares actuarial reports on the financial status of these programs as required by legislation, including reports on proposed changes to the Canadian pension plan introduced to Parliament. The chief actuary submits these reports to the responsible ministers, who are the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Human Resources Development and the President of the Treasury Board.

The office also provides actuarial information to responsible government departments to assist these departments in the design, funding and administration of these programs.

In addition, the office provides actuarial information on the Canada pension plan to provincial governments which are the plan's co-stewards. Major changes to the Canada pension plan benefits and contribution rates can come into effect only with the accord of two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population.

Since 2001 the office of the chief actuary has also been responsible for undertaking the actuarial review of the Canada student loans program.

The hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill is proposing, as I understand it, to have legislation that would see the chief actuary be appointed by the governor in council after approval by resolution of the House and Senate. This chief actuary would report directly to Parliament and request resources for his or her office from Parliament.

The proposed legislation would also require the new chief actuary to provide advice, opinion, analysis or recommendations on any prescribed social insurance program or public pension plan established by an act of Parliament free of charge to any member of the Senate or House of Commons, the government of a province that participates in the program or plan, as well as any responsible minister of the crown.

As I mentioned earlier, public confidence in the public pension system is essential, and Canadians already have a public pension system in which they can have a lot of confidence.

#### *Private Members' Business*

My hon. colleagues may not be aware that the federal and provincial governments, as co-stewards of the Canada pension plan, took meaningful steps in 1997 and 1999 to strengthen the transparency and accountability of actuarial reporting on the CPP. In 1997, federal and provincial governments agreed that the frequency of actuarial reporting on the CPP should be increased from every five years to every three years to strengthen public accountability.

The CPP legislation was also changed to require federal and provincial ministers to review planned finances every three years instead of every five years. These findings are reported to Canadians. In doing so, the stewardship and accountability of the plan have been further strengthened.

• (1750)

In 1999, federal and provincial finance ministers took additional steps to strengthen the transparency and accountability of actuarial reporting on the CPP. They endorsed regular peer reviews of such reports and consultations by the chief actuary with experts on the assumptions to be used in the reports. Ministers also developed a policy for supplying actuarial information and services on the CPP to individuals and organizations outside of the executive arm of government on a fee for service basis. This standardized and brought transparency to existing practices.

It is my understanding that the most recent independent review of the statutory actuarial report on the CPP confirmed that the work of the chief actuary meets professional standards of actuarial practice and is of sound quality.

The independent review also confirmed that the office of the chief actuary has adequate resources and access to data and other information required to fulfill its mandate.

To ensure the quality of future actuarial reports, the chief actuary continues to consult with experts in the fields of long term demographic and economic projection in the preparation of actuarial reports.

Perhaps the hon. members of the House are not aware of the high professional esteem in which the current office of the chief actuary is held. This is evidenced by the decision to have Canada's chief actuary undertake the first independent peer review of the actuarial report of the government actuary on the Great Britain national insurance fund.

I have another point. At the present time the office of the chief actuary is housed within the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, which is the primary regulator of federally chartered financial institutions and federally administered pension plans. This allows the two offices to share certain administrative costs. It allows for greater coherence between the work of the superintendent and the chief actuary.

To summarize, confidence in Canada's pension system is high because the system works. It works because of the commitment of the federal and provincial ministers, supported by officials such as the existing chief actuary, to ensure that it is the very best that it can be.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1755)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ):** Madam Speaker, first I would like to thank the member for Calgary—Nose Hill for introducing Bill C-421, which provides for an independent Chief Actuary of Canada who would be a senior government official just like the current Auditor General. The Chief Actuary would be independent and report directly to Parliament.

The proposal made in Bill C-421 is perfectly in line with the expectations of Canadians and Quebecers concerning the transparency of the federal government. The parliamentary secretary indicated earlier that Canadians as well as Quebecers trust the Canada Pension Plan. This might be the case now, but it was also the case for the employment insurance account, a few years ago.

I remember that, up until the late 1980s, Canadians and Quebecers took great pride in their unemployment insurance system, as it was called at the time, especially when compared to the circumstances of salaried workers in the United States. This UI system provided workers who lost their job with replacement income to help them through a difficult time.

Now, thanks to the actuary, we know that not only do Canadians and Quebecers not have access to a reasonable employment insurance program, but as well the money in the fund is going for other uses. Without the actuarial study, we would not have all the information required and would be in a position where the minister could tell us whatever he felt appropriate.

To give one example, I have asked the finance minister on a number of occasions, or his parliamentary secretary, why the contribution rate to the EI fund is so high compared to its requirements, which means that it creates a surplus year after year. Twice the parliamentary secretary has told me that this year revenue would balance expenditures. He told me that twice.

Today, I asked the same thing of the Minister of Human Resources Development. She told me that no, again this year they were expecting a surplus of close to \$3 billion.

There is a problem with transparency then, and people's trust in a whole series of federally administered programs is shaky. It could easily be lost altogether.

As for the proposal made by the member for Calgary—Nose Hill in her Bill C-421, I really cannot understand how the government, the governing party, could object to it. When one thinks that confidence is based on transparency, there is every interest in creating all the conditions necessary to ensure that the transparency is real and not just theoretical.

It seems to me totally obvious that creation of the office of the chief actuary of Canada would raise the confidence level, as well as the accountability level, not only of public servants but also of the government as a whole as far as these programs are concerned. Moreover, as has been pointed out by the member for Calgary—Nose Hill, the sponsor of this bill, the Canadian Institute of Actuaries supports her proposal. I can also assure her of the support of the Bloc Québécois.

● (1800)

*[English]*

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I wish to say a few words in support of private member's Bill C-421, an act respecting the establishment of the office of the chief actuary of Canada and to amend other acts in consequence thereof.

I support the bill for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, a chief actuary would be like the Chief Electoral Officer who is responsible to the House of Commons and not responsible to the Government of Canada. That gives the position an air of credibility in terms of being more aloof from politics or from the government of the day. That is the way we should go with this particular position.

I remember a number of years ago when hardly anybody was responsible to Parliament. Every appointment was made by the Government of Canada. Now the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Auditor General of Canada, and the Chief Electoral Officer are responsible to the House of Commons rather than the government. That sets a more non-partisan tone in terms of the responsibilities of the person holding that particular office. In terms of parliamentary reform, it is important that this be a non-partisan appointment.

When someone like the Chief Electoral Officer is appointed, we generally have consultations among all parties to ensure there is consensus that the individual has the confidence of the House, and not just the confidence of the government. That is extremely important with regard to this particular position. I also believe that the office of the chief actuary of Canada should be established for other non-parliamentary reasons.

The whole issue of pensions has become extremely important. We must have strong public pension plans. The Canada pension plan is experiencing some bumps because part of it is on the stock exchange right now. Recently there has been a drop of around 25% in the value of the invested part of the Canada pension plan. It is important that we have a chief actuary who is able to ensure that public pensions are as viable as they possibly can be.

We are coming to a stage in this country where more people will be receiving pensions. The average lifespan of both men and women is increasing in Canada which means more people are receiving pensions. The oldest people in the so-called baby boomer generation are 57 years old. It will not be long before there are more baby boomers moving into the pensionable age, and that again will increase the number of people who will be receiving a pension. These are important issues that we should be looking at in terms of ensuring that our pensions are viable.

People are concerned about how their pensions are invested. Canada has a lot of pension money available now for investment. In fact, there is probably more investment from big pension funds than there is from any other sector in the country. This makes me think of the Ontario teachers' pension fund which is one of the largest pension funds in Canada. There are many large pension funds in Canada. It is important that we ensure that these are being run as efficiently and effectively as possible so they maximize the return to the contributor of the fund.

*Private Members' Business*

At the same time, we should be looking at how to make our pensions more valuable to the country as a whole. They should be used to invest as much as possible in industries in Canada that create jobs. We must create jobs to strengthen and build the economy. Investing pension money into parts of the economy that creates jobs is important.

We should be looking at setting up an ethical screen for the Canada pension fund so that it does not invest in tobacco, for example. I had a private member's motion or bill to this effect in the House. It is ironic that the government across the way will spend money through the Department of Health to get people to stop smoking while at the same time the Canada pension plan will be investing in tobacco companies. That is a real contradiction in terms of public policy.

• (1805)

It is a case of where one hand in the government does not know what the other hand is doing. That is why we should have an ethical screen to ensure that public pensions like the Canada pension plan do not invest in businesses such as tobacco. There are other industries and companies in which there should not be any investments made by public pension plans, like the armament industry. Instead, more of this money should be going into environmentally safe investments which create jobs and help to green the economy.

I think, for example, of the credit unions. They have ethical funds that have done very well over the years. Their return is probably not equal to the return of other mutual funds, but probably better in many cases than most mutual funds. These are funds that are ethically invested in companies that would make us all proud as Canadians.

This massive pool of capital is a big area. The pool of capital should have a watchdog, a chief actuary, who would be there to ensure that we have pension funds that run firmly, soundly and are properly invested.

The Canada pension plan, through a decision made by Parliament in 1998 or 1999 to partially invest the fund in the stock market, will be the largest capital pool bar none with billions of dollars of assets within a few short years. It is important that we have a chief actuary who will report to Parliament in terms of the viability of the fund.

This huge fund is one that should be receiving a bit more direction from the Parliament of Canada to ensure that we have ethical investments, investments in industries and in businesses that create jobs, and that small businesses have, as much as is feasible, access to capital so small businesses can expand. The biggest creator of jobs in this country is small business. It is not the large corporation, but the small business sector. These are things I believe should be done.

This is a step in the right direction. I hope that we have a majority of government members as well as opposition members to support the bill. We can then make a move to create a chief actuary who would be responsible to the Parliament of Canada and not responsible to the government. That is a step forward in terms of parliamentary reform and making this Parliament more relevant and meaningful to the average citizen in Canada.

**Mr. Rex Barnes (Gander—Grand Falls, PC):** Madam Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to create an independent chief actuary of Canada who would report directly to the House of Commons. Bill C-421, brought forward by the hon. member for Calgary—Nose Hill, is a commendable bill and worthy of attention, support and passage.

As previously stated, the bill would provide that the chief actuary of Canada become an independent officer of Parliament, and report directly to the House of Commons and Senate when directed to do so, and when directed by statute.

Absolutely nothing about having an important financial officer reporting to Parliament could or would produce adverse effects. In fact, it is when officers do not report to Parliament that problems arise and issues of transparency and accountability are rightly questioned. These questions that need answers are not just asked by parliamentarians, but by many Canadians and rightly so. Many high ranking officers report to Parliament. These include: the Chief Electoral Officer, Official Languages Commissioner, Privacy Commissioner, Information Commissioner, and Auditor General.

In the name of a well balanced, functioning, transparent and accountable democracy, it is extremely important that these people report to Parliament and to no one else but Parliament. Because they are independent and report to Parliament, let us look at all the good work these officers have done in the past. There have been no black marks, scandals or cover-ups. They are just hard working officers doing their best at what they do.

No one is suggesting the Auditor General's Office suffers from a taint or is influenced by the PMO. Neither does anyone suggest that the Privacy Commissioner is anyone's lapdog, but I do not know if, at times, we can say the same regarding the ethics counsellor. The ethics counsellor does his job exactly the way the Prime Minister tells him to do it. It is laughable and shameful, and is all rolled into one big mess.

It is what happens when high ranking officers and public officials are placed in the hind pocket of the Prime Minister. Scandals erupt, corruption abounds, questions are asked, transparency becomes a foreign concept, and accountability is non-existent and trust erodes.

Canadians are losing faith in the trustworthiness of their elected officials and bureaucrats because of the never ending shower of scandal. True reports of corruption and cover ups have plagued the government for many years.

Everyone and his or her dog, except the Prime Minister and his lapdog ethics counsellor, thinks that the ethics counsellor should report to Parliament. Two people, maybe three if we include the former finance minister, think the position should be enshrouded in secrecy.

*Private Members' Business*

Most others in the House, and most across the country, would agree that the ethics counsellor should report to Parliament. It is time for the secrecy to end. Nothing adverse or bad could come about by having the ethics counsellor report to Parliament. In the same vein, nothing untoward or adverse would come about by having the chief actuary of Canada report directly to Parliament instead of having him or her report to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.

The integrity and honesty of the government has stooped to unforeseen depths when it comes to ethics, corruption, conflict of interest allegations and cover-ups. This would not happen nearly as often if the ethics counsellor were to report to Parliament.

Having the chief actuary of Canada an officer of Parliament would be a step in the right direction. The chief actuary contends with some very important financial matters, especially matters dealing with pensions. Having the chief actuary report to Parliament would ensure that important issues such as pensions would be out in the open and it would ensure that the best interests of pensioners and others would be looked after.

I believe all members would agree that having high ranking officers of various portfolios report to Parliament would be a good thing. It is not only the ethics counsellor who has come under fire during the government's tenure, but the chief actuary's office has also been subject to political interference. It is exactly for this reason that the chief actuary should report to Parliament and not be another civil servant who in turn reports to the Minister of Finance.

• (1810)

In the fall of 2002 the chief actuary, who had an impeccable and unblemished personal and professional record, was fired just three weeks before he was to report on the status of the Canada pension plan.

Why was he fired? He was fired because he just about to report unfavourably on how the former minister of finance was running the CPP and how he mismanaged it. He was looking out for Canadians and would not lie to the public about a file that was botched. He was fired for his integrity and honesty before he was allowed to report his findings to the Canadian public.

Every party in the House, except the governing party, held the former finance minister to account, but how can there be accountability when everything is done behind closed doors?

Every party asked questions about the firing but the former finance minister, true to form, answered in half-truths.

No one ever had to account for that wrongful firing other than charging the taxpayers for his cash settlement for wrongful dismissal, and no one will ever have to account for it. Why? It is because the office of the chief actuary is about as independent as a newborn baby. Anything the chief actuary does that the Minister of Finance does not like, he gets fired or he gets reprimanded like an infant.

This is unacceptable when it comes to a position of the man or woman who is dealing with these very important pension numbers that concern all Canadians, especially elderly Canadians. I guess the former finance minister was more worried about his job security than the retirement income of elderly Canadians, and that is shameful.

If there is something wrong with the way CPP is being administered then Canadians have a right to know. If there had been an independent chief actuary in Canada that unfortunate situation would never have arisen.

It is high time that the office of the chief actuary of Canada joined the office of the Auditor General, among others, to become an independent, objective institution reporting to Parliament. For the safety of the pensions of all Canadians, the chief actuary has to be in the same category as the Auditor General.

I thank the hon. member for bringing this important bill forward. I urge members from both sides of the House to support this long overdue bill.

• (1815)

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise as well in the debate this afternoon. I heartily endorse my colleague's recommendation in Bill C-421, to have a chief actuary who would be accountable to someone.

We know that actuaries are managers of details. One need only look at accountants who, as one of my colleagues said earlier, are the best number crunchers anyone can get, and that is for sure. People who have risen to the position of chief actuary are surely pleased to be accountable. They are proud of their work and proud of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries to which they belong.

It is unfortunate when I see people, who have been very responsible public servants, rise to the post of chief actuary and then become embroiled in politics. I am sure none of them would care to be in that position.

I think my colleague's idea, the member for Calgary—Nose Hill, of de-politicizing the position of chief actuary and making the position accountable to Parliament is an excellent one. It is also an idea that members of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries support. This institution is a self-regulating organization representing over 2,500 actuaries who are qualified to practise in Canada. One can imagine that these people are not only very proud of their organization, but they are proud of the person who rises to the position of chief actuary in the country.

This is a group of people who are not only proud of their profession, but they are proud of the chief actuary who oversees the enormous public pension funds of the RCMP, the Canadian Forces, and, in fact us as members of Parliament, and the entire public service. They want the chief actuary to be accountable and they want to know that somebody somewhere is taking the chief actuary's non-political, unbiased advice.

I think there are a tremendous number of benefits to making sure that the chief actuary is completely independent and completely accountable to Parliament, not just having coffee with someone. We do not want to see a chief actuary being dumped from his job, as we heard earlier, because someone in the political realm did not like his projections and what he had to say about the percentage of Canada pension plan funds needed to cover unfunded liabilities, et cetera. That was clearly wrong.



*Private Members' Business*

We know a lot of political influence goes on around this place and across the country but surely when it comes to the pension funds of Canadian citizens, the RCMP, et cetera, they deserve better.

I think the idea of creating an office of the chief actuary of Canada who is completely independent is a great idea. First, it would enhance confidence in public financial management. Lord knows there is not a great deal of that these days. I think what we could see is that the public would start to say that there is a higher priority on this right now, sound fiscal management. They have not seen a whole lot of that in the last generation or so. I think it is just absolutely terrific that they would be able to have that confidence instilled back in that position.

Second, the application of probability analysis, risk theory and statistics to the financial environment is the principal role of actuaries. I am a humanities girl and I do not understand all this mathematical and scientific stuff well enough but I know they do. I put my confidence as a Canadian citizen in the fact that they know their work, that they are experts at it and that they are proud of it.

Actuaries are a cornerstone of the risk management mechanisms of insurance companies and pension funds. We want to know that pension funds are there for people across the country. People have worked hard and for a long time to put money into their pension plans and they want to know that their pensions will be funded, that they will have a good accrual rate and that when they do get older and retire they will have some pension to take out.

Imagine what is going on in some of the private sector companies right now, where these big companies are saying, "Sorry, shucks, we just do not have any money for you. We are going bankrupt right now and we wish you well". However all these people have been putting money into these pension plans for years, decades in fact.

We do not want to see that happen. I think there should be regulations in place. However we are talking public sector here today. Specifically, I think this would go a long way toward making people feel a whole lot more financially sound. There would be far less risk.

• (1820)

The office of the chief actuary would be responsible for all actuarial advice to the Government of Canada. That means they would be able to give advice and recommendations. Would it not be a wise thing for politicians to sit down and not only listen to the advice of these experts in the field but to take that advice and act on it?

I think the basic reason my colleague has brought this bill forward is to make sure there is not only sound financial management but that we have an expert in the field who will provide unbiased and non-political advice to someone in the government who will listen, not politicize it, and say that the advice is great, that the government will take advantage of it and that it will act on it.

The reporting relationship of the office of the chief actuary would be to report directly to Parliament, not just to someone having coffee, like we see with the ethics counsellor right now. That is just a great idea too but we know what happens over the coffee table; everybody is cleared of everything it seems to me, because again it is politicized. The reporting relationship of the chief actuary would be

to report directly to Parliament, and free from the direct influence of cabinet or the civil service.

Unfortunately we saw what happened to the chief actuary a couple of years ago who was an expert in his field. My colleague mentioned him earlier. He had been the chief actuary for seven years and had done a super job. However, because he did not come in with the right numbers of what CPP ought to have been, which was above 10%, then heads had to roll. He had to be honest about it and say that it was over 10% because he had enough self-respect and enough dignity in his office and his own conscience to be a truth teller. It is always a good thing to be a truth teller but, as we see too often, in fact almost always, there is often a cost attached to being a truth teller.

When the chief actuary spoke up, told the truth and said that the numbers simply were not going to crunch, he was axed. Was he absolved in the end? Yes, he received a good settlement of over \$300,000. Will that ever bring his name back? Probably not, but nonetheless he was proven innocent and that he was wrongfully dismissed.

We need to take all that stuff out of the position. We need to depoliticize it so the role will be performed well and benefits from it will be amazing. We need to ensure that actuarial analysis and advice is seen to be free from political and bureaucratic influence and based only on the highest professional standard.

The people in the Canadian Institute of Actuaries are professionals and they operate by the highest standards. We all could take a lesson from them, that they could attract the best from the profession to the office of the chief actuary. Their peers, among themselves, know who are the best and the brightest. When we look around here we do not have to listen too long to know who are the best and the brightest. Those members of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries know who their experts are. They know who will rise to the top. Regardless of who the person is, regardless of gender, regardless of where he or she lives in the country, the best person, based on merit and merit alone, should be named to that position of chief actuary.

Another benefit is that they could combine the resources of the actuaries, which currently exist in many of these programs, to ensure that statistical tools, theories and best practices are shared and maintained at the highest standard for all Government of Canada managed programs. Would it not be nice to know that EI, the Canada pension plan, social programs, the RCMP pension, the MP pensions, the public service pensions and Canadian Forces pensions are in good hands? I think people would rest a lot easier if they knew they were in good hands. I know I am using the Allstate motto there and that I might get sued, which, Lord knows, has happened before, but people would be in good hands with the chief actuary.

The bill would make the position non-political. It would make sure that somebody somewhere would be looking out for them and that they would be reporting directly to Parliament, not just having a secret coffee meeting somewhere, getting a pat on the back and being told that everything is okay, everything looks just slick. Nobody would know the unfunded liability or the true numbers. Nobody would have to feel that they were at risk of being fired very publicly and painfully because they stood up and told the truth.

*Adjournment Debate*

I would say that the sooner we get on with this legislation the better. I am trusting that government members will realize how beneficial this is. It is nothing to be afraid of.

• (1825)

This is just wonderful. The Prime Minister makes everything a confidence motion. This will give the Canadian public, members of Parliament and all public servants great confidence. Therefore, I think they should vote with real confidence on this bill.

**Mr. Murray Calder (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose this bill. It is very clear to me that the office of the chief actuary provides information and advice to the executive arm of government, which allows that executive to take the decisions for which they are accountable to the House. The chief actuary operates in an impartial, professional manner. As a public servant, the chief actuary serves the executive arm of government with objectivity and impartiality.

Responsible government in Canada is based on the individual and collective responsibilities of the ministers and their answerability to Parliament for their own actions and for the actions of the public servants who report to them. In my view, their responsibility and accountability are clear under the present structure and reporting relationships. The existing role and the functioning of the office of the chief actuary is consistent with the concept of ministerial responsibility. I must add that at the present time the federal-provincial process that is essential to the Canada pension plan is also well served by the existing role and mandate of the chief actuary and his office.

What would be the effect of this proposed legislation on such important issues as the status and operations of the office of the chief actuary, its neutrality and impartiality, ministerial responsibility, implications for federal-provincial relations, and on cost?

As I understand it, the proposed legislation would require the chief actuary to provide advice, opinion, analysis or recommendations on any prescribed social insurance program or public pension plan established by an act of Parliament free of charge to any member of the Senate or the House of Commons, the government of a province that participates in the program or plan, as well as any responsible minister of the crown.

Such an approach would see the chief actuary drawn into matters of policy and potentially political controversy which would undermine the confidence of the impartiality and the professionalism of the office. As a public servant, it is important and imperative that the chief actuary serve and be seen to serve the executive arm of the government with objectivity and impartiality.

This does not, however, prevent those of us elected in the House from seeking actuarial information from the chief actuary on a fee for service basis. Nor do the current arrangements impede us from seeking information through the minister on policy, or inviting the chief actuary to appear before the appropriate standing committee to explain his actuarial projections. Indeed, the chief actuary has appeared before numerous committees of the House a number of times over the course of the last year.

I must also wonder how having the chief actuary directly serve the legislative branch of the federal government would affect federal-

provincial relationships. As my hon. colleague mentioned earlier, the Canada pension plan is unique in that any material changes require the approval of at least two-thirds of the provinces representing at least two-thirds of Canada's population. A formal and elaborate federal-provincial review of the CPP takes place every three years. It is in this context that changes are considered, consensus reached and legislation then introduced in the House of Commons by the minister responsible.

The current structure ensures that the executive arms of the federal and provincial governments are able to move forward quickly with the work required and seek the consensus necessary within the timeframes set out by the legislation. The changes proposed could hamper this process. In doing so, the effective functioning of a federal-provincial arrangement that is essential to the Canada pension plan could be damaged. That is why I oppose it.

• (1830)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** 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.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[English]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Svend Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Madam Speaker, on March 27 I rose in the House to ask a question of the Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning Canada's position with respect to the participation of Taiwan in the World Health Organization. I noted, in the fight against the SARS epidemic, that unfortunately Taiwan was unable to avail itself of the assistance of the World Health Organization at an early stage in this epidemic. Obviously the World Health Organization plays a very critical role in that.

I am calling today once again on the Government of Canada, with the upcoming meeting of the World Health Assembly in just a few days, to listen to the voices of parliamentarians from all parties in the House and to support the application of Taiwan for observer status in the World Health Organization.

I would note that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Commons voted, by a vote of 10-3, in support of Taiwan's bid for observer status in the World Health Organization. Members of all five parties represented in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs supported that motion. It was passed overwhelmingly. Yet the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada showed total contempt for that decision and that recommendation by the committee.

*Adjournment Debate*

I want to note as well that it is essential that Canada support Taiwan's application for observer status in the World Health Organization because, as it now stands, the Government of Canada has given a veto power to China to block the involvement of Taiwan in the World Health Organization. This is completely unacceptable. China has never exercised any authority whatsoever over Taiwan's health care system. Nor has China contributed its national budget in any way to the health needs of Taiwan.

Obviously China has long opposed Taiwan's World Health Organization application. Beyond that, it has actually obstructed the people of Taiwan. For example, in 1998 it prevented WHO experts from helping Taiwan combat a deadly outbreak of enterovirus. The following year, in 1999, when a massive earthquake struck central Taiwan killing over 2,400 people and leaving more than 10,000 injured, China helped block the shipment of emergency medical equipment.

Why is the Liberal Government of Canada prepared to give a veto to China? When we look at the SARS epidemic for example, China has handled this in an absolutely negligent way. It knew in November of last year about the possibility of this epidemic and yet did nothing whatsoever to combat it. Why should the people of Taiwan have to depend on China for their help?

I am calling today once again on the government to do the right thing, to support Taiwan's application, to stop this phony argument that it has to be an independent state when in fact there are a number of entities including the little Island of Niue which has a population of about 2,000 people or the Cook Islands which are members but not UN member states.

I am calling now on the government to explain exactly why the 23 million people of Taiwan should not have the opportunity, not only to avail themselves of the benefits of WHO membership, but also to contribute their tremendous expertise in the medical field or the scientific field, through the WHO, to the people of the world. The time is now. All parties have representatives supporting this. I urge the government to act to support Taiwan's observer status.

•(1835)

**Ms. Aileen Carroll (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, at the outset before addressing the arguments put forward by the hon. member, I find it rather appalling to hear him use the word contempt to describe the way the Minister of Foreign Affairs acts. Quite frankly it is beyond the nature of this man, with his experience and high regard for the committee, the work of committees and Parliament.

As far as China having a veto power, it has veto power because it is a permanent member of the Security Council, not because Canada has assigned it any veto power.

However to address the nature of the issue at hand, like Canada, Taiwan has also been affected by SARS. Authorities in Taiwan continue to work diligently, both domestically and with the international community, to curtail the spread of this disease.

The World Health Organization has indicated that there is no practical impediment to the exchange of information and cooperation between the World Health Organization and Taiwan that might threaten the health of Taiwanese in some manner. Nor would Taiwan

be barred from humanitarian assistance from the WHO in the event of a medical emergency.

[*Translation*]

The WHO is indirectly cooperating with Taiwan authorities by setting up measures to curtail the spread of the disease. Its cooperation centres have sent teams to Taiwan to help resolve certain health issues.

[*English*]

As a member of the international community, Taiwan is currently able freely to access health information from the World Health Organization either directly from the website or through WHO's collaboration centres.

Taiwan is able to participate in a whole range of WHO health promotion programs under current circumstances. Taiwan has not been denied access to medical information and assistance that it requires.

With specific reference to the SARS outbreak, Taiwan has received assistance from the United States Centers for Disease Control, CDC, as we did in Toronto, where the World Health Organization has a collaboration centre.

Specifically, one, on March 16, 2003 the CDC, at the request of the WHO, dispatched two officials to Taiwan to assess the SARS cases. Two, information on Taiwan's reported cases of SARS have been included on the WHO's website since March 18. Three, Taiwan has the information it needs to deal with the outbreak of SARS through the CDC which is a de facto link to the World Health Organization.

Taiwan in effect has the same information as others, including Canada, to deal with the SARS outbreak. The only difference for Taiwan is that information has been provided through the CDC, a WHO collaboration centre, and not directly through the WHO. This has in no way affected Taiwan's ability to deal with this outbreak, nor has it adversely affected the health and safety of the Taiwanese.

Would that this issue were about the health and safety of the Taiwanese rather than the politically driven reason for which it is constantly brought forward.

In closing, Canada would support a formula for Taiwan's participation other than as a full member as long as this formula was in accordance with the WHO constitutional rules and procedures and had received broad based approval of WHO members.

**Mr. Svend Robinson:** Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has just said that Canada would support Taiwan's membership if it is in accordance with WHO rules.

I pointed out to her that in fact observer status would be entirely in keeping with the rules of the World Health Organization. Indeed, there are a couple of entities, the Cook Islands and Niue which are not UN member states that are members. There are five other entities, the Holy See, Palestine, the Order of Malta, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies that are allowed to participate actively in the activities of the WHO by sending observers.

*Adjournment Debate*

If the government were prepared to show some leadership and to listen to the all party recommendation of the foreign affairs committee, clearly it should be supporting observer status.

The parliamentary secretary made frankly the absurd statements that of course China has a veto because it is one of the five powers of the Security Council. This is the World Health Organization we are talking about, not the Security Council. There is no veto as such. I pointed out that it is Canada that is giving China a veto through consensus rules.

• (1840)

**Ms. Aileen Carroll:** Madam Speaker, I thought that the hon. member could connect those dots. One has to be a member of the United Nations in order to be a full observer at the World Health Organization. China being a member of the Security Council most likely would be inclined to veto such an action.

Within the context though, as the member mentioned, of Canada's one China policy and with the absence of diplomatic relations, we have had the flexibility to develop and maintain strong cultural, economic and people to people relations with Taiwan. These unofficial ties, which continue to grow, are well demonstrated by the activities of the Canadian businesses and cultural communities which form such important links.

The World Health Organization has said that it is a UN specialized agency and its constitution, i.e., that of the WHO, provides that only states are eligible for membership. Taiwan is not recognized by the United Nations credentials committee as a state. Furthermore there are no provisions in the WHO's constitution for the type of ongoing observer status sought by Taiwan.

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, Canadian Alliance):** Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the late show and get a little more time to harangue the government. In this case we are going after the maritime helicopter replacement. It is very hard to get everything locked into a 30 second question, so four minutes seems like an eternity.

In the 10 year saga over which the helicopter replacement has dragged its heels in the political process here, we still have not even placed an order yet. We have not even nailed down what it is we are going to order. Ten years have gone by and these poor old Sea Kings are just getting older by the day.

There is a common thread we have seen through all of this procurement process over the past 10 years and that common thread is political interference. I know you find that hard to believe, Madam Speaker, but it is absolutely true. As more and more facts come to light, we see that it was politics that cancelled the order in the first

place. It was politics that debundled the order. Alfonso Gagliano, who was the minister at that time, said in July 2000, "I just do what I am told, I am just a good little minister". Who told him what to do? His political masters, of course.

The government has never really fully explained why the contract was debundled. It has never been done anywhere else in the world, not or in any industrialized country, for that matter. Nobody could find out why. Then the government clung to that stupid ideology for two and a half years. Now we have the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of National Defence both taking credit for rebundling it. Another two and a half years have squeaked by and we still do not have anything.

The Liberals throw around a lot of fancy titles like "statement of requirements". That is what this late show is based on. The other day the Minister of National Defence said that the government had not changed the statement of requirements since 1999, that nothing had changed. I guess technically that is true. The statement of requirements has not changed, but what has changed is the requirement specifications that make that statement of requirements into a helicopter. That has been played with, up, down, sideways and all over the map.

I have done up a bit of a flow chart as to what the government started out with and what it has dumbed it down to at this particular point. There are things like the fact that there is no requirement now for structural crashworthiness. It used to be that 85% had to remain structurally integral. Now there is nothing. As well, there is no requirement now for a safe landing after a single engine failure. Originally operators had to be able to maintain a hover by losing an engine. When it is only a two engine helicopter, of course that can be difficult, especially if one is under load at the time. Now there is no backlash if an aircraft is lost because it cannot maintain a hover, so there goes the crew and several hundred million dollars worth of stuff. There is no backlash if operators dump out their full cargo and jettison everything to try to maintain and limp back to shore because they have lost an engine. It is huge.

There is no requirement now to maintain a fuel reserve once the helicopter is back to base. It used to be that it had to have 30 minutes of fuel on board for adverse conditions. That is gone. There is no requirement for a tactical air navigation system. That can always be bolted in later, but that is what gets the helicopter back to the safe base. It is not there anymore. The payload has been lightened by 500 pounds since 1999.

*Adjournment Debate*

The big thing was mission reconfiguration. There was nothing in the original one that allowed for anything to happen at that end: an hour and the helicopter was on its way. Now there is no interoperability. The operators fly back to ship or shore and have three hours to reconfigure the helicopter to get out and rescue somebody. As hon. members well know, in a rescue minutes count and now operators will be allowed three hours to go back to shore, tear things apart and then fly back out again, and flight time is added to that.

That is how much this has changed, so when the Minister of National Defence stands in the House and says that nothing has changed since 1999, it is a bald-faced abuse of the truth.

• (1845)

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am honoured to be here to replace the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

Since coming into service the Sea King helicopters have done an outstanding job in a wide range of roles, including peace support, maritime surveillance and search and rescue operations. Canadians take great pride in the accomplishments of the Sea Kings and their dedicated crews.

The Sea Kings remain safe and capable aircraft. However, as the Minister of National Defence has stated very clearly on several occasions, the Sea King helicopters have growing limitations and need to be replaced. That is why it is the government's goal to replace the Sea Kings as soon as is practical.

When spending taxpayers' money on a large project such as this one, it is the government's responsibility to decide on the correct procurement strategy. The government has developed a procurement process that will ensure the Canadian Forces gets the equipment it needs at the right price for Canadians. It minimizes the risk and the cost. In fact, this procurement process is designed to ensure fairness, openness and transparency. Most important, the government will ensure that any new helicopters meet the Canadian Forces operational requirements. The government will not compromise on this.

The statement of operational requirements was drafted in response to the new strategic environment, not that of the cold war. It is based on military analysis, extensive statistical research and realistic force planning scenarios. The statement of operational requirements has not changed and will not change.

The maritime helicopter requirement specifications, which are the detailed technical specifications, continue to be governed by the principles established in the statement of operational requirements.

Changes that have been made to the technical specifications were the result of an unprecedented level of open and transparent dialogue with industry and stakeholders. However, these changes to the technical specifications were only made when they conformed with the integrity and intent of the statement of operational requirements and following a review by its authors.

In short, the Minister of National Defence has developed a procurement process that will ensure the Canadian Forces gets the equipment it needs at the right price for Canadians.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the men and women of the Canadian Forces. Time and again, the men and women of the Canadian Forces have demonstrated their ability to meet their commitments both at home and abroad, and time and again the superb work of the Canadian Forces has been repeatedly praised by our friends and allies. The hard work and dedication of the Canadian Forces is a source of pride for all Canadians.

**Mr. Gerry Ritz:** Madam Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for that. I have to wonder why natural resources is involved in this when we have public works and defence; I guess she drew the short straw. She is the only who would read that canned speech.

Certainly we are not in the cold war anymore. We are in a war on terrorism. These helicopters will have to work from the heat of the jungles to the cold of the Arctic to rescues off in the north Atlantic where it gets really nasty. We need a good quality replacement vehicle. We need something that is at least as good as the Sea Kings we have.

Nobody questions the role the Sea Kings have played. It has been heroic. In spite of the government, they have done the job for an extra 20 years and they will have to do it for another 10 years until we finally get around to taking delivery of something.

This in no way serves our armed forces in a proper way. No one could say this is the right way to run a procurement process.

I only hope that when the member for LaSalle—Émard becomes prime minister, if he gets to that point, he finally has the political chutzpah to order the right helicopter, because it could be his own crews for CSL that are adrift.

*Adjournment Debate*

**Ms. Nancy Karetak-Lindell:** Madam Speaker, again I repeat that the statement of operational requirements has not changed and will not change. I think we can take some comfort in that the military is very actively involved in this process. It is being asked to provide the specifications. The amount of work that is going on between the department and the military I think is something to be very proud of. I think we will see the good helicopters come into the Canadian Forces in a very short time.

● (1850)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Bakopanos):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:50 p.m.)

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