



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Monday, February 2, 2004**

—  
**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, February 2, 2004

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*Prayers*

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## OPENING OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE 37TH PARLIAMENT

• (1500)

[*English*]

The Parliament which had been prorogued on November 12, 2003, met this day at Ottawa for the dispatch of business.

The House met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

The Speaker read a communication from the Secretary to the Governor General announcing that Their Excellencies, the Governor General and John Ralston Saul, would arrive at the Peace Tower at 3 p.m. on Monday, February 2, 2004, and that when it was indicated that all was in readiness Their Excellencies would proceed to the chamber of the Senate to formally open the third session of the 37th Parliament of Canada.

A message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, it is the desire of Her Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House attend her immediately in the Senate chamber.

Accordingly the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

*And being returned to the Commons chamber:*

\* \* \*

• (1640)

### CONSERVATIVE PARTY

**The Speaker:** Order. Before we proceed to the next business, I would like to make a brief statement which may be of assistance to hon. members.

[*Translation*]

I wish to take this opportunity to welcome all members back to the House for what I am sure will be an interesting and no doubt vigorous session.

[*English*]

I have in hand letters from the leaders and House leaders of the former Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservative parties requesting that 15 Progressive Conservative members and all Canadian Alliance members be henceforth recognized as Conservative members and be seated together in the chamber.

As a result, seats have been reallocated following the usual practices. As the largest party in opposition to the government in the House, the Conservative Party shall be styled the official opposition. I have been informed that the hon. member for Macleod is the leader of the official opposition.

As hon. members know, it has been our practice that individual members have the right to decide for themselves their party affiliation. A number of members of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Canadian Alliance have decided not to participate in the union of the two parties and have informed me that they wish to sit as independent members. Here again, in accordance with House practice, the Chair has acceded to these requests, allocated each of these members a seat in the chamber, and noted how they wish henceforth to be designated.

[*Translation*]

If there are any issues of a procedural nature arising out of this realignment here in the Chamber, they can be dealt with as circumstances require. As Speaker, I will, of course, deal with any matters raised by members in conformity with our rules and practices.

\* \* \*

### JAMIE BRENDAN MURPHY

**The Speaker:** I want to draw the attention of the members to an important matter.

[*English*]

I ask for the attention of the House as we rise to pay tribute to Corporal Jamie Brendan Murphy, a soldier from Conception Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador, who was killed last Tuesday while on patrol in Kabul, Afghanistan, with the battle group Third Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment.

We share the grief felt by Corporal Murphy's family, by his kith and kin, and by his comrades in arms.

I ask hon. members to please, rise and spend a moment in silence in his memory.

[*Editor's Note: The House stood in silence*]

*The Address*

[Translation]

**OATHS OF OFFICE**

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-1, respecting the administration of oaths of office.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

\* \* \*

[English]

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that when this House did attend Her Excellency this day in the Senate chamber, Her Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament. To prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy, which is as follows:

*Honourable Members of the Senate,  
Members of the House of Commons,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

I am pleased to greet you at the beginning of 2004, when, as Canadians, we know that our history and our capacity for change are a part of our strength as a complex and modern country. Human dignity and respect for others and a realistic awareness of our past make us a mature nation and help us to move forward to express our true values.

We have our Canadian values and we can bring them into the international sphere in a humanitarian and effective way. As Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Forces, I have the privilege of seeing our values as Canadians in action.

When I visited our troops in Kabul, I could see that our troops play a vital role of courage and commitment. In the past year, we have suffered tragic loss and injury to our soldiers while carrying out Canada's commitment to peace. I said to the soldiers that every single one of them carries within him or her a microcosm of our Canadian character. A desire to create a world where fairness, justice and decency reign.

That part of the Canadian character comes out in civilian ways when we face natural disasters—such as the devastation of the fires in British Columbia or the destruction of Hurricane Juan on our eastern coast. My visit to Kelowna and Kamloops after the devastating fires confirmed to me that Canadians, even in distress and loss, think of others. Many assured me that their situations were not as bad as their neighbours' and were more concerned about how others would cope.

It is this ability to look at the needs of others, to feel compassion for their suffering as part of our own, which speaks to the best of us as Canadians. I think this comes from the fact that we have a society that is caring, in which Aboriginals, Francophones, Anglophones—and immigrants from all over the world—play a significant part. Our history has prepared us to be innovative in the modern world, where diversity counts for so much.

I preside over citizenship ceremonies across this country whenever I can, most recently in Saskatoon 10 days ago. But whether it's in Saint John, Quebec City, Ottawa, Calgary, I speak to our newest Canadians with optimism. Because I know that, as they

look around them, they will see examples of what it is like to live the truly Canadian life, to accept and be accepted, to understand and be understood.

When we look around us at Canada today, we see many strengths, many achievements—a society with an enviable quality of life and so much potential, so much talent.

We can build on these strengths to expand our horizons and enlarge our ambitions.

Canadians have already taken up that challenge. They have embraced change with a new confidence. Canadians know who they are and what they want. They want a government that helps shape that course, that leads the way—and that also engages them in building the future.

We want governments to reflect our values in the actions they take. This includes living within our means; investing as we can afford; and looking to the future.

Canadians want their government to do more than just settle for the status quo. They want a government that can lead change, develop a national consensus on common goals and have the wisdom to help all of us achieve them.

The goals of the Government of Canada are clear.

We want a Canada with strong social foundations, where people are treated with dignity, where they are given a hand when needed, where no one is left behind. Where Canadians—families and communities—have the tools to find local solutions for local problems.

We want a strong economy for the 21st century, with well-paying and meaningful work; ready at the forefront of the next big technological revolution; and built on a solid fiscal foundation.

We want for Canada a role of pride and influence in the world, where we speak with an independent voice, bringing distinctive Canadian values to international affairs. It is time to take our place, meet our responsibilities, carry our weight.

Today the Government is proposing an ambitious agenda to set our country on this path. An agenda that should be measured and judged by the goals we have set and by the resolve and constancy by which they are pursued.

Achievements of worth and permanence take time. But that is no excuse for inaction. The Government is committed to making the down payments needed now and to build consistently on these steps as resources permit. So that, a decade hence, we will see that today we made the right choices for the country.

This Speech from the Throne marks the start of a new government; a new agenda; a new way of working.

*The Address*

It marks a renewal, built on partnership, opportunity, achievement—and the real engagement of Canadians.

**Changing the way things work in Ottawa**

The path to achievement begins with making sure that Canadians believe their government, so that they can believe *in* government.

We must re-engage citizens in Canada's political life. And this has to begin in the place where it should mean the most—in Parliament—by making Parliament work better. That means reconnecting citizens with their Members of Parliament.

That means a new partnership with provinces and territories, focused on the interests of Canadians. That also means greater transparency, ethical standards, and financial accountability in how we govern.

The Government of Canada is determined to return Parliament to the centre of national debate and decision making and to restore the public's faith and trust in the integrity and good management of government.

To that end, it will, as a first step, immediately table in Parliament an action plan for democratic reform.

This will include significantly more free votes, so that Members can represent the views of their constituents as they see fit.

This will include an enhanced role for Members to shape laws.

An enhanced role for Parliamentary Committees, so that Members can hold the Government to greater account—and can play a key role in reviewing senior appointments.

A more active role for Parliamentary Secretaries, for greater engagement between the Government and Parliament and with Canadians.

Significantly enhancing the role of all MPs will make Parliament what it was intended to be—a place where Canadians can see and hear their views debated and their interests heard. In short, a place where they can have an influence on the policies that affect their lives.

**Restoring trust and accountability**

Democratic renewal must also restore trust. Too many Canadians are alienated from their governments. This must be reversed.

Canadians want the Government of Canada to do better in meeting ethical standards. That is why, as one of its first acts, the Government enhanced the ethics code for all federal public office holders. And that is also why the Government will ask Parliament to immediately reinstate and adopt legislation establishing an independent Ethics Commissioner reporting to Parliament and an Ethics Officer for the Senate.

And this is why the Government created a new agency for continuing excellence in public service. A professional, non-partisan public service—drawing on the talents and commitment of Canadians from every region—is a source of strength and advantage. Our public servants have an important role in this agenda of change. They want to improve how we govern. Canadians deserve the best public service possible—and our agenda demands it.

Democratic renewal means that government programs deliver on objectives, that they deliver what matters in people's lives. Canadians expect government to respect their tax dollars. They want to have the confidence that public money—their money—is wisely spent.

To this end, the Government is launching an ongoing process of expenditure review, overseen by a new Committee of Cabinet. This will ensure that spending reflects priorities and that every tax dollar is invested with care to achieve results for Canadians.

**A stronger relationship**

Democratic renewal means opening the doors in Ottawa to the voices of our provinces and territories—all our regions—and adopting new ways of working together on behalf of Canadians.

Jurisdiction must be respected. But Canadians do not go about their daily lives worried about which jurisdiction does this or that. They expect, rightly, that their governments will co-operate in common purpose for the common good—each working from its strength. They expect them to just get on with the job.

That is why the Government is determined to put relations with provinces and territories on a more constructive footing.

**Strengthening Canada's social foundations**

Changing the way things work in Government will help all Canadians to achieve their goals, starting with strengthening Canada's social foundations.

That means ensuring that all Canadians have the opportunity to develop and use skills and knowledge to their fullest. It means removing barriers to opportunity. It means building on the fundamental fairness of Canadians. Because our enormous good fortune demands nothing less.

This philosophy is given concrete expression in our system of universal health care; in social programs that seek to level the playing field for everyone; in programs to provide our seniors with income assistance and care when needed; in our openness to immigrants and refugees and abhorrence of racism; in our commitment to gender equality; in measures to better the opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians.

**Partnership for a healthy Canada**

The Government's commitment to health care rests on one fundamental tenet: that every Canadian have timely access to quality care, regardless of income or geography—access when they need it.

### *The Address*

The Government is committed to this goal: universal, high-quality, publicly funded health care, consistent with the principles of medicare, as set out in the Canada Health Act.

The length of waiting times for the most important diagnoses and treatments is a litmus test of our health care system. These waiting times must be reduced.

This will require fundamental reform and improvement in the facilities and procedures of the entire health care system.

But there is much we can do right now.

The Prime Minister announced on Friday that the Government of Canada has determined that, without going into deficit, it will now be able to provide a further \$2 billion health-care transfer to the provinces and territories this year. Funds to help reduce waiting times; to improve access to diagnostic services; to provide for more doctors and more nurses.

Looking forward, the Government will work with its provincial and territorial partners on the necessary reforms and long-term sustainability of the health system. And it will support the Health Council in the development of information on which waiting-time objectives can be set, and by which Canadians can judge progress toward them.

Canadians also want to be protected from emerging threats to their health, from global epidemics to contaminated water. Safeguarding the health of Canadians is a top priority of this Government.

The shock of SARS demonstrated vividly our vulnerability to infectious diseases that may be incubated anywhere on earth.

Diseases such as SARS and the recent avian flu pose threats which increased global mobility can only make worse.

The Government will therefore take the lead in establishing a strong and responsive public health system, starting with a new Canada Public Health Agency that will ensure that Canada is linked, both nationally and globally, in a network for disease control and emergency response.

The Government will also appoint a new Chief Public Health Officer for Canada—and undertake a much-needed overhaul of federal health protection through a Canada Health Protection Act.

Strengthening our social foundations also means improving the overall health of Canadians—starting with health promotion to help reduce the incidence of avoidable disease. The Government will work with all of its partners to that end, following the age-old prescription that prevention is the best cure.

### **Caring for our children**

The future of our children is, quite literally, Canada's future.

Science teaches that the early years can shape—or limit—one's future, that early and effective intervention can have enduring benefits.

Governments are not parents, but they do have a role to play in helping to make sure that families get the supports and tools that they need and in protecting children from exploitation and abuse.

We must ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life; that all of Canada's children enter school ready to learn; that we protect their health, their happiness, and their freedom to grow in mind and in body without fear. These are the foundations of healthy early childhood development.

That is the goal. And there are important steps we can take now—down payments on an enduring commitment.

First, in co-operation with the provinces and territories, the Government will accelerate initiatives under the existing Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care, which means more quality child care more quickly.

Second, to help communities identify children whose readiness to learn is at risk, the Government will extend its successful community pilot project, *Understanding the Early Years*, to at least 100 communities. Communities themselves can do much for their children with the right knowledge and tools.

Third, the Government will do more to ensure the safety of children through a strategy to counter sexual exploitation of children on the Internet and by reinstating child protection legislation.

### **Creating opportunity for Canadians with disabilities**

Many Canadians with disabilities are ready to contribute but confront difficult obstacles in the workplace and in their communities. And too often, families are left on their own to care for a severely disabled relative. Here too, the Government of Canada has a role.

We want a Canada in which citizens with disabilities have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from Canada's prosperity—as learners, workers, volunteers, and family members.

Canada cannot afford to squander the talents of people with disabilities or turn its back on those who seek to provide care and a life of dignity for family members with severe disabilities.

The Government will start by working with the provinces and territories to fill the gaps in education and skills development and in workplace supports and workplace accommodation for people with disabilities.

It will lead by example in supporting the hiring, accommodation and retention of Canadians with disabilities in the Government of Canada—the nation's largest employer—and in federally regulated industries.

*The Address*

The Government will also improve the fairness of the tax system for people with disabilities, and their supporting families, based on the findings of the Advisory Committee on Tax Measures, which will report this fall and will implement early actions in areas of priority.

**Aboriginal Canadians**

Aboriginal Canadians have not fully shared in our nation's good fortune. While some progress has been made, the conditions in far too many Aboriginal communities can only be described as shameful. This offends our values. It is in our collective interest to turn the corner. And we must start now.

Our goal is to see Aboriginal children get a better start in life as a foundation for greater progress in acquiring the education and work-force skills needed to succeed.

Our goal is to see real economic opportunities for Aboriginal individuals and communities.

To see Aboriginal Canadians participating fully in national life, on the basis of historic rights and agreements—with greater economic self-reliance, a better quality of life.

The Government of Canada will work with First Nations to improve governance in their communities—to enhance transparency and accountability—because this is the prerequisite to effective self-government and economic development. Aboriginal leadership is committed to this end and rapid progress is essential.

In order to support governance capacity in Aboriginal communities and to enhance effective dialogue, the Government will, in co-operation with First Nations, establish an independent Centre for First Nations Government.

The Government will also focus on education and skills development, because this is a prerequisite to individual opportunity and full participation. To pursue this goal, the Government will work with provinces and territories and Aboriginal partners in a renewed Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy.

Too often, the needs of Aboriginal people off reserve are caught up in jurisdictional wrangling. These issues cannot deter us. The Government of Canada will work with its partners on practical solutions to help Aboriginal people respond to the unique challenges they face. To this end, the Government will expand the successful Urban Aboriginal Strategy with willing provinces and municipalities.

The Government will also engage other levels of government and Métis leadership on the place of the Métis in its policies.

The Government is committed to a more coherent approach to Aboriginal issues. To focus this effort, it has established a new Cabinet Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister; a Parliamentary Secretary; and an Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat in the Privy Council Office.

**Great places to live—a new deal for communities**

Our communities, our towns, our cities are key to our social goals and our economic competitiveness. Large and small, rural and urban,

Canada's communities are facing new challenges, often without sufficient resources or the tools they need.

Canada depends on communities that can attract the best talent and compete for investment as vibrant centres of commerce, learning, and culture. We want communities that provide affordable housing, good transit, quality health care, excellent schools, safe neighbourhoods, and abundant green spaces.

To this end, the Government of Canada is committed to a new deal for Canada's municipalities.

A new deal that targets the infrastructure needed to support quality of life and sustainable growth.

A new deal that helps our communities become more dynamic, more culturally rich, more cohesive, and partners in strengthening Canada's social foundations.

A new deal that delivers reliable, predictable and long-term funding.

Therefore, the Government will work with provinces to share with municipalities a portion of gas tax revenues or to determine other fiscal mechanisms which achieve the same goals.

This will take time and the agreement of other governments. But the Government of Canada is prepared now, as a down payment, to act in its own jurisdiction by providing all municipalities with full relief from the portion of the Goods and Services Tax they now pay.

Over the next decade, this will provide Canada's municipalities with approximately \$7 billion of stable new funding to help meet critical priorities.

The Government will also move to quickly commit funds within our existing infrastructure programs, so that our partners can plan properly.

Together, these are real and ongoing investments in urban transit, affordable housing, clean water, and good roads. Canada's municipalities asked for this. The Government has acted.

Canada's municipalities can play a crucial role in helping the Government meet its national priorities—for the integration of immigrants, for opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians living in urban centres, for tackling homelessness, and for emergency preparedness and response. The new deal means that city hall has a real seat at the table of national change.

And the Government will help communities to help themselves.

### *The Address*

One of the best ways to do this is to get behind the remarkable people who are applying entrepreneurial skills, not for profit, but rather to enhance the social and environmental conditions in our communities right across Canada.

These new approaches to community development—sometimes referred to as the “social economy”—are producing more and more success stories about a turn around in individual lives and distressed neighbourhoods—communities working to combat homelessness, address poverty and clean up the environment.

The Government of Canada wants to support those engaged in this entrepreneurial social movement. It will increase their access to resources and tools. The Government will, for example, work to widen the scope of programs currently available to small and medium-sized enterprises to include social enterprises.

The voluntary sector and the millions of Canadian volunteers are essential contributors to the quality, fairness and vitality of our communities. The Government will continue to advance the Voluntary Sector Initiative, to strengthen the capacity and voice of philanthropic and charitable organizations and to mobilize volunteers.

Another defining characteristic of our communities and of our reputation around the world is the vitality and excellence of our cultural life. Canada’s artists and cultural enterprises are among our best ambassadors, as well as being an increasingly dynamic element of the knowledge economy. Their work holds a mirror on our society and builds a legacy for future generations.

The Government will work with parliamentarians to modernize our arts and culture policies and federal cultural institutions to bring to bear the new technological possibilities of the digital age and to reflect Canada’s regional diversity and multiculturalism.

Linguistic duality is at the heart of our identity. It is our image in the world. It opens doors for us.

The Government will nurture this asset, which benefits all Canadians. It will ensure that minority language communities have the tools that enable their members to fully contribute to the development of Canadian society.

#### **Building a 21st century economy**

A strong economy, built to succeed in the 21st century, is the precondition to fulfilling our aspirations, as a nation and as individuals.

A nation’s social and economic goals are inseparable. A stronger economy requires stronger social foundations. And if we want to build a fairer, more equitable society, we need a stronger economy.

Where do we want to be a decade from now?

We want a Canada that is a world leader in developing and applying the path-breaking technologies of the 21st century—biotechnology, environmental technology, information and communications technologies, health technologies, and nanotechnology. Applying these capabilities to all sectors to build globally competitive firms, from start-ups to multinationals. And creating high-quality jobs that will meet the ambitions of young Canadians—

and keep them in this country, working to build an even greater Canada.

We foresee a Canada that is a magnet for capital and entrepreneurs from around the world.

A Canada where the increasing number of women entrepreneurs have every opportunity to succeed and contribute a vital new dimension to our economy.

A Canada built on innovation with world-class research universities, smart regulation and innovative financing, all combining to make Canada a global leader in the commercialization of bright ideas.

A Canada where the benefits of the 21st century economy are being reaped from coast to coast to coast—on our farms, in our fishing, forest, and mining industries, and in our rural communities where modern communications are helping to surmount the barrier of distance.

This will be achieved primarily through the efforts of Canadians themselves. But government has an essential enabling role.

A sound macroeconomic environment is fundamental. To ensure that the hard-won gains of the past decade are never squandered, the Government of Canada is unalterably committed to fiscal prudence, as evidenced by annual balanced budgets and steady reduction in the debt relative to the size of the economy. This Government will not spend itself into deficit.

Canada is a trading nation. And a 21st century economy is an economy open to the world. Canadian goods, services, capital, people, and knowledge must be able to reach international markets.

There are growing opportunities for Canadian exporters and investors to complement our enormously successful relationship with the United States by building closer economic ties with other regions of the world. In particular, more attention will be focused on such newly emerging economic giants as China, India, and Brazil.

#### **Lifelong learning**

Investing in people will be Canada’s most important economic investment.

The Government’s goal is to ensure that a lack of financial resources will not be allowed to deny, to those with the motivation and capacity, the opportunity to learn and aspire to excellence in pursuing a skilled trade, a community college diploma, or university degree.

To advance this objective, the Government of Canada will work with provinces and territories to modernize the Canada Student Loans Program to help overcome financial barriers to post-secondary education and training. It will update and improve grants and loans to increase access for middle-and low-income families and their children and to reflect the rising cost of education.

Loan limits will be increased, in recognition of the rising cost of education.



*The Address*

Eligible expenses will be broadened to include the new essentials, such as computers.

Family income thresholds will be raised to improve access for middle income families, squeezed by rising costs.

Measures will be taken to improve loan terms for part-time students.

But the answer to improved access must go beyond simply more generous loans, because a growing debt load poses its own limits, both psychologically and financially.

The Government will therefore provide a new grant for low-income students, to cover a portion of the tuition cost of the first year of post-secondary education.

More is also needed to encourage greater savings by families for their children's education, starting from the earliest years of life. The Registered Education Savings Plan and associated savings grant have been extraordinarily successful stimulants, but participation by lower income families—often those who could most benefit—has been disappointingly low. The Government will therefore create new incentives that truly work to encourage low-income families to begin investing, right from the birth of their children, for their long-term education.

To meet the challenges of the new economy, Canada's workers must have the opportunity to upgrade their skills, to improve their literacy, to learn on the job, to move onto the path of lifelong learning.

The Government will therefore refine and enhance its programs to encourage skills upgrading, in concert with sector councils, unions, and business.

The Government will also work with provinces to update labour market programming to better reflect the realities of work in the 21st century, such as the growth of self-employment and the need for continuous upgrading of skills.

We will also deepen the pool of Canada's talent and skills by ensuring more successful integration of new immigrants into the economy and into communities. Immigrants have helped to build Canada from its inception and will be key to our future prosperity. The Government will do its part to ensure speedier recognition of foreign credentials and prior work experience. It will also implement measures to inform prospective immigrants and encourage the acquisition of necessary credentials before they arrive in Canada.

**Science and technology**

Canadian entrepreneurs have made great strides in building the innovative, technology-enabled economy needed to succeed in the years ahead. The Government of Canada has helped lay the foundation for even greater success with very substantial investments in basic research—\$13 billion since 1997.

These investments are ensuring a continued flow of basic knowledge and highly trained people on which our future economic success depends.

Now we must do much more to ensure that our knowledge investment is converted to commercial success. We need to do more

to get our ideas and innovations out of our minds and into the marketplace.

Our small, innovative firms face two key obstacles—access to adequate early-stage financing; and the capacity to conduct the research and development needed to commercialize their ideas and really grow their business.

The Government will help to overcome these obstacles—building, for example, on the venture financing capabilities of the Business Development Bank.

The Government will create access to capital for the commercialization of science in areas where we can be among the world leaders—in environment, in health, in biotechnology, and in nanotechnology.

The Government will also build on the experience and nationwide reach of the National Research Council to help small firms bridge the commercialization gap by providing the research and expertise that small business cannot develop on its own.

To help integrate and focus these efforts, Canada's new National Science Advisor will re-engage universities, colleges, and enterprise in a truly national science agenda.

**Regional and rural development**

The 21st century economy promises opportunity for all parts of Canada. The objective of the Government is to ensure that every region of the country has the opportunity to move forward, socially and economically, on a rising tide of progress. As we share opportunity, so too will we share prosperity.

The Government therefore remains committed to supporting economic development through the regional agencies where the focus must be on strengthening the sinews of an economy for the 21st century, building on indigenous strength.

The Government will place increased emphasis on opportunities to add greater value to natural resources through application of advanced technology and know-how; on opportunities to develop Canada's energy resources and be a leader in environmental stewardship; and on opportunities to maximize the potential of our vast coastal and offshore areas through a new Oceans Action Plan.

It will develop a Northern strategy, ensuring that economic development related to energy and mining is brought on stream in partnership with Northern Canadians, based on stewardship of our most fragile northern ecosystems.

The Government is dedicated to Canada's farm economy and to taking the steps necessary to safeguard access to international markets and to ensure that farmers are not left to bear alone the consequences of circumstances beyond their control. It is also committed to fostering a technologically advanced agricultural sector with the supporting infrastructure of transportation and applied science to make the competitiveness of Canadian farmers and the safety of our food second to none in world markets.

*The Address***Sustainable development**

Safeguarding our natural environment—in the here and now, and for generations to come—is one of the great responsibilities of citizens and governments in the 21st century.

The tide of global population and the imperatives of economic development—no longer restricted to the small minority of rich countries—make sustainable development a challenge of national and global magnitude.

Canadians, as stewards of vast geography and abundant resources, feel a keen sense of responsibility to help the world meet the environmental challenge.

And in so doing, to show how this challenge can be turned to advantage through leadership in “green technologies”; through more energy-efficient transportation and housing; and through non-polluting industrial processes. All of which will stimulate innovation, new market opportunities, and cleaner communities.

This spirit will animate Canada’s approach to climate change.

Halting the increasingly damaging impact of human activity on climate is a project of global scale and decades duration.

The Government of Canada will respect its commitments to the Kyoto accord on climate change in a way that produces long-term and enduring results while maintaining a strong and growing economy. It will do so by developing an equitable national plan, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments and other stakeholders.

We have begun, and we will persevere. And we will go beyond Kyoto to strengthen our environmental stewardship.

First, the Government will begin by putting its own house in order. It will undertake a 10-year, \$3.5 billion program to clean up contaminated sites for which the Government is responsible. And the Government of Canada will augment this with a \$500 million program of similar duration to do its part in the remediation of certain other sites, notably the Sydney tar ponds.

Second, the Government will intensify its commitment to clean air and clean water. We will engage the United States on trans-boundary issues and the provinces to achieve more stringent national guidelines on air and water quality. And we are committing the resources needed to ensure safe drinking water in First Nations’ communities.

Third, building on recommendations of the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, the Government will start incorporating key indicators on clean water, clean air, and emissions reduction into its decision making.

Fourth, the Government will increase the resources to support innovative environmental technologies and further encourage their commercialization.

Fifth, we will engage Canadians directly. Our One Tonne Challenge aims to raise awareness and provide Canadians with information on how their individual consumption choices contribute to the emissions that drive climate change. The objective—the challenge—is to reduce emissions by 1,000 kilograms per person,

per year. Because environmental stewardship must be everybody’s responsibility.

**Canada’s role in the world**

Canadians are uniquely positioned for the new global realities—open to the world, comfortable with the interdependence of nations, aware of our global responsibilities.

Canadians want their country to play a distinctive and independent role in making the world more secure, more peaceful, more co-operative, more open. They want to see Canada’s place of pride and influence in the world restored.

What kind of world do we want to see a decade from now?

We want to see the benefits of global interdependence spread more fairly throughout the world.

We want agreement on new rules governing international actions when a government fails to protect its own people from tyranny and oppression.

We want to see multilateral institutions that work. No one nation can manage the consequences of global interdependence on its own.

We want to see greater collaboration among nations to ensure that economic policies go hand in hand with stronger social programs to alleviate hunger, poverty, and disease, and to help to raise the standards of living in developing countries.

Canada can contribute to achieving these goals.

We can play a distinctive role based on our values—the rule of law, liberty, democracy, equality of opportunity, and fairness. As others have said: the world needs more Canada.

Canada can make a difference and we can more than carry our weight. We need to work better, to work smarter, in diplomacy, in development, in defence and in international trade—all of which have become profoundly interdependent and are increasingly touching Canadians in their daily lives.

To guide us forward in this, the Government has launched an integrated review of its international policies—the first such review in a decade of change.

The review will be completed this autumn and then considered by a parliamentary committee, where Canadians will have the opportunity to make their views known.

Some things, however, need not wait for the review—because they are urgently needed, or because the right course of action is already clear.

There is a moral imperative to do all we can to make medical treatment accessible to the untold millions suffering from deadly infectious diseases, notably HIV/AIDS, particularly in the poorest countries of Africa. The Government of Canada will therefore proceed with legislation to enable the provision of generic drugs to developing countries.

Canada's obligation does not stop there. We are a knowledge-rich country. We must apply more of our research and science to help address the most pressing problems of developing countries.

The Government will continue its leadership in the creation of a new international instrument on cultural diversity, participate actively in la Francophonie, and promote and disseminate our cultural products and works around the world.

And in 2010, the eyes of the world will be on Canada as Vancouver and Whistler host the Winter Olympics, an opportunity to inspire Canadian pride and achievement—and an opportunity to reinforce participation in sport by Canadians, at the highest level and in our communities.

Our foreign policy objectives require a meaningful capacity to contribute militarily in support of collective efforts to safeguard international peace and security. Our men and women in uniform put their lives on the line for us when they participate in operations abroad—as we were reminded tragically only last week. All Canadians support them and their families. We must ensure that they have the equipment and training to do the job.

To this end, the Government will make immediate investments in key capital equipment, such as new armoured vehicles and replacements for the Sea King helicopters.

There is no role more fundamental for government than the protection of its citizens.

That is why the Government has already established the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and appointed a National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister. It has also established the Cabinet Committee on Security, Public Health and Emergencies and the new Canada Border Services Agency.

Given the responsibility to address new threats, such as non-state terrorism, and to ensure effective emergency management, the Government will develop, with its domestic partners, Canada's first national security policy. This will publicly set forth the principles that will guide the Government's actions and serve as a blueprint for effectively securing Canada in a way that strengthens the open nature of our society.

Canada and the United States are connected not only by the shared geography of North America and by hugely beneficial trade and investment flows—the largest bilateral economic relationship in the world—but also by ties of friendship and family, by commonly held democratic values, and by shared interests and responsibilities.

The Government is therefore committed to a new, more sophisticated approach to this unique relationship.

To ensure a border that is open and effective in handling the volumes of people, goods, and services flowing to and from our economies, the security concerns of both sides must be respected.

Building on the success of the Smart Borders initiative, the Government will engage with the United States to further strengthen North American security while facilitating the flow of commerce and travellers. It will also work toward infrastructure investments at key trade corridors to ensure that we can facilitate the expanding trade between our countries.

### *The Address*

#### **Conclusion**

Canada and Canadians are confidently positioned to achieve great things in the years ahead.

We have set out measured steps consistent with our means. An ambitious agenda for an ambitious country.

#### *Members of the House of Commons:*

You will be asked to appropriate the funds required to carry out the services and expenditures authorized by Parliament.

#### *Honourable Members of the Senate and Members of the House of Commons:*

As you carry out your duties and exercise your responsibilities, may you be guided by Divine Providence.

• (1645)

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jacques Saada (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of her Excellency the Governor General and the Prime Minister's message of welcome delivered in the Senate Chamber on Monday, February 2, 2004, be appended to the official report of the House of Commons Debates and form part of the records of this legislature.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I moved:

That the speech of Her Excellency the Governor General, delivered this day from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament, be taken into consideration later this day.

(La motion est adoptée.)

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### **VACANCIES**

SAINT-MAURICE AND ETOBICOKE CENTRE

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to inform the House that vacancies have occurred in the representation, namely: Mr. Jean Chrétien, member for the electoral district of Saint-Maurice, by resignation effective December 12, 2003 and Mr. Allan Rock, member for the electoral district of Etobicoke Centre, by resignation effective December 12, 2003.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to subsection 25(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed my warrant to the chief electoral officer for the issue of a writ for the election of a member to fill these vacancies.

*The Address*

[English]

**SUPPLY**

**Hon. Reg Alcock (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this House consider the business of supply at its next sitting.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Speaker:** It is my duty to inform the House that a total of six days will be allotted for the supply period ending March 26, 2004.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**The Speaker:** Members will recall that on October 29, 2003, the House concurred in the 50th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs which had the effect of extending provisional Standing Orders in relation to private members' business until the earlier of June 23, 2004, or the dissolution of the 37th Parliament.

To ensure that private members' business will be conducted in an orderly fashion, the Chair wishes to clarify some of the provisions resulting from Standing Order 86.1, the Standing Order that deals with the reinstatement of all items of private members' business originating in the House of Commons.

[Translation]

First of all, the List for the Consideration of Private Members' Business, established on March 18, 2003, continues from last session to this session notwithstanding prorogation.

This list is available for consultation at the Private Members Business Office and on the Internet.

• (1650)

[English]

The items themselves, either in or outside the order of precedence, whether Motions, Notices of Motions (Papers) or Bills, will keep the same number as in the second session of the 37th Parliament. However, considering that he is no longer a member of this House, all the items standing in the name of Mr. Harb will be dropped from the Order Paper.

Ministers and parliamentary secretaries who are ineligible by virtue of their office will be dropped to the bottom of the list for the consideration of private members' business, where they will remain as long as they hold those offices. Consequently, the item in the name of the member for Don Valley West is withdrawn from the order of precedence.

Standing Order 86.1 states that at the beginning of the second or subsequent session of a Parliament, all items of private members' business originating in the House of Commons that have been listed on the Order Paper during the previous session shall be deemed to have been considered and approved at all stages completed at the time of prorogation and shall stand, if necessary, on the Order Paper or, as the case may be, referred to a committee and the list for the consideration of private members' business and the order of precedence established pursuant to Standing Order 87 shall continue from session to session.

[Translation]

So, pursuant to this Standing Order, the items in the Order of Precedence are deemed to have been considered and approved at all stages completed at the time of prorogation. Thus they shall stand, if necessary, on the Order Paper in the same place or, as the case may be, referred to committee or sent to the Senate.

[English]

There were five private members' bills originating in the House of Commons referred to committee. Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 86.1, Bill C-231, an act to amend the Divorce Act (limits on rights of child access by sex offenders), is deemed to have been introduced, read the first time, read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

Bill C-338, an act to amend the Criminal Code (street racing), is deemed to have been introduced, read the first time, read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

[Translation]

Bill C-408, An Act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (oath or solemn affirmation), is deemed to have been introduced, read the first time, read the second time, and referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

Bill C-420, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act, is deemed to have been introduced, read the first time, read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

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, is deemed to have been introduced, read the first time, read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

(Bills deemed introduced, read the first time, read the second time and referred to a committee)

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** May I remind hon. members that a time limit is placed on the consideration of private members' bills. Indeed, pursuant to Standing Order 97.1, committees will be required to report on these reinstated private members' public bills within 60 sitting days of this statement.

[English]

At prorogation, five private members' bills originating in the House of Commons had been read the third time and passed. Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 86.1, the following bills are deemed adopted at all stages and passed by the House: Bill C-212, an act respecting user fees; Bill C-249, an act to amend the Competition Act; Bill C-250, an act to amend the Criminal Code (hate propaganda); Bill C-260, an act to amend the Hazardous Products Act (fire-safe cigarettes); and Bill C-300, an act to change the names of certain electoral districts.

*The Address*

(Bills deemed adopted at all stages and passed by the House)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** The Special Committee on the Modernization and Improvement of Procedures of the House of Commons, in its first report, encouraged the Speaker, during the transition period, to take all reasonable measures to facilitate this pilot project. I have been mindful of this recommendation in making all these various decisions.

[*Translation*]

Hon. members will find at their desks an explanatory note recapitulating these remarks. I trust that these measures will assist the House in understanding how Private Members' Business will be conducted in the Third Session. The Table can answer any other questions you may have.

[*English*]

**Mr. Loyola Hearn:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Before we get into the really heavy agenda, I wish to give notice that later this week I will be raising a question of privilege concerning the government's initial response to Question No. 37 which sought details of all contracts, grants, contributions, and/or loan guarantees by the government to companies that were subject to the current Prime Minister's former blind management—

• (1655)

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The hon. member knows that the correct procedure for giving notice of a question of privilege is by letter to the Chair, and I know he will be sending one to the Chair at the earliest possible date.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

## COMMITTEES OF THE WHOLE

### APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I move:

That Mr. Réginald Bélair, member for the electoral district of Timmins—James Bay be appointed Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

**Right Hon. Paul Martin (Prime Minister, Lib.)** seconded by the hon. member for Wetaskiwin, moved:

That Ms. Betty Hinton, member for the electoral district of Kamloops, Thompson and Highland Valleys, be appointed Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole House.

(Motion agreed to)

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Hon. Jacques Saada (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister responsible for Democratic Reform, Lib.)** Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following changes be made to the membership of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs: Mr. Breitreuz, Ms. Caplan, Mr. Duplain, Mr. Hearn, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Proulx, Ms. St-Jacques and Mr. Strahl for Ms. Catterall, Mr. Cuzner, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Keddy, Mr. Regan, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Saada.

(Motion agreed to)

## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[*Translation*]

### ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by Her Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

**Mr. Christian Jobin (Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour and privilege for me to move this motion on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

I would like to pay my respects to the Governor General and thank Her Excellency for the speech she has given today.

I would also like to thank the Prime Minister for the honour he has granted to me, and to the voters of Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, in asking me to move this motion.

I am all the more honoured to have been asked to move this motion because today's throne speech marks the beginning of a new era. We are embarking on a period in which we shall see changes of critical importance. A great many of the initiatives and priorities presented today will affect the lives of all Canadians during the next decade.

Our new Prime Minister has, in my opinion, eloquently outlined the factors that have brought Canada to this significant crossroads.

Ten years ago, the federal government faced an alarming financial situation. The previous government had accumulated a crushing national debt, weighed down by annual deficits of up to \$42 billion. The national unemployment rate was consistently in the double digits.

These conditions undermined economic prosperity and mortgaged the future of Canada's youth.

But, thanks to the difficult choices our government has made, and especially to the considerable sacrifices made by all Canadians, we have put an end to this nightmare. Fiscal responsibility, that is, living within one's means, is now a defining characteristic of the federal government. Canada now has one of the strongest economies of all industrialized countries.

*The Address*

And while having succeeded in freeing ourselves of this financial burden, another equally heavy burden has become lighter. Over the past twenty years we have wasted too much time and energy on bitter and painful debates over our national identity. A sense of confidence and self-assurance now prevails in Canada. We know who we are and where we want to go.

As the Prime Minister pointed out, there is clearly a new spirit abroad in Canada. We are proud of our linguistic duality, our diversity and our pluralistic society. We know that when we work together and pool our efforts, we have no equal.

This sense of confidence is especially evident in Quebec. Quebeckers, the young in particular, are open to the world and know they can compete with the best the world has to offer. In the last election in Quebec, Quebeckers made clear their legitimate desire to work together with their partners in the Canadian federation. They are tired of the same old unproductive games the Bloc Quebecois is so fond of.

Like all Canadians, Quebeckers know this is not the time for self-indulgence and introspection. They realize that what lies before us is a decade of opportunities during which we will be able to ensure that these recent victories translate into sustainable prosperity for all.

Today's world is offering unprecedented opportunities, and I believe that Canada is ready to take advantage of these opportunities. Having successfully resolved the problems we had been confronted with here in the past, Canada is now more than ever capable of controlling the forces for change which are rapidly transforming our world.

We can benefit from the major technological change taking place worldwide. We will be witnessing breakthroughs in areas such as biotechnology, medical technologies, environmental technologies and nanotechnologies. These breakthroughs will be as significant for the next generation as computer science was for this generation.

If we in Canada can pursue a common goal and make the right decisions, we will ensure not only our own prosperity and that of generations to come but also a quality of life that will be envied the world over.

This future prosperity is not a sure thing, however. While such winds of change will bring great opportunities, they will also disturb the status quo.

• (1700)

Without a clearly defined plan or a coordinated strategy, we risk being overwhelmed by the rapid evolution of new technologies or being left behind while the rest of the world moves forward.

I am happy to open the debate on the throne speech. It is a detailed plan to achieve specific goals. It provides a roadmap for laying the foundation necessary to take advantage of new opportunities to work together as a nation united by its determination to succeed.

The throne speech clearly identifies the goals we must attain to reinforce the foundation of our society, build a strong economy for the 21st century and demonstrate Canada's influence and reputation in international affairs.

Canada is successful when all Canadians work together to reach major goals. However, this is possible only when everyone feels involved in the democratic process. Everyone must feel that their opinion matters.

Canadians need to see real change: voters must see that members play a decisive role in helping government to achieve the national consensus I mentioned earlier.

Canadians will support major national goals only if they are convinced that well-defined democratic mechanisms are in place to establish priorities.

Voters want their members to be able to act and to be even more autonomous, so that they can truly be the most direct link in influencing and shaping the national government.

Today's throne speech refers to an action plan for democratic reform that will implement the necessary changes. Allowing more free votes and making parliamentary committees more influential and autonomous will do much to convince Canadians that their members truly represent them at the national level.

To increase public confidence in the government, real improvements must be made with regard to management and unethical conduct. To this end, the throne speech identifies concrete changes, such as the creation of a new agency for continuing excellence in the public service, the creation of the position of independent ethics commissioner and the implementation of a high-level expenditure review and the elimination of waste and overruns.

The federal government must implement these changes in order to resolve the problems we are facing as a nation.

The greatest challenge facing us is ensuring that we have solid social foundations. We will be able to meet challenges and reap the benefits over the next decade by setting priorities, such as the needs of Canadians, and those of the less fortunate in our society in particular.

We must first ensure that all Canadians have timely access to universal, high-quality, publicly funded health care. The \$2 billion health care transfer to the provinces will help in improving our system, increasing the number of doctors and nurses, and reducing waiting times for diagnoses or treatment. The new Canada Public Health Agency will allow us to react quickly and in a coordinated manner to the threat of infectious diseases such as SARS.

Moreover, in order to ensure that our children get the best possible start in life, the government is increasing its initiatives under the Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care to increase the number of quality child care spaces available.

In the Speech from the Throne, the government also promises to implement child protection legislation and to develop a strategy to prevent the sexual exploitation of children on the Internet.

*The Address*

In the context of the next budget, the government is strongly committed to improving the fairness of the tax system for people with disabilities and those who care for them.

In the speech, the government also promises to meet the urgent needs of aboriginal communities with respect to development, particularly by creating the Centre for First Nations Government and expanding the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy.

As a government, we want our cities and communities to have access to new sources of revenue in order to meet the growing demand for services. To this end, the government will work with the provinces and territories to share with the municipalities a portion of gas excise tax revenues or other tax revenues.

• (1705)

One of the mechanisms the government is committed to making available quickly is tax relief to cities and municipalities from GST payments, which will free up billions of additional dollars for meeting critical priorities.

In the Speech from the Throne, reference is also made to a number of initiatives aimed at making it possible for Canada to benefit from the new economic possibilities available.

We must first ensure that Canadians have the necessary skills for the jobs available in this 21st century economy. This will be done in part through substantial improvements to the Canada Student Loan Program, by offering new grants to low-income students. As well, we will concentrate on speedier recognition of foreign credentials and previous work experience.

We will improve access to capital for the commercialization of science in order to benefit from technological breakthroughs in environment, health, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. We will develop a program to be administered by Canada's new national science advisor. We will promote the technological advancement of the agricultural sector by concentrating on transportation infrastructure, competitiveness and food safety.

Sustainable development will become an even more important component of the world economy, and Canada will play a lead role in this. We will respect our commitments to the Kyoto accord by developing an equitable plan on climate change, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments and other stakeholders.

The Speech from the Throne announces a 10-year, \$4 billion program primarily designed to clean up contaminated sites. As well, environmental indicators on clean water, clean air, and emissions reduction will now be incorporated into the government's decision-making process.

The Speech from the Throne also refers to specific initiatives to showcase Canada's prestige and influence in international affairs. This strategy will ensure Canada of an independent voice and enable it to promote our distinctive values on the world stage. First, a global overview will draw attention to all of our international policies.

We will also address lessening the debt load of the third world, and will be one of the first countries to enact legislation to provide

more affordable drugs to help the developing countries deal with pandemics such as AIDS.

Here in Canada, we will establish a national security policy, including a detailed plan to ensure our safety and security while respecting the special characteristics of our society.

I am thrilled with today's throne speech and the new course it sets for us. I am pleased that Canada is ready to make the most of its renewed faith in progressive goals, with a stronger social agenda, a true 21st century economy, and a platform from which we can assert our prestige and influence in the world. I am also pleased to think that the changes to our political system will enable us to reach these goals with a national consensus.

Similarly, I am pleased to think that, with this plan, Canada will be able to make its mark in history, as the Prime Minister pointed out.

I am proud to move, seconded by the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, that the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, a member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

May it please Your Excellency:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

• (1710)

[*English*]

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know there are undoubtedly a lot of members from both sides of the House who would like to pose a question to the hon. member who just spoke in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

I listened with great interest to his remarks. I note that he said, "We know who we are. People who need help will get help". Those were direct quotes from his speech.

Western beef producers know they need help and they know who they are. I wonder if the government knows who they are because when I looked through this pathetic Speech from the Throne, it said:

The Government is dedicated to Canada's farm economy and to taking the steps necessary to safeguard access to international markets and to ensure that farmers are not left to bear alone the consequences of circumstances beyond their control...

The government has just had another three months of holiday and this is the best it could come up with, when farmers in Prince George, Peace River and farmers across western Canada are hurting. Where is the help it promised? How can the Liberals sleep at night?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, I am aware that we are facing a serious problem concerning beef. The Canadian government has already taken actions that have allowed to partially open the border with the United States. This is a problem that concerns all of America and I am confident that our new Prime Minister will do everything in his power to negotiate with the current President of the United States to solve the problem. We must be forward-looking and have confidence in the current government.

*The Address*

•(1715)

[English]

**Mr. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today in response to the throne speech. I, too, look at the one paragraph on page 18 that is supposed to supply solace to our farm and ranch families who are in dire straits.

We have one paragraph in the speech for the third largest contributing group to the GDP in the country. We are back stopped by a half of one per cent of federal spending. That is as good as it gets from this government. The 2002 farm program, CFIP, is only paying out 60%. Is that the best farm families across the country can expect from the government? It is time to change the government.

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, I am aware that farmers are very concerned. Some of them live in my riding and I regularly accompany them. This is a problem that concerns all of America. It is difficult to solve. I think that, with the current Prime Minister, we will succeed in solving this problem in the next months. Let us be confident and forward-looking. There is hope that the problem will be solved.

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on page 18 of the throne speech, in the last paragraph, it says, and I quote:

The Government is dedicated... to ensure that farmers are not left to bear alone the consequences of circumstances beyond their control.

Is this not a blatant admission that the government has left farmers to bear alone these consequences during the last mandate? Today, once again, the government thinks that it is solving the problem, but it is solving nothing, except that it is producing a document.

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat what I said. The Government of Canada supported the farmers with subsidies. It was not enough to cover all their losses, but we have to look ahead and hope that the problem will be resolved. It is a problem that concerns all of North America, not only Canada. We have to work with the U. S. to resolve this North American problem.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, why does the government, after being repeatedly told about the lack of a shipbuilding policy in the country, not have a single mention in the speech of a shipbuilding policy?

Also, the Prime Minister talked about reinvigorating and reinvesting in our military, but there was not a single word on replacing the vessels and having the ships built here in Canada.

As well, there is a huge crisis facing our lumber producers and there is not a single word in the throne speech on softwood lumber. Why did the government omit these two very serious issues in the country?

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to a shipbuilding policy, I know that my colleague, the Minister of Industry, formed a committee specifically to explore this issue. The committee will certainly provide input to the government. I also think the budget speech will make some very specific references to this issue.

We all know that shipbuilding policy in Canada is important because we have the best seaway crossing the Great Lakes area. It is therefore important to develop it.

As the member for Lévis-et-Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, I am keenly interested in this issue.

[English]

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that member has referred to the BSE crisis as a problem. The farming and ranch community that I know that raise livestock consider this to be a crisis.

Why has the government not mentioned in the throne speech that it is making a more concerted effort to liaise with the United States, and in particular President Bush, to resolve the issue of cross-border trade?

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, that is incorrect. I have never considered this to be just any old problem. It is a major problem for all of North America. It cannot be simply dismissed. Discussions are underway and the borders are already partially open. I think that is what needs to be worked on. I am confident that there will be a solution in the coming months.

It was the discovery of a second cow infected with BSE that provoked this crisis once again. I think we have to work together with the tracing techniques available in North America to resolve the problem once and for all.

•(1720)

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Neigette-et-la Mitis, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to be able to quote from the throne speech like some of my colleagues did. Unfortunately, it makes no mention of the subject I want my colleague to comment on. Yet it is a pressing responsibility of this government.

What does my colleague think of the complete and utter silence on employment insurance and seasonal workers?

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question. Obviously, employment insurance and seasonal workers are extremely important. There is a modulation by region.

**An hon. member:** It is not in the speech.

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** It is not in the speech, but there are already established programs set out in the main estimates. The employment insurance programs exist already. We can abide by them, and they are currently working extremely well for Canadians. If they need to be improved, we are prepared to listen to suggestions from the members.



*The Address*

[English]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government has watched the auto industry slide in the country. It has watched it dissipate. It has made sure that issues like the Windsor border, which has become clogged, have put the industry on its knees.

I would like to know why the border is not addressed properly in the throne speech and why can we not move on adequate infrastructure improvements instead of the jargon. Lastly, why is there no national Canadian auto policy when one in seven jobs is affected by that?

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, if we take a closer look at the throne speech, the reference is there. When we talk about building a strong economy for the 21st century, at the forefront of new technologies, we are including the automobile industry. This industry is not excluded. That is what is intended in the throne speech.

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the cultural sector must be very disappointed with this government's commitment. There was nothing at all about this in the throne speech. The government will work with parliamentarians to modernize our arts and culture policies.

Nothing was said about removing the restrictions on foreign ownership. Nothing was said about the Canadian Television Fund. We know that culture was cut out of the Canadian Television Fund. Nothing was said about copyright.

I would like my hon. colleague to tell this House what he believes the government's position will be with respect to culture.

**Mr. Christian Jobin:** Mr. Speaker, when we talk about developing strong social foundations to improve Canadians' quality of life, that includes culture. When one reads between the lines, one understands that in the budget there are provisions for this.

Moreover, the heritage minister already has the funds available to solve the cultural problems. It must not be said that there is nothing for culture. That is not the case. One needs to look at the budget when commenting on improving the quality of life of Canadians.

**The Speaker:** The period for questions and comments on this speech has expired. The hon. whip of the Bloc Québécois has a point of order.

**Mr. Michel Guimond:** Mr. Speaker, since the hon. member has given such good answers, I will be seeking unanimous consent of the House to extend the question and answer period by 10 minutes.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

[English]

**Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a distinct privilege for me to participate in the events of this very important day.

I want to extend appreciation to Her Excellency the Governor General for her presentation of the Speech from the Throne. I would

also like to express my gratitude to our Prime Minister for striking the right chord with Canadians between ideas and actions that are highlighted in this speech.

A Speech from the Throne has a formidable task, to touch Canadians and to improve their quality of life. For me the true value of the Speech from the Throne is determined in how it resonates in the streets of my constituency of Kitchener Centre.

My constituency office is located in the heart of urban Canada, a downtown intersection of two major cross streets. Business people, new immigrants, single mothers, tradespeople, teenagers, university students, street people and professionals walk past my window daily. In fact my window represents a portrait of what Canada looks like in the year 2004.

Three blocks west is Kitchener City Hall where our new deal for cities is met with great enthusiasm. Across from my office the school of architecture through the University of Waterloo has established the Community University Research Alliance. Education cannot be a privilege for only the rich or for those who are affluent. Grants for low income students and improving the Canada student loans program are steps toward improving access to higher learning for all.

A couple of doors from my office, Lutherwood, working in partnership with Human Resources Development Canada, offers resources for job seekers. In my community I have heard the need for updates to labour market programming. This would include growth of self-employment, continuous upgrading of skills, timely recognition of foreign trained professionals as well as workplace supports for persons with disabilities.

Today's announcement to work with the provinces on these issues will provide clear benefits to Canadians.

Governments do not create jobs. That responsibility falls to a healthy and robust economy. Debt reduction and fiscal prudence are key components of our continued economic growth.

Kitchener Centre is blessed with beautiful parks and natural spaces. However, not unlike other cities in Canada, we also have areas that need work to return to responsible use. My city has been a leader on focusing on brownfields recovery strategies.

Kitchener's streets boast a diverse cultural scene, including the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, the Waterloo Regional Children's Museum, the Centre in the Square as well as Theatre and Company. We can look forward to modernizing our arts and culture policies to reflect the realities of today's artistic community.

The economic argument for supporting the arts is well documented. In my region Eyego to the Arts is an initiative that offers the opportunity for students to enjoy high quality arts presentations at a reduced ticket price. The program has enjoyed a tremendous success across Waterloo region and it has cultivated an appreciation for Canada's arts and theatrical performances among the secondary school population. Eyego to the Arts has been heralded as a blueprint for a national initiative to expand audiences for arts and culture programming.

*The Address*

Today's Speech from the Throne makes important steps that will have a lasting imprint on Kitchener Centre. Since 1997, I have represented the people of my riding in the House. When I address school children, I make a point of mentioning that the seat I occupy here belongs to the citizens of Kitchener Centre and not to me as their representative.

The government is focused on restoring trust and accountability in Parliament and that is why an independent ethics commissioner will report to Parliament. Canadians can be confident in the integrity and the management of their government.

I also have often been asked about the partisan environment in the House of Commons. What is it like to deal with members opposite in the daily work as a parliamentarian?

I say with sincerity that while 301 members of the House come to this place with their individual ambitions and with party philosophies dictating different solutions, we are Canadians who have come together to improve the livelihood of our fellow Canadians.

• (1725)

We are united in a purpose to improve the quality of life for Canadians for today and for the future. That is what makes today so significant. It is the fact that we have before us an exciting insightful vision that respects the hard-earned victories of the past 10 years. It is the vision of a Prime Minister, a government, a Parliament that has its eyes focused on tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

The Speech from the Throne defines an ambitious program characterized by clear objectives, solid social foundations reinforced by a dynamic economy in step with the 21st century, and a balanced policy which will restore Canada's pride of place and influence in the world.

Significant and lasting actions take time. But that must not serve as an excuse for inaction. This government is intent on embarking immediately on the essential actions that are required, and continuing those actions, provided the resources continue to be available. Ten years from now, Canadians will see that the choices made today were the right ones for this country.

• (1730)

[*English*]

As we move forward, to borrow a phrase from author Stephen Covey, we are setting our compass rather than winding our watch.

The Speech from the Throne marks the start of a new government, a new agenda, a new way of thinking, built on partnership, opportunity, achievement and the real engagement of Canadians.

Last year I was part of a task force that engaged women entrepreneurs in a dialogue about their unique challenges and experiences. Small and medium size businesses create over 80% of the new jobs in Canada. Women entrepreneurs are creating businesses at three times the rate of men. Women were eager to share their stories. As a matter of fact, in Charlottetown 100-strong came out to our task force meeting in the middle of record low temperatures. Schools were closed and business had ground to a halt, but these enterprising women came out in great numbers to offer

their solutions. These were evidenced in the report that was tabled last November.

The task force recommendations address the specific challenges that face women entrepreneurs and these can act as a blueprint for all entrepreneurs. The crux of these recommendations is evidenced in the structure of our new government.

Women entrepreneurs said that Canada needs a strategy for serving small business. We now have a parliamentary secretary focusing on small business.

Women entrepreneurs said that government must regard entrepreneurship as a viable career opportunity. We now have a parliamentary secretary who is focusing on entrepreneurship.

Women entrepreneurs said that government should re-examine the accessibility of contracts for the government procurement process. We now have a parliamentary secretary focused on the procurement review.

These are important changes that reflect priority areas. Canadians spoke and we listened.

The path of achievement begins in making sure that Canadians believe their government and believe in their government. This government will change the way things work in Ottawa by enhancing the connection between citizens and their members of Parliament. We need to work to restore trust and accountability and to develop new partnerships with other levels of government.

Municipalities want a place at the table. They want predictable, sustainable funding to support long term planning for local needs. Recent years have seen, either through intent or neglect, a downloading of services and responsibilities to municipalities. Today's announcement to provide GST relief to all municipalities will provide Canadian communities with approximately \$7 billion in stable new funding.

Clearly it is at the local level where programs are delivered. National priorities such as integration of immigrants, opportunities for urban aboriginals, emergency preparedness, and responses to that, impact at the community level. Municipalities play a crucial role in how we address these priorities. Where we have a common purpose, we will join forces for a common good. How, one might ask. It is through meaningful consultation with citizens that we are best equipped to serve Canadians. During the prebudget process, Canadians were adamant that a balanced budget was key to our national sustainability and that health care was our number one investment priority. Anything less would be simply unacceptable.

The Romanow commission and the Kirby report establish that Canadians value and want publicly funded health care in this country. Today this government has made a commitment that every Canadian will have access to quality care when they need it, regardless of income, regardless of geography. To support this promise, the federal government will provide a further \$2 billion in health care transfers to the provinces this year to help reduce waiting time, to invest in faster diagnoses and to provide more doctors and more nurses.

*The Address*

Canadians want a health care system that is accountable to them. This government will work with provincial and territorial partners and the health council to develop service objectives by which Canadians can assess the performance of their health care system.

• (1735)

A solid, responsive health care system must also engage Canadians as stewards of their own well-being. It is not enough to heal. We also must be more proactive in promoting healthy lifestyles as well as disease prevention.

Our challenge is to build on existing achievements in public health. Safer workplaces, vaccinations, healthier foods, family planning and tobacco prevention are all contributors to improvements in life expectancy. Canadians have a stake and they also have a responsibility in their own good health.

Our challenge is to build confidence with the help of Canadians through initiatives such as the public health care agency that will ensure Canada is linked nationally and globally with a network of centres for disease control and emergency response.

Canadians are playing significant roles in ensuring there is a high quality of life within their communities. During the consultative process of the task force on seniors, we heard of the need to strengthen the capacity of volunteers.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our community services. In recent years, governments have shifted to project based funding and away from core funding. This shift has led to gaps in administration and has created a challenge for organizations trying to strategize for future priorities.

Today volunteers bring their knowledge, their expertise and their compassion to the work that they do in communities, to public policy development and within government. Volunteers strengthen citizen engagement and they give voice to the voiceless and present a multitude of perspectives on many issues.

Today's commitment to advance the voluntary sector initiative will strengthen the capacity and the voice of philanthropic organizations and help to mobilize volunteers.

[*Translation*]

This is but one example of the federal government's commitment to supporting communities' efforts to sustain viability. The government has made similar commitments in connection with water and air quality, as well as climate change.

In partnership with other levels of government and other stakeholders, we will define a plan on climate change which will be equitable, will comply with the Kyoto protocol, and will preserve the vigour and growth of our economy.

[*English*]

Further, the government will undertake a 10 year \$3.5 billion program to clean up contaminated sites for which the federal government is responsible. In addition, a \$500 million program will be developed to help remediate certain other sites, notably the Sydney tar ponds.

It has been said that emerging technologies will be a critical element in helping Canadians address the challenges of climate change.

Today's commitment to build on the extensive venture financing capabilities of the Business Development Bank will create access to capital for the commercialization of science to place Canada among the world's leaders in environment, in health, in biotechnology and in nanotechnology. This is good news for Waterloo region, which is known as Canada's technology triangle.

Using the nationwide reach of the National Research Council, the government will help small firms take their ideas to market by providing research and expertise that small businesses cannot develop on their own.

No one level of government can accomplish these lofty goals on its own, so Canada's new national science adviser will re-engage universities, colleges and enterprise to articulate a truly national science agenda.

With this vision toward the future, one cannot speak of the future and overlook our nation's most valuable asset, our children. Governments have a role to play in making sure families are getting the support and the tools they need.

Canadian families have voiced the need for more quality child care spaces and by accelerating the initiatives under the existing multilateral frameworks for early learning we can provide those spaces more quickly.

To ensure children get the best possible start in life, we will extend the understanding the early years project to 100 additional communities.

By reinstating child protection legislation, we will help to ensure the safety of our children and protect them from exploitation on the Internet.

Canada's place in the world has never been more pivotal than in the post-September 11 world that now exists. World peace can simply not be an ideal; it must be a reality. Canada has the opportunity and a responsibility to ensure democracy, freedom and human rights are fundamental rights of humanity. As U2 rock star and international activist Bono observed in his address to our new Prime Minister, "what the world needs is more Canada". I could not agree more.

Canada has an independent voice, a respect for democracy and distinct values. We will continue to focus our international policies to reflect this trademark. Canada is a leader in third world debt relief. We will move forward on legislation to provide cheaper medications to assist the developing world, particularly in the fight against AIDS.

*The Address*

I second the motion on the Speech from the Throne with the firm belief that today's speech paints a vision for Canada that is broad, far-reaching and inclusive. It has always been my view that government is defined not merely by its policies but by how it implements them.

I believe, in addition to setting our compass in a direction that is right for our country, that the Prime Minister has also articulated a method that includes all Canadians so that their voices will be heard and they will share in equal measure the benefits that result.

• (1740)

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for Kitchener Centre for a very well delivered speech. She is probably a good spokesman for the government because she sounds credible.

Herein is the dilemma. When the throne speech speaks about ethics, the throne speech itself is unethical because it represents that there will be an independent ethics commissioner and it uses a word for someone who is not independent at all. That person will still be appointed by the Prime Minister. There is no meaningful input by the rest of Parliament.

Furthermore, the legislation that the government is purporting to reinstate says, explicitly, that when the ethics commissioner deals with matters pertaining to the cabinet, where all the problems have been in the last 10 years, then the ethics commissioner does not deal with them in the same way. It still requires confidential reports be given to the Prime Minister. It still requires that the ethics commissioner consult with the Prime Minister prior to tabling a report.

It can be nicely laundered and it can look really good but it is a shame that on the matter of ethics the government cannot come clean.

I ask the member why in that single phrase it erroneously says that there will be an independent ethics commissioner when in fact that is not the case?

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I guess my hon. friend's question just underscores my comment about the fact that there is a diversity of views within the House.

Clearly, the proposed legislation will be debated and voted on. Having it report to Parliament is seen as a vast improvement, and I look forward to vigorous debate.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in the Speech from the Throne about the status of women. Perhaps the government has forgotten that women make up 50% of the population, that they are poorer than men, that they face a different reality than men and that it is because women are poor that we have child poverty.

• (1745)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, actually there is a line in the Speech from the Throne that does talk about women entrepreneurs and, on a very personal level, I was very pleased to see that.

By giving attention to this underutilized sector of the economy, we are indeed giving women economic independence. As well, we are looking at increasing high quality child care spaces, which is something women have said they needed. We are also looking at how we attend to the needs of families. This indeed does help women.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—St. Clair, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that there were a number of points made in the last speech by my colleague from Kitchener with which I would like to take issue but time limits me to addressing the lack of any mention in the throne speech of the need for a national auto policy.

The particular member knows full well the importance of us dealing with an auto policy for the country, one that we have not done anything about and in fact have ignored for the whole term of this government.

In particular, one major company, which is part of her riding, Budd Canada Inc., is just teetering on whether it will be able to stay in business. The problem it has is reflective of the problem the auto parts industry has in the country generally.

In addition, I spent yesterday morning at a meeting in Oakville. Almost 1,000 auto workers showed up at that meeting crying for the government to do something about saving their jobs, which are in very real danger. We have Budd and so many other auto parts suppliers and major auto makers that are in very serious difficulty because of the lack of an auto policy.

Therefore I would like to ask the member if she is doing anything to see that we work toward a national auto policy and that the government will actually do something to save the auto industry in the country.

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, if my hon. colleague would just turn to page 13 of the Speech from the Throne he would see that we do talk about working with sectoral councils. We do talk about building globally competitive firms. We are investing in science and technology, which does aid the auto firms as well as other industries. I know in the past we have had a very robust program with the technology partnership program which also helps that industry.

**Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I for one was very pleased to see in the Speech from the Throne a lot of discussion about helping poor families, and particularly poor children, achieve all they can. As I know the hon. member is committed to families and to children in particular, I wonder if she would elaborate on the post-secondary sector given how much she has in her constituency related to the post-secondary sector, and the importance of poor children getting access to post-secondary education.

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I am truly pleased to talk on this issue as I have two universities and an outstanding community college within my community.

The fact that we are looking at a grant program is huge news, because all the members on this side of the House, who were part of the post-secondary caucus, recognize that accessibility to education has been a huge factor.

Not only are we looking at how we can improve our loan program, we are looking to enrich the program for matching people who want to put money into saving for their children's education. We are also looking at a grant program, which will make a huge difference for young people who find that moving on past secondary education is barred by financial issues.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Kelowna, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who just spoke is rather eloquent and I know some of the things she stands for are absolutely the same things that I stand for, but how does she explain the absence in the Speech from the Throne of dealing with justice, of bringing about safer streets and of developing a national drug strategy to ensure our children are protected?

It is all very well to talk in very general terms but where are the specifics on what we will do in the justice system to make sure our parole system does the kinds of things we want it to do and that in fact our families are protected from the predators of their children?

• (1750)

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, we are re-introducing legislation that will deal protecting children from predators on the Internet.

I would also point out to my hon. colleague that as much as this is an energized government with a new Prime Minister and a new vision, and I certainly feel the buzz on this side of the House, we have to acknowledge that over the past 10 years we have made investments. I would remind my hon. colleague of the community safety and crime prevention councils that were set up with \$3 million. They do go into communities and the communities identify local initiatives. We are stopping crime and we are making streets safer by dealing with the issues upstream instead of waiting until people get into correctional institutions.

**Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while we saw a plethora of platitudes paraded out today by the Prime Minister, it may leave some Canadians hopeful but more so doubtful.

We have seen the cynical promise to bring back the Sea King program cancelled by the Prime Minister with a stroke of the pen 10 years ago.

However, one of the glaring omissions that we saw today was the complete absence of any mention of the fisheries. In Atlantic

### *The Address*

Canada, this is still the biggest issue. Places like Canso are dying on the vine. Not a single, solitary mention of the fisheries. Although we have a newly appointed minister from the province of Nova Scotia, it did not even warrant a passing reference.

Does the hon. member not realize the plight of the fisheries and the anxious anticipation that many in Atlantic Canada and, I suggest, on the west coast and throughout the country, were waiting to hear something, some kernel of hope that might exist for the recovery of the fisheries?

**Mrs. Karen Redman:** Mr. Speaker, I too absolutely feel the plight of the fishery but I would point out that other issues have been raised. We have the softwood lumber issue and the issue of ranchers who are dealing BSE. In my riding I have health food manufacturers and pet food manufacturers that are dealing with these issues.

All the issues that we deal with on a daily basis have an incredible impact on one sector of the Canadian economy and they impact real Canadians.

The Speech from the Throne is a broad brush, as I said, of finding our compass, our true north, rather than winding our watch.

I would suggest to the hon. member opposite that we will deal with those issues and we will talk to Canadians and find the kinds of solutions that will be long term.

**Mr. Grant Hill (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would propose that we thank both the mover and the seconder for their speeches.

The Speech from the Throne looks very much to me like a document designed for an electoral campaign, one that, frankly, normally would be secret at this point in time. I wonder if Your Excellency might, being in possession of such a secret document, expect a visit from the RCMP.

I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

(On motion of Mr. Grant Hill the debate was adjourned)

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

(Motion agreed to)

(The House adjourned at 5:55 p.m.)



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