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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, June 13, 2008

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, June 13, 2008

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

•(1005)

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Jay Hill (Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations and discussions between all parties. I think if you seek it you may find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House, in relation to Bill C-60, on Monday, June 16, 2008, a member from each recognized party may speak for a period not exceeding 10 minutes, after which time the bill shall be deemed read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Defence and the standing committee shall be permitted to meet that day.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

The House resumed from June 12 consideration of the motion that Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are continuing debate on Bill C-29, which is a bill that the government has put forward to regulate loans made in political campaigns: elections, leadership contests and nominations.

It is an area that is probably not well understood by most people who do not participate in the political process. It is perhaps sometimes a little more complicated now than I think it needs to be, but nonetheless it is an area that does need some regulation. Federal laws have attempted to do that over the last few years.

I want to start by saying that a loan is actually integral to many campaigns. It is facilitatory to a campaign. It enables many campaigns to get up and running when there may not be sufficient funds at the beginning of the campaign.

The dynamic of a campaign varies in regard to candidate, place and circumstance, but in most campaigns there are a lot of expenses. I am talking first about campaigns for elections to the House of Commons. There are a lot of expenses at the front end of a campaign. I guess that is so in the business world too.

At the front end of a campaign, there are expenses. Perhaps one has to secure premises for a campaign office or pay cash for election signs and brochures. Deposits are required on telephones or other equipment such as computers and also on leases. At the front end of the campaign, there actually is a fair bit of uploading of the expenses.

Of course, the fundraising for a campaign can happen before the campaign, during the campaign and after the campaign, but the cash need is right at the beginning. Thus, there is the need for such a loan for most campaigns.

A lot of campaigns will have already fundraised and will have enough money to get going. Some members around here are fortunate enough to have raised enough money before the campaign even starts, keeping in mind that when we seek election to the House of Commons, there are election spending limits.

We all know pretty much what the spending limit is. For most of us, it is in the range of \$70,000 or \$80,000 per campaign. If a candidate has raised that at the beginning, he or she is ready to go, but what about those who have not?

For example, a member of Parliament is supposed to know roughly when an election is coming, and he or she can raise money. On the other hand, a candidate who is not an incumbent will often come in as a nominated candidate for a party that is not holding the riding. Often that person has not had a run-up of one, two, three or four years in raising money.

There is a conspicuous need in that case. A person who wants to run for Parliament for a party that has not held a riding may have a significant cash need at the beginning of a campaign. The only way to bridge that cash need is to borrow the money.

Government Orders

Over the past century, that money has come from friends or the father-in-law, or banks or other financial institutions, and we have managed to make do. However, recently there have been suggestions that there have been occasions when these loans have been given or granted and then, at some point after the event, they have been forgiven, so that the candidate who borrowed the money never actually had to pay the money back.

● (1010)

In our electoral system, that might be seen as unfair. I have a very extreme example, one that will probably never happen. Let us say that an individual says he or she is going to run for party A. Party A tells that individual not to worry, that the party will lend him or her the money to get going, and that Mr. X will lend the individual \$50,000. They go through the campaign. When it is over, let us say that the candidate is unsuccessful and Mr. X says that is okay, it was his obligation to the party and he is forgiving the loan.

Let us contrast that situation with another individual who has raised \$100 here and there and has worked hard and operated within the rules. It may be seen as quite unfair that a candidate or party has a rich friend who basically underwrites the whole thing and seems to circumvent what we now have, which is election contribution limits. For an individual, the limit is about \$1,100 per person. A \$50,000 loan lent and forgiven obviously circumvents the intent of the election contribution limits that we already have in law.

For some reason, though, notwithstanding that we have made some corrections in the past, the government party here still thinks that these loans are a big problem. It has come back with this legislation that knocks them down and almost squeezes them out of existence.

I have to say that most businesses need these types of loans. They are a part of how our economy operates. A campaign is no different. Many people have mortgages on their homes, car loans and lines of credit. Why would a campaign for the House of Commons or for a leadership not have the same kinds of financial needs? I think they do.

Under our Constitution, people who run for office ought not to be prejudiced or handicapped any more than an ordinary citizen out there doing other things, with reasonable constraints. I agree that any legislation which prevents forgiveness of a huge loan that would circumvent the election contribution limits should be established. That would be justifiable, in my view.

In this legislation, for some reason, the government, and I believe it is supported by one or two of the other opposition parties, sees a need to micromanage the loan situation, in my view overly, to the point where I think it may have crossed the line. I will explain this in my remarks a little later. Having started with the premise that we have to in some ways restrict the loan arrangements, I am suggesting that the provisions in this bill go way too far.

The amendments in this bill restrict the amount of a loan that an individual can make. I am not sure why that has to be. I can see why there is an election contribution limit, but if a loan has to be made and there has to be transparency and disclosure of it and it has to be repaid, I do not understand why it is necessary to restrict the amount that an individual can actually lend. It enforces a repayment regime. I

question whether it is necessary to impose an actual time limited regime. In this case, the bill does that.

It does something else that in my view is quite insidious and unfair. The legislation says that if a loan is not repaid in a particular campaign, then the political party under which that person ran must assume that debt.

● (1015)

For the average citizen that may sound almost all right and what is the big deal, but if we go down to the riding level, where we have three, four or five parties running, not each of these parties running candidates at the local level are smooth-oiled machines. These are regular Canadians, some of them for the first time embarking on a run for office.

It is possible that a particular candidate may on his or her own volition, wittingly or unwittingly, borrow a ton of money. The main party may not know about it and the central campaign may not know about it. However, at the end of the time period, and it would be a sad comment on the individual, the individual could say, "To heck with it. I'm walking. I'm declaring bankruptcy", and the main party would be stuck with that debt. That would create a huge liability contingency for all the political parties.

The large political parties, the Liberal Party of Canada, the Conservative Party of Canada, and I think the other parties represented in the House have fairly decent financial means. However, there are other political parties out on the street. Our Elections Act provides for that.

Those parties are being forced, under this legislation, to play by those same rules. I have a sense that it is unfair to impose that kind of a rule on a new or young political party. It could seriously damage it financially in a circumstance where the main party itself does not have control over what its candidates are spending and borrowing. There is no provision in our law that would allow that to happen. I could not conceive of one.

Therefore, this is a serious problem and I absolutely do not support that. I am going to do everything I can inside the House and outside, and later, to make sure this provision is not applied.

The next area I want to touch on has to do with the relationship between what this bill tries to do and our constitutional freedom. I am of the view that some of these provisions do not pass constitutional muster. I think they are vulnerable under our Constitution.

It is not clear to me that anyone has measured and assessed the constitutional implications of some of the measures in this bill. Certain parts of this legislation impose these loan restrictions. One in particular states that a candidate for nomination, or a candidate for office, or a candidate for leadership can only borrow from a financial institution. I think we have a problem.

As I said earlier, it is not clear to me why we have to restrict loans, coming only from financial institutions. It seems kind of reasonable, like we would just want to buy beer from a beer store or buy liquor from a liquor store. However, in terms of loans, this is a much different thing.

Government Orders

I have to say there is the perspective of the borrower, that is the candidate, which is pretty much the perspective that the government has imposed on this bill and which the other two opposition parties appear to be supporting. However, there is another perspective and that is the perspective of the lender. Of course, the lenders include everybody else in this country. We sometimes around this place focus a little too much on who we are as MPs and I am as guilty of that sometimes as others.

● (1020)

However, when we are talking about lending money to campaigns, it is everybody else in the country. It is all of the businesses, all of the financial institutions, all of the fathers-in-law that might lend money, or wherever we might borrow money. It is all of our citizens.

They have the right to all of our freedoms and the right to be unrestricted in what they do. I ask, why should an individual be restricted in lending money to a political campaign when a financial institution is not? What the heck are we doing? We curtail what a citizen can do, when we do not curtail what a financial institution can do. That is wrong. That is turning the whole thing on its head. In the government's rush to nail this area down with rules so restrictive, we will have to hire another army of accountants to police it.

The Conservatives have actually managed to abridge the rights and freedoms of Canadian citizens, and the only ones they wanted to leave out are the financial institutions. God love the financial institutions. We love them. We are indebted to them. We are in hock to them.

However, I have to say that the government and Parliament cannot abridge the freedoms of our citizens unless they do it properly under our Constitution. They can only abridge those freedoms, unless they do it, if they do it, for reasons that are demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society.

Who, on the government side, has articulated the demonstrably justifiable reasons for abridging the freedom of Canadians to participate in political campaigns, for example, by lending money, which has to be repaid, to a candidate?

There are many other types of lending institutions in society. They can lend money to buy cars. They can lend money to buy houses. They can lend money to take a bus trip, but they cannot lend money to one of the most vital institutions of our democracy, which is an election campaign.

I do not think I have heard this come up earlier, but it is a real issue for me and it has to be dealt with. The bill is at third reading. It is very tough to fix a bill at third reading, in fact we cannot.

I am inviting the other place, when it sees the bill, to review it with this perspective in mind. If the government cannot come up with reasons to abridge the rights and freedoms of Canadians out there in the way I just described it, that are demonstrably justifiable, then this provision that prohibits individuals from lending to political campaigns is not constitutionally enforceable, and it will go down. I will help to bring it down if I can. I am sure I will be able to help somewhere.

I ask the other place, when and if it has a chance to look at this bill, which I am sure it will if we pass it at third reading, to look at it.

There is a second side of the coin in insisting that only financial institutions can lend the money and it is this. We are forcing financial institutions to become partners on the street with political campaigns, and this our banks have never wanted to do. It is very difficult for them to do it. I do not know how we can force a bank manager in a particular riding to start picking and choosing between the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party, the Bloc Québécois, and all of the other political parties. If they lend to one, do they have to lend to the others?

There is more than one bank, but this forces the banks, in a sense, to either politicize themselves or to be seen to be politicizing themselves, and this is not right either. This is a problem and I do not think that has been adequately articulated.

The bill should have had some fixes. The committee tried to fix the bill and I thought the bill had been fixed, but when we got it back to the House, the government party, in league with other parties, decided it would remove those amendments.

● (1025)

I am very concerned about the constitutionality of this and its impact on the street. I think we are making a mistake and for that reason I am not going to support the bill.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question, based on not today's presentation but on a comment that the hon. member made yesterday. I had spoken yesterday in questions and comments at great length about the fact that several of the Liberal leadership candidates, from their previous leadership campaign, had missed a deadline, the 18 month repayment deadline, and were seeking extensions or some other form of repayment options with Elections Canada.

The member, in response to my comments, stood in this place and went on at great length, I would suggest, to suggest my comments were in error, that there was really no 18 month repayment required. I would point out to the member that according to Elections Canada, it states so quite clearly. It says that contestants are required, not may or perhaps, to pay any outstanding debts within 18 months of the end of the contest. Of course, the end of that contest, the 18 month period, in the case of the Liberal leadership campaign, came in early June of this year.

There are some other recourses if they fail to repay at the end of the 18 month period, but the fact is there is an 18 month repayment requirement. I wonder if my hon. colleague would care to retract his comments from yesterday.

Mr. Derek Lee: Mr. Speaker, it is my view that the hon. member is still misleading the House and the public. He has used the term "debt". The word used in the statute is a "claim". It is claims that must be repaid within 18 months and there is an explicit exception for loans, where the loan has been turned into a written agreement.

Government Orders

I am sick and tired of hearing the government twist reality into its propaganda, the twisting of reality. If it were an 18 month deadline, may I ask anyone around here to tell me the implication of that. There was no implication when the 18 months came and went. The reason is that loans to campaigns are not claims until the person who makes the loan makes it a claim and the legislation explicitly states that if there is a loan, and it is in a written agreement for repayment, then it is accepted from the definition of the claim.

I cannot say that too many times, but let that please be the end of this misleading hokey foisted upon this House and the public by the government.

An hon. member: You should be in Hollywood.

•(1030)

Mr. Derek Lee: Well, I am prepared to go anywhere and say this, and I am prepared to actually have a chat with Elections Canada and the lawyers at Elections Canada. Let us get this nailed down because everyone knows here that if there is a written agreement to repay a loan, it runs out beyond the 18 months, and that is exactly what has happened.

Of the \$12 million borrowed for the Liberal leadership campaigns, approximately \$10 million has been repaid and there is still \$1.5 million or \$2 million to go and that will run over for the next year or so. But, relax.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I remind my colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River that the whole principle behind the bill is to take big money out of politics so there is no unfair competitive advantage to any person running for politics because of who he or she knows.

I want to challenge my colleague on this idea and ask him to elaborate on it. Where does he get the idea that it would be better to have the loan loophole come from individuals rather than from financial institutions? The whole premise of that clause in the bill is to avoid the “good ol’ boy” connections as well as the connections with business and unions, where they are not allowed to donate a single penny to an election campaign.

Under the current loophole, my union, the carpenters union, could loan me \$100,000 and not push me to pay it back. That would be fundamentally wrong. It would give me an inside competitive advantage over other people running in the same election campaign who may not have connections with a union, or a business, or a rich uncle or an individual lending it to themselves. For example, it is fundamentally wrong for a guy who owns a car dealership to have his dealership loan him \$250,000. However, it is perfectly legitimate for that same individual to get a \$30,000 or \$50,000 start-up loan from a bank or a credit union. In fact, it is necessary if we are to give equal access to the electoral system to all people who want to seek office.

My colleague has a convoluted, pretzel logic. He is a complicated man and an intellectual, but this reasoning is so convoluted that it does not hold water.

Mr. Derek Lee: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that the objective is to squeeze big money out of political campaigns, but this legislation would not squeeze big money out. It allows banks to lend

the big money. If he thinks the “good ol’ boy” network does not include bank managers, then he is deluding himself there as well.

In terms of logic, if it is okay for a bank to lend \$20,000 to get a campaign up and running then, why is it not okay for a citizen to lend \$20,000 to get a campaign up and running, on the assumption that the money has to be paid back and that it is disclosed as part of the campaign? This is how we do it now.

I do not understand why the hon. member is so happy foisting upon the banks the sole responsibility for providing the interim cash flow, the line of credit, or the loan, for a political campaign. All citizens should have that right, provided there is disclosure and the amount is repaid.

•(1035)

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, much to the chagrin, I am sure, of my hon. colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River, I will return to the fact, and I emphasize the word “fact”, that any unpaid debts at the end of 18 months of a leadership campaign must be repaid. That is quite clear in the elections act.

My hon. colleague has said that he is sick and tired of hearing this and that these words are being twisted because they are not debts but claims. I point out for the hon. member that the act currently includes loans as claims. Therefore, any unpaid loan is an unpaid claim.

I will give the member this opportunity to retract his earlier comments. Eighteen months is the deadline for the repayment of loans in a leadership campaign. Would he care to retract his statement now?

Mr. Derek Lee: Not a chance, Mr. Speaker. A loan is mentioned in the act if it is a loan that is reduced, in writing, with a term commitment to repay the loan. It is explicitly excepted from the claim provisions that have the 18 month deadline.

Mr. Alan Tonks: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties and I think you would find unanimous consent for the following motion: That notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of this House, that at the end of today's debate on Bill C-474, standing in the name of the hon. member for Don Valley West, all report stage motions be deemed adopted, the bill be deemed concurred in at report stage with further amendments and be deemed read a third time and passed.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Toronto Centre.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I participate in this debate with some considerable interest.

Government Orders

I do not want to bore members, but I have been elected nine times, federally and provincially, under either federal or provincial statutes. I have run for two leadership contests in two different political parties in two different political jurisdictions, once successfully and once unsuccessfully, but both thoroughly enjoyable experiences.

I have had quite a considerable amount of experience, since first being elected to this place in 1978 and in the province of Ontario in 1982, in looking at the question of election financing. Therefore, I would like to put the debate on this set of amendments in a context.

For a long time, in most provinces, there were very few limits on contributions and very little transparency in the system with respect to who could spend what, whatever limits there might be, and what had to be declared or did not have to be declared. Companies, unions and individuals were allowed to give. Looking around the world, this is what pertains in a great many jurisdictions.

I think there is a very widespread feeling, and certainly one that I share, that this is not a very desirable circumstance in which our democracy should operate and that our democracy should operate under the rule of law, under a rule of transparency and of accountability and under the principle that one does not have to be rich to run for political office and that political office should be accessible to everyone, regardless of their circumstances.

Speaking very personally, the first time I ran for Parliament in 1978, I ran for a nomination in which I would have spent somewhere in the order of \$500. The money was raised from a group of friends of mine from law school, who all contributed money so I could run for the nomination. The spending limit at the time I was elected would have been something in the order of \$25,000 to \$30,000. Contributions came in large and small amounts. It was, by any stretch of the imagination, in discussing with my American or British friends how that system compared with others, a very democratic and open system.

In the early 1970s in the province of Ontario, the premier of the day, Mr. Davis, asked Dalton Camp to chair an inquiry into election financing in the province because there had been a great deal of concern about the principles, which I have outlined: the principle of transparency, the principle of accountability and the principle that the system should be seen to be fair and should be seen to be operating in a fair manner.

Mr. Camp was a Progressive Conservative of some note and he wrote what I think many people would regard as a very fine report. He was assisted in that regard by Mr. Doug Fisher, who is well known to many of us as a public figure and commentator, a former member in this place, and by the former leader of the Liberal Party in Ontario, Mr. Farquhar Oliver as well.

They produced a report that set out some of these principles, but it also did something else, which is worth noting. The way Mr. Davis approached it was to go to the other political parties and say, "We have a problem", not "I have a problem", or not "I want to manipulate the system to my temporary advantage", but "We have a general problem and as much as possible, we should try to regulate the question of election financing by consensus".

As much as possible, the participants in politics, the political parties, should try to create institutions and methods of operation and establish a broad basis of consensus and stability that would allow us to proceed in a way that no one would be able to suggest that somehow, for reasons of temporary advantage of one kind or another, we would make a change, a change that would be seen to be benefiting one political party as opposed to another.

• (1040)

We all know that nothing could be more subversive of our democratic process than to have a party in government suddenly decide that it would change the rules, so it would completely undermine the position, the credibility and the ability of other parties to operate in that system.

I make no secret of my friendship with Mr. Davis and of my great admiration for him. He and I have since had occasion to work together on many different tasks and projects, including most recently the report that we wrote on improving higher education in the province of Ontario.

I know Mr. Davis continues to regard me as philosophically misguided, as he would put it, but nevertheless our friendship remains very strong. I have great admiration for his sense of occasion and his sense of critical times in the life of the province. He was not simply going to exercise partisan advantage in order to achieve something. He was going to be doing something on behalf of all the people of the province. No issue reflected this more significantly than the question of election financing.

I could tell a similar story about the changes in the federal law and the federal rules, the decision by Prime Minister Chrétien to make a very significant change, which was carried through. It is notable, for example, that the proclamation of the date of that change was delayed so it would not negatively impact a leadership contest then under way in the Conservative Party of Canada. That was, again, an example of someone saying, "Let's recognize that we're not going to take advantage of this to simply punish a party which is now undergoing a political battle".

I entered the contest for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada under a certain set of rules. Those rules were not made by me. They were not written by me. They had nothing to do with me in a sense. They were passed by the Parliament of Canada. I assumed those rules would apply to the leadership contest, which I was entering, for the full time of that contest.

I do not say this directly when I look at my friends, including my colleagues who are here from the Conservative Party and my friends from the New Democratic Party and the Bloc.

[*Translation*]

I became a candidate under legislation approved by the Parliament of Canada and very clear rules. The rules said that there was a \$5,400 limit on individual contributions and that the contributions could be made up to 18 months after the convention. The law was very clear, unequivocal and transparent, and it was passed by the Parliament of the day.

Government Orders

• (1045)

[*English*]

To put it mildly, I and a number of other leadership candidates were shocked. It woke me up to how the new government plays the game of politics. In the middle of the period in which we were raising money for the leadership and engaged in the leadership race itself, the Conservatives changed the law in such a way that for the entire 18 month period after the convention we were no longer allowed to collect cheques of \$5,400. We were only allowed to collect cheques of \$1,100.

I want to tell everyone in this chamber and anyone else who wants to listen that there is no other interpretation that one can give to that unilateral change, joined in by the Bloc and approved and egged on by the New Democratic Party. There is no other way to interpret the timing of that law and the fact that it was not grandfathered for those who were participating in the leadership contest. There is no other way to interpret that law but as a deliberate attempt to undermine the credibility and integrity of the Liberal Party of Canada and to cause personal difficulty and embarrassment for each person who ran for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada. It was a deliberate and flagrant attack on our political process in which we had all entered in terms of that race.

The member for Cambridge is laughing. Let him laugh because for him to change the rules in the middle of the game is just a laughing matter.

Mr. Gary Goodyear: You were taking money from kids, Bob.

Hon. Bob Rae: I will say to the hon. member that if we are on the other side, I hope we will not do what they have done to us. To change the contribution limits, when people ran campaigns on the assumption that financing would be possible, and then to change those rules and those limits in the middle of the game when we had all taken the personal risk that we take when we go into a leadership race, is simply disgraceful. I must confess that it has affected, for all time, my view of what the party opposite is really all about. I think I now understand what it is all about, what it is trying to do to us and what it is trying to do to the democratic process.

The Conservatives can shout down, heckle and comment any way they want but I will not be cowed nor bullied by them into not stating what I know to be the truth. The government opposite interfered in this process because it had a political agenda. That is what it is all about. There is no way that anyone in his or her right mind would support the government in any effort it makes with respect to the project that is now under way with Bill C-29 and the statements it is making about the current law with respect to Elections Canada.

The member opposite is not sitting in his chair and I am not sure he is allowed to heckle from anywhere in the House.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Bob Rae: If you're going to heckle—

• (1050)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Derek Lee): Order, please. A little more order would assist all colleagues in getting through this debate.

Hon. Bob Rae: Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with a couple of arguments that have been made.

My colleague from Winnipeg Centre just made a comment about the importance of using banks rather than individuals to make loans. I have no particular problem with that amendment to the act. It does not affect things one way or the other.

However, the one comment he made, which he needs to think about, is when he said that it would take big money out of politics, which means that anybody could gain access to the same amount of money. The hon. member needs to think realistically about what security banks will be asking for with respect to getting a loan and what that really means.

If the member is saying that this would take big money out, I would say that it does not. However, if the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre wants to take the money factor out of a leadership race entirely, the one way in which it can be done is to apply the philosophy in the Elections Act to leadership races, which is to say that there should be, as there is in the United States, public contributions for leadership races just as there are public contributions for our own campaigns at the national level.

Speaking, I hope, in a less partisan fashion at this moment, if I were to make a practical suggestion to the House, having gone through this race, and I do not say this with any sense of pride, having managed to get through a very extensive process of begging and pleading with friends and people who used to be friends and getting them to make contributions, there is one flaw in the legislation. When my friends in the Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party or the Bloc Québécois have a leadership race they will all have the same experience we did.

[*Translation*]

They will have to deal with the same circumstances and challenges as us. They will see that if a party wants to conduct a nation-wide campaign, if that party wants its campaign to reach every riding in this great land, that costs money. If the funds do not come from our families, from personal sources, and from contributors, and if they want a democratic campaign, then I believe there has to be more public funding for leadership races, just like there is for political parties.

With all due respect, I wanted to focus on two points about this change. The first is that it is not fair to change the rules in the middle of the game. That is not fair. They can do it, and they have even done it twice now, but it is not fair, and I have to say that. This is an example of injustice toward a political party. If they want to punish a political party, they can. But if they start playing that kind of game, it could have some negative consequences.

The second point I really want to make is about an important reform that has not been proposed in this bill: public funding. I am not talking about full funding, but a contribution from the public for leadership campaigns. I hope that will be in place before the next Bloc Québécois, NDP or Conservative Party leadership race because I think it is important for the Canadian democratic process.

That is all I have to say, and I appreciate the opportunity to take part in this debate.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Toronto Centre for a very informative speech. It is the kind of speech I myself would have given if I were looking forward to contesting a leadership race in the next year or so and was going to rely upon a large amount of donated cash.

I want to talk about a couple of things. One is the idea that Jean Chrétien was being fair and thoughtful when he put forward this finance legislation. We should be clear about what was going on. The legislation that was put forward would have gone into effect, although the Chief Electoral Officer had some discretion on it, on December 31, 2003. Any race that might be underway could be declared to go before or after. The Chief Electoral Officer chose to cause the old financing rules with unlimited donations and unlimited spending to apply.

That was not done out of fairness. That was done to ensure the member for Newmarket—Aurora, who at that point was running for the leadership of the Conservative Party, would have a huge advantage over the current Prime Minister in that leadership race. It was a complete abuse of process and no one should misunderstand what was going on on that occasion.

With regard to the fairness of the underlying system, there was nothing fair about the process that Jean Chrétien proposed of providing public financing on a sliding scale based on how many votes one got in the previous election, thereby locking in the advantage of the governing party; \$1.75 per year to each party per vote it received in the previous election. Regardless of how voters might feel in the future, there is nothing fair about that. It locks in an incumbent's advantage. The longer the next Parliament lasts, the bigger the advantage adds up to be and the larger the number of votes a party has the bigger the advantage.

What was fair about that as compared to what Ed Broadbent proposed where one would have the ability to indicate where one's particular subsidy would go based upon one's ongoing preferences? That was a much fairer suggestion which was shot down by the Liberals at that time.

Similarly, the rebate of 60% of expenses to candidates, rewards those who are able to spend more. What is fair about that? What about this does not have the effect of benefiting those who have the most to spend and the most ability to borrow?

• (1055)

Mr. Derek Lee: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Now that the hon. member has completed his comments, I just want to say that we were admonished in the House yesterday for straying beyond the scope of this third reading of Bill C-29. We were admonished in part because of two or three points of order from the parliamentary secretary. I am suggesting that the comments here go way outside of the contents of the bill we are now debating at third reading.

I am just asking that the government members subscribe to the same rules that their member urged upon the House yesterday.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River but I think the hon. member for Toronto Centre is ready to

make a response, in any event, to the comments so I will call upon him at this point to make his response.

Hon. Bob Rae: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from my friend from Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington.

If we were to go back to the Camp report, we would find the basis upon which the two principles that were applied to the Liberal legislation were there. That is the first one was with respect to using the last election as the basis upon which to document the public contributions because it is an objective basis. It is a basis of what the support was in an election, a democratic contest in which people have expressed themselves. That is just the reality. Would there be another way of doing it? Yes, I suppose there would be but that is one objective criterion.

If we look at other countries in terms of how public funding is allocated, it is the same principle applied, which is that the level of public funding depends upon the level achieved in a democratic process. The same is true with respect to the contributions. None of these things are fixed for all time.

If the member opposite is saying that the government would like to look at those contributions and at the legislation overall, I would invite the government, instead of bringing in these little amendments here and there, which are designed to appeal to one party on the other side or not and give a temporary advantage, to put the subject matter of election financing in front of an all party committee and let us have an agreement that we will not see this as a partisan issue.

I really do not see this as a partisan issue nor do I see it as a personal issue. I have done my bit and I have no personal issues. I am not here out of any personal gripe. I am here because I think what has animated the government is a desire for temporary political advantage.

I do not know whether that has animated other governments in the past or not. I only know what I see and I think that is a very unhealthy feature. It is a perfect example of how not to reform the election financing process. The election financing process should be something in which all political parties can be seen to be participating and there is no particular advantage to one party or another. That is an approach that I would strongly advocate for now and certainly advocate for the future.

• (1100)

Mr. Alan Tonks: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to ask for unanimous consent for the following: "That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, at the end of debate on Bill C-474, standing in the name of the member for Don Valley West, all report stage motions be deemed adopted, the bill be deemed concurred in at report stage with further amendments, and be deemed read a third time and passed".

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: No.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[English]***TILLSONBURG MULTI-SERVICE CENTRE**

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to honour and celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre, a volunteer organization that has been serving the community since 1978.

The Multi-Service Centre offers a wide variety of programs and services. The programs are organized into three broad categories: adult basic literacy; employment service for youth and adults; and home support services for seniors and the disabled.

Residents are invited to join in the festivities on Wednesday, June 25, 2008 at the Livingston Centre in Tillsonburg.

On behalf of Canada's government and the residents of Oxford, I would like to thank the Multi-Service Centre for its exceptional selfless service and leadership. I am proud to represent such an inspiring organization fuelled by an outstanding community.

* * *

NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR WEEK

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is National Blood Donor Week which we officially celebrate for the first time this year after a bill initiated in the other place received royal assent on February 14. I am proud to have been the House sponsor for that piece of legislation.

All hon. members should understand the importance of blood donation to our health care system.

Each year hundreds of thousands of Canadian donors are required to meet the demands of hospitals across Canada. National Blood Donor Week presents an opportunity to thank those who have given blood and recruit others to do the same.

Yesterday I had the honour of joining Canadian Blood Services in opening the Toronto Stock Exchange as well as a new permanent blood donation clinic in Toronto. That clinic will serve as a visual reminder that the need for blood never wanes. Long after these celebrations are forgotten, we will still need those donors.

I encourage all Canadians to give blood, to give the precious gift of life.

* * *

*[Translation]***MEMBER FOR NEPEAN—CARLETON**

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in this House, the member for Nepean—Carleton apologized for the hurtful comments he made about first nations members, right after the government had apologized. His comments cast a shadow over the sincerity of these apologies.

The night before, on Tuesday, this member and all of his Conservative colleagues behaved in an extremely unruly manner—and that is putting it lightly—at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. Since they wanted to avoid

passing a motion to examine their ethical behaviour concerning their party's financial practices during the election campaign, the Conservatives spent four hours dragging out the debate and delaying the vote. They interrupted the chair at every opportunity and made disparaging and even offensive remarks. It got so bad that the chair of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics asked the member for Nepean—Carleton to apologize. This request was ignored, adding insult to injury.

The Conservatives should not dodge a review of their ethical practices by throwing ethics to the winds at the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

* * *

*[English]***MARINE PROTECTED AREAS**

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about the cultural, economic and historical importance of salmon to British Columbia, but a serious crisis exists with regard to chinook, sockeye and coho on the south coast. Action must be taken.

Changes in the ocean, rising temperatures, predation, food source issues, pollution, the impact of human development and industry are key to the decline.

Last Friday, the Living Oceans Society, the Suzuki Foundation and the Sierra Club reported on Canada's progress on new marine protected areas. Despite having legislation and policy in place, they called Canada's record dismal on implementing a comprehensive network of marine protected areas. Canada lags far behind the U.S. and Australia.

The government must deliver to protect sensitive and vulnerable marine ecosystems. The Pacific north coast integrated management area must be achieved immediately.

Enforcement of habitat protection must also be increased and support for the work of stream keepers must be stepped up. Burnaby stream keepers, like the Stoney Creek Environment Committee, know the importance of such steps. Does the government?

* * *

● (1105)

ZIMBABWE

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada endorses the statement made last week by 40 eminent African leaders that the Zimbabwe election should be free and fair.

Canada condemns the repeated detention by two key opposition leaders, Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara, and the recent arrest of Tendai Biti. Opposition should be permitted to campaign freely without fear and prosecution.

We are also very concerned that the government of Zimbabwe continues to harass and effectively shut down independent organizations. In such an environment it is impossible for a free, fair and democratic election to take place.

We support greater UN involvement in Zimbabwe, including an envoy and UN Security Council consideration of the situation. Last week, the Government of Canada called on the Zimbabwean ambassador to deliver these strong messages and to express our deep concerns with the recent conduct of the Zimbabwean government.

* * *

HELP A VILLAGE EFFORT

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since 1999 the community of Glovertown in my riding, with matching funds from CIDA, has managed to raise enough money from its annual Walk for Water to provide 85 artesian wells for needy villages in India. As their member of Parliament, I am extremely proud of this remarkable achievement, a feat that is unlikely to be matched by any other community of its size.

As members may know, Help A Village Effort, or H.A.V.E., is a voluntary non-governmental organization which a constituent of mine, Mr. Gerard Feltham, and his friends started in 1982 when he was living in Haliburton-Minden, Ontario.

Since 1982 nearly 700 safe drinking water systems and many essential education and health services have been provided to thousands of needy families in hundreds of villages, particularly in India. The bulk of its support comes through the efforts and donations of friends and relatives.

Walk for Water events are now taking place in communities in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Ontario.

This small group of people are to be commended for their outstanding efforts to improve the lives of those less fortunate and for making this world a better place.

* * *

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Rahim Jaffer (Edmonton—Strathcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Competition Bureau announced that criminal charges have been laid against 13 individuals and 11 companies accused of fixing the price of gasoline at the pump in various cities in Quebec. Some are questioning whether the Competition Bureau will look into other retail markets across the country.

This government will not tolerate price fixing by companies that jack up the price of gasoline. We will also not go the way of the Liberal leader, who wants to put a carbon tax on everything, which would raise the prices at the pump, the cost of heating oil and everything else we buy.

This tax trick would severely impact seniors, rural Canadians, and those living on fixed incomes. It would hurt the trucker, the taxi driver and the small business owner. In fact, every single Canadian would have to pay more in tax.

While the Liberal leader wants to hit all Canadians with his massive tax increase, our Conservative government is making sure

Statements by Members

Canadians keep more of their hard-earned tax dollars. We are cracking down on price fixers who want Canadians to pay more for gas.

* * *

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Standing Committee on the Status of Women tabled its 11th report, which focuses on gender-responsive budgeting.

We are especially pleased about recommendation 20, which suggests that Finance Canada publish its gender-based analysis of budget measures as part of future federal budgets.

This would allow us to understand the direct effects of the budget on women's economic status. Consider social housing, employment insurance and all of the other issues that are not priorities for the Conservatives and that contribute to the gap between men and women.

This report clearly exhibits that the egalitarian society we claim to be part of is perhaps not as egalitarian as we thought and that the struggle for women's equality is not over.

The Conservatives have been, are and will be an obstacle to equality between the men and women of Quebec. Given our recommendations, they should admit this publicly and stop hiding.

* * *

[English]

CARBON TAX PROPOSAL

Mr. Gord Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader has made tens of billions of dollars in non-budgeted spending promises, and now he has come up with a way to finance his free-spending ways: higher taxes for everyone. Weasel words like “green shift” and “revenue neutral” will not hide the fact that his plan is a tax on everything for all Canadians.

My constituents live in a rural riding in a cold climate. They know what it costs to heat their homes, drive their cars, operate their farm machinery, and get food and goods to our stores. As more details emerge about this massive carbon tax, Canadians are questioning the Liberal leader's enormous flip-flop on this issue.

I am sure all Liberal MPs are really excited about spending their summer defending a tax increase. Even the Liberal environment critic cannot convince his own brother, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, that this plan is a good one.

Canadians know that with the Liberal leader's new carbon tax, they will be forced to reach deeper in their pockets for everything. The good folks in my riding and across the country will not be tricked.

Statements by Members

● (1110)

[Translation]

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Marcel Proulx (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on May 18, 2008, the Chinese Association of Outaouais organized a special event to commemorate Asian Heritage Month. Activities included concerts, dance performances, culinary tastings and round tables.

Since the first event was organized in Toronto in 1993, several Canadian cities, including Gatineau, have been holding festivities to commemorate Asian Heritage Month. In 2001, the Senate of Canada made this initiative official by adopting a motion declaring the month of May as Asian Heritage Month.

Cultural diversity enhances Canada socially, politically and economically. Asian Heritage Month allows all Canadians to celebrate the beauty and wisdom of Asian cultures.

I would like to congratulate Ming Zhang, president of the Chinese Association of Outaouais, and her daughter, Catherine Gao, for their hard work, as well as the City of Gatineau for its involvement and contribution to making this event a great success.

* * *

[English]

LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing rumours that the Liberal leader will finally unveil the details of his massive national carbon tax next week, the tax trick that will raise the cost of everything for all Canadians.

However, Liberal MPs are deeply divided and there is infighting over the Liberal leader's plan to sell a tax on everything to Canadians this summer. Liberals who support higher gas prices, higher electricity costs and higher food costs will have a lot of explaining to do.

Canadians will not be tricked into swallowing a new, permanent Liberal carbon tax.

My constituents are worried about this permanent new regressive tax that will destroy jobs and drive up the cost of gas, electricity and everything else.

The Liberal leader must finally be honest with Canadians and tell them why he is planning on attacking seniors and Canadians living on fixed incomes. Why?

* * *

GARMENT INDUSTRY

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected in 1997, there were 43 garment manufacturers in my riding. They employed some 7,000 skilled craftspeople. These were good jobs: union jobs with pensions, benefits and dental plans.

Since then, established companies in this industry have suffered terribly. Major established companies such as Gemini, Western Glove and Nygard are dropping like flies, one by one yielding to

insurmountable forces with virtually no assistance from the federal government.

The government has abandoned the garment industry. I cannot understand why.

It is almost impossible any more to find anything that is made in Canada. When China was allowed into the WTO, Canada could have put quotas on imports so our domestic employers would have a fighting chance. The government did nothing.

Duty remission orders now are sunseting, from 50% to 25% to zero in 2010. If the government cares about the garment industry at all, it needs to extend the duty remission orders to 2016, and at 100%, not 50%.

The government has failed to act in any meaningful way. The duty remission orders are one last chance so that these employers can keep hiring Canadians to make clothes in Canada that we can all be proud of.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Tina Keeper (Churchill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister said the apology to Indian residential school survivors marked “a positive step in forging a new relationship between aboriginal peoples and other Canadians”.

This new relationship must lead to greater opportunity for the current generation of first nations children.

Recently I met with Chief Flett of St. Theresa Point and Chief Colon of Oxford House in the Churchill riding. They spoke of their longstanding struggle to attain cooperation and funding for new schools.

Provinces and territories benefit from transfer payments for such provisions, but not first nations. These schools face severe overcrowding in their classrooms, deteriorating buildings and widespread mould. As well, the school in Oxford House is situated on contaminated soil.

First nations students across Manitoba's north are determined to learn, advance their education and achieve the same hopes and dreams as all other Canadians.

* * *

● (1115)

[Translation]

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a majority of members of this House voted in favour of Bill C-207 at third reading. The members for Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean and Jonquière—Alma ignored the message from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean and its representatives. It is deplorable that these two elected representatives and their colleagues from Quebec chose to blindly follow their party's right-wing ideology, the laissez-faire ideology the Conservatives are known for.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS**

Yesterday, we saw proof of these members' impotence as they put their party ahead of the regions of Quebec that are in economic difficulty.

The Conservative government must now accept the verdict of the House. It has a moral obligation not to impede the bill's progress toward royal assent.

I want to thank all the people, municipalities, youth organizations and student associations who fought with me against the Conservative ideology.

* * *

[English]

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been a bad couple of weeks for the Conservative Party of Canada. Conservative donors must be wondering if they are getting value for the money they are funnelling into the party's Ottawa office.

Last week was highlighted by a disastrous attempt to distract from its current scandal by drawing Canadians' attention back to the Cadman affair.

Hundreds of thousands of Conservative dollars are being spent on big city lawyers' fees for affidavits which point out that Conservative operatives offered Chuck Cadman a bribe for his vote.

Thousands of dollars are being spent on audio experts, only to have them confirm that those are the Prime Minister's unaltered words on that tape where he talks about "financial considerations" for Chuck.

This week brought back the Conservatives' ad campaign, in which the Prime Minister is represented by a talking grease spot. Unfortunately, the oily campaign will never see the light of day because even the big gasoline companies do not want to be associated with the Conservative government.

Yes, Conservative donors are receiving excellent returns on their investment. Or are they?

* * *

TAX FREEDOM DAY

Mr. Gary Goodyear (Cambridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have great news to share with Canadians. Tax Freedom Day, the day when Canadians have paid off the total tax bill imposed on them by government, is tomorrow, June 14, four days earlier than last year and 11 days earlier than the last full year of the former tax and spend Liberal regime.

Our Conservative government is cutting taxes in every way we can. As promised, we cut the GST from 7% to 6% to 5%. We have reduced the overall tax burden to the lowest point in almost 50 years. Almost \$200 billion in tax cuts means that Canadians are keeping more of their money.

Tax Freedom Day is fantastic news for almost everyone in Canada except the Liberal leader and his party, whose carbon tax trick and planned GST hike push Tax Freedom Day closer to December.

This government will not let that happen.

[Translation]

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for the government. I would like to ask why the Minister of Public Works, Michael Fortier, demanded the resignation of his assistant, Bernard Côté?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, questions were raised Tuesday with regard to Mr. Côté's actions. Minister Fortier himself immediately asked him to provide an explanation. Mr. Côté then submitted his resignation, which the minister accepted.

I would also like to add that the Liberal Leader in the Senate, Senator Hervieux-Payette, told the Senate on Wednesday: "I thank the minister for his diligence in this matter."

We did our job.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did not really get an answer from the parliamentary secretary. He did not outline for us what happened to persuade Mr. Côté to take this decision.

I would like to ask the following question. Why are the activities of Mr. Côté a matter of public interest whereas those of the member for Beauce and Ms. Couillard are considered a private matter?

How does he explain this clear contradiction in the government's position?

● (1120)

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no contradiction whatsoever.

[English]

Mr. Côté did not recuse himself from a conversation with somebody on a government file. Mr. Côté was confronted with questions about his behaviour by Minister Fortier. Mr. Côté offered his resignation. He immediately resigned. This government takes its responsibility on accountability very seriously. Mr. Côté no longer works for the federal government.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is engaged in a systematic obfuscation of a series of issues that are clearly important. The answer it always gives us is that the Department of Foreign Affairs is reviewing the only matter that is of public interest.

Oral Questions

Let me ask this of the parliamentary secretary or whoever else will answer the question. How can an administrative review by the Department of Foreign Affairs possibly include the following questions: the questions of conflict within the Department of Public Works and Government Services involving people on the minister's staff and Madam Couillard; Madam Couillard's application to the Department of Transport; and issues of security and organized crime and the Government of Canada?

How can a tiny little administrative review—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member for Vancouver South made it clear how the Liberals view this issue and why they are for holding a legislative inquiry when he said, speaking of Madam Couillard, “Who else does she have relationships with? I'd like to know”.

The member for Toronto Centre is right. That will not be covered by the foreign affairs inquiry because that is not really a matter of public interest.

We are worried about the issue that does matter in this regard. That is the question of documents that were left in an unsecured place. That is the one legitimate question of national security that is concerned.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the RCMP refused to tell the public safety committee whether it advised the Privy Council Office about Julie Couillard, but the Privy Council felt no such compunction. Why the double standard?

The government's whole defence in this matter is a pure fabrication of convenience.

Why does the government continue to insist in the case of the ex-foreign affairs minister that it is a private matter while a similar private matter was sufficient for Mr. Côté to be unceremoniously fired by the unelected Mr. Fortier?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the issue with regard to Mr. Côté was a question of having been lobbied on an issue, having a relationship with someone on that issue and not having recused himself. That is very different from any other issues that arise here and that is why his resignation was tendered and accepted.

We know the real issues that the opposition wants to pursue. The member for Vancouver South, the Liberal member who just spoke, said it quite clearly and he said it many times. He wants to know about Madam Couillard: “Who else does she have relationships with? I'd like to know”. Those are his words because that is how he defines this issue. That is why he thinks there should be a legislative inquiry.

With the greatest of respect, we do not think that is a proper subject for a legislative inquiry.

Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this has something to do with bikers and mobs and relationships with people with organized crime.

This all started with a security breach at the foreign affairs department and now has spread to the transport, public works and public safety departments. A top security expert, who is a former RCMP officer and CSIS agent, testified that a foreign affairs review is not enough to get to the bottom of this mess.

Why is the government refusing to call a full public inquiry, which is the only way to kill the bad odour rising from the Conservative scandals?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Vancouver South said quite clearly why he wants to have a public inquiry, when he said about Madam Couillard, “who else does she have relationships with? I'd like to know”. I am sure he would like to know that, but I do not think we need to have a public inquiry to satisfy that prurient curiosity of his.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Privy Council spokesperson and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons read from the same script, almost word for word. They said that the Privy Council was not advised of any security concerns about Julie Couillard by the RCMP. We are witnessing another attempted cover-up because this in no way proves that the Prime Minister was not informed of Ms. Couillard's shady past by the RCMP, the Department of Foreign Affairs or through other channels.

Instead of getting tangled up in unlikely explanations, will the Prime Minister admit that he knew of Julie Couillard's shady past long before this affair hit the news?

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, there is no camouflage here. We did not just say that the Privy Council Office was not advised by the RCMP. We also said the Prime Minister's Office was not advised by the RCMP of any security concerns; both of them, clear, front and transparent.

It is only when the opposition members suggest that something else has happened that we felt it necessary to say that, but those are the facts. If they think there is something wrong with the RCMP, then I think that is consistent with their attitude toward the police at all levels in this country.

Oral Questions

•(1125)

[English]

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons is still reading from the script, and in that same script the Privy Council spokesperson and the House leader speak about security. But, once again, that in no way rules out the fact that the Prime Minister was informed of risks in terms of other concerns such as undue pressure or influence peddling.

Does the Prime Minister understand that he has not managed to sweep the Julie Couillard affair under the rug, and that he has no choice but to appear before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have said many times, the Prime Minister and this government are not in the business of conducting investigations into people's private and personal lives. We are not going to change that approach.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec City, all the socio-economic stakeholders agreed that Estimaerville was the best site for a building to house public servants, but Minister Michael Fortier sent his advisor, Bernard Côté, to tell them that that plan would never materialize. In fact, the minister and Mr. Côté had only one location in mind: the Kevlar site downtown—the same Kevlar Julie Couillard was associated with.

Does this not prove that there was conflict of interest and influence peddling involving Michael Fortier's office?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): No, Mr. Speaker, for two reasons: first, no decision has been made in this matter yet and, second, the process is administered by departmental officials in an independent and transparent manner.

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, every stakeholder in Quebec City prefers one site and we have a public works minister who decides to march to his own drum by choosing another location in order to give the contract to Kevlar and help out his political advisor's girlfriend.

Is this not further proof that they were listening more to Kevlar than to those concerned and, if such is the case, that this is influence peddling?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the answer is no on many levels, but primarily and quite simply because no contract has yet been awarded.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, an apology without action is just empty words. All five aboriginal leaders spoke to us from this floor on Wednesday and they want to know that the government heard their call for action.

There are more aboriginal children in foster care now than at the height of the residential school era. The Prime Minister said that never again would Canada let racist policies sever the ties between children and parents.

What action will he take today to honour those words, and keep these children out of foster care and with their families?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very appreciative of this member's support for the apology that occurred on Wednesday of this week. It was a historic moment in Canada. I know that everyone in this country will look to that moment as a key beginning in our relationship with first nations people, aboriginal people, Métis and Inuit who lived the residential school experience.

She references more recent issues that our country faces in relation to students and children that are in child and family services. Our government is working on that issue diligently.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Bev Jacobs said on this floor, "Women have taken the brunt of it all".

I know she spoke from the heart because Bev Jacobs recently lost a cousin, Tashina General, to violence.

Wednesday she asked:

What is it that this government is going to do in the future to help our people? Because we are dealing with major human rights violations that have occurred to many generations: my language, my culture and my spirituality.

What will the government do to end violence against aboriginal women?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government's plan in this area is quite strong. We brought in changes to the Canadian Human Rights Act which extend the benefits of individual rights protection to first nations people on reserve.

Should a woman feel that her human rights have been violated, she will now have the option of pursuing that at the human rights tribunal. We have also brought forward legislation to extend matrimonial real property rights to first nations women. Few people in Canada know that this does not currently exist on reserve.

Oral Questions

• (1130)

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in committee this week, Michel Juneau-Katsuya described Ms. Couillard's attempts to influence and infiltrate four different departments as a "classic recruitment operation" for organized crime groups. This former senior CSIS intelligence officer unequivocally stated that this was a major public safety issue.

We are simply asking the government to give us a single good reason why a public inquiry should not be ordered.

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has undertaken a review, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, of the issue of whether there is any outstanding security question which remains.

As we know, there was one breach of the rules with regard to security, which was that documents were left in an unsecured location. That had nothing to do with the individual in whose home it was left. It would have been the same problem had it been left in any unsecured location.

For that, the member for Beauce submitted his resignation as foreign affairs minister and it was accepted.

Ms. Martha Hall Findlay (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is missing the point. The point is the question of the value of an inquiry. Renowned expert Wesley Wark was asked if the foreign affairs investigation would satisfy national security experts. He said:

I doubt it very much. First of all, Foreign Affairs has no real experience in investigating these matters. It has a small security department. It doesn't usually handle high level cases of this kind, that's usually CSIS or the RCMP.

All we ask is that if we are not going to get answers internally, give us one good reason why not a public inquiry?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said many times in the House, and I suppose the member for Willowdale was not listening, foreign affairs can draw on whatever public agencies that Canada has that have the expertise in the areas to assist it with its search.

If a public inquiry were to occur, it would not have the ability to call on CSIS or the RCMP to undertake any investigation. That is not how a public inquiry works. That can only happen if it happens in the context of the foreign affairs inquiry, which is why we are proceeding in that fashion.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government continues to dismiss this issue by saying that it is somehow a private concern.

This scandal involves national security, classified government documents, conflict of interest, multi-million dollar government contracts, the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Public Works, Public Security and Transport, the Privy Council, RCMP, organized crime, Hells Angels, and the Prime Minister of Canada.

How much more public does it have to get before the government realizes that this is a serious matter of national security and that Canadians deserve answers?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated many times, the Department of Foreign Affairs is conducting a review and it has the ability to draw on whatever agencies the government has to assist it in that regard. I am quite certain that is the way in which, if there are any outstanding concerns, it will be able to turn those up.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for weeks the government refused to answer. It hid behind false arguments of privacy as a security breach was ongoing.

As some with links to organized crime compromised national security and government contracts, the Conservatives dismissed serious questions, sticking their fingers in their ears and saying, "I am not listening".

When will the government realize that this cover up has failed? When will it call an independent inquiry and start putting national security ahead of the political interest of the Conservative Party?

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member's interest in national security were genuine, he would support the foreign affairs review, but if his interest is the same as that of the member for Vancouver South, one of wanting to know, for example, who else does Madam Couillard have relationships with, then I guess he wants to have a public inquiry into those questions.

We do not think that is what public inquiries are for. We are focusing on the serious public policy issues. Those will be undertaken by foreign affairs. It has the resources available and can draw on whatever resources it needs to get to the bottom of any legitimate national security issues, not the issues of who has been sleeping with whom that interests the Liberals so much.

* * *

[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on May 1, the Premier of Quebec, the mayors of Montreal and Quebec City and the president of the Union des municipalités wrote to the Prime Minister, asking him to reverse the decision by his Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec to cut funding for NPOs. The signatories did not even receive an acknowledgement that their letter had been received.

Does the Prime Minister realize that by acting in this way, he is showing disdain for the entire nation of Quebec? Will he promise to reverse his minister's bad decision, yes or no?

• (1135)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our department will continue to support regional economic development in Quebec and will continue to work with NPOs. We will continue to fund one-off projects that produce results and have a beginning, a middle and an end. Our mission is to support regional economic development, not to favour anyone.

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the four signatories are protesting the sudden, significant withdrawal of Ottawa's share of the funding for NPOs. Opinion in Quebec is unanimous that these organizations are a crucial part of Quebec's economic development model.

Will the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec finally stop posturing and agree to restore funding for non-profit organizations?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois wants to have it both ways. Given that the Bloc will never manage any public money, it is in no position to lecture us about regional development.

The Bloc Québécois record of achievements for the regions of Quebec will always be a big zero.

* * *

COMPETITION BUREAU

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Competition Bureau's investigation into gas price fixing reminds us of the importance of this consumer watchdog, and also confirms the need to strengthen its powers. It does not make sense that the bureau cannot launch an investigation until it receives a complaint or that it cannot summon and suitably protect witnesses during such a major investigation.

Does the Prime Minister recognize that the powers of the Competition Bureau must be extended?

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is very proud of the Competition Bureau. It does a very good job on what the member is talking about.

We are standing up for consumers and we are getting things done. In this specific case, 13 individuals and 11 companies have been charged with price fixing and 3 companies have already entered guilty pleas. These are the first such charges since 1955.

We will not tolerate price fixing for gas companies, but what we would like to see go away is the Liberal leader's plan to put a carbon tax on everything. It would raise the price of gas and energy for all Canadians. That is something we definitely will not support.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if these are the first charges since 1955, that is proof that the law is not working. The Bloc Québécois wants to give

Oral Questions

the Competition Bureau some teeth through Bill C-454. Having the ability to shed some light on an entire industrial sector will reduce the risk of price fixing. The Prime Minister knows all too well that this situation is not unique or limited to service stations. He must pick a side: consumers or oil cartels.

Will the Prime Minister finally commit to supporting Bloc Québécois Bill C-454?

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Bloc member does not understand his own bill. Bill C-454 would do nothing to lower the price of gas.

The government is taking action because we will not tolerate high gas prices. If we look at what the Bloc proposes in its platform, it is a \$500 million increase in taxes for petroleum companies. As always, the Bloc members say one thing, but their platform says the other.

We will not tolerate high gas prices.

* * *

ELECTIONS CANADA

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the in and out scheme was all about hiding national expenses on the books of local campaigns. The Conservatives then ran up an additional \$1.3 million in ads to help marginal ridings.

The member for Nepean—Carleton partook in this scheme and some of us are begging these questions. Did the increase in votes from 2004 to 2006 come from the scheme? Does the government credit this increase to the member's personal charm and mastery of cultural sensitivity or to the fact that Conservatives exceeded advertising limits?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative candidates spent Conservative funds on Conservative advertising. Those funds were spent legitimately and under the law in a common practice that was done by all political parties.

Elections Canada has failed to produce any evidence that our practices were any different than the other parties. We will continue to follow the law as we always have done in the past.

• (1140)

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): That is pretty rich, Mr. Speaker. He is in, but he should be out, quite frankly.

Oral Questions

Here is another situation. When he talks about legitimate spending, why was it the only party raided by the RCMP? Because only one party crafted a scheme to exceed national spending limits and bilk taxpayers out of illegal rebates.

Conservative candidates, like the one in my riding, are left holding the bag by a national campaign that pressured them to take part in this scheme. These candidates want to testify before a parliamentary committee, where the majority of MPs there want to hear from them.

Why is the government forcing its members, including the member for Nepean—Carleton, to filibuster the ethics committee?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, among the number of factual inaccuracies contained in the member's remarks was his discussion of filibusters at the ethics committees. In fact, it is the Liberal Party, along with the opposition, that is filibustering a parliamentary committee from investigating the question.

Our wish is to have such an investigation and for that investigation to include the actions of all parties. Therefore, we would encourage the member to tell his members at that committee to show up and to vote in favour of our amendments, which would allow our party and every party to be investigated.

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JUSTICE

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that parliamentary secretary continues to speak on behalf of the government. He is a major spokesperson who answers more questions on behalf of the government than most of the cabinet ministers. Now he is the poster child for Conservative intolerance.

The Conservatives believe that young offenders cannot be rehabilitated, that they should be punished as adults. Why is it that adult Conservative government members pay no price for their intolerant and hateful remarks?

Mr. Rob Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to improving the Youth Criminal Justice Act. We have been taking strong measures. Canadians are not fooled. They know there is only one party in the country that stands for the rights of victims, that there is only one party that is committed to addressing our justice system and that there is a party that is holding up these proceedings in the justice committee. Why does it not get on-board and help us fight crime?

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what about the victims of Conservative hate-filled remarks against gays and lesbians and against aboriginals?

Former Progressive Conservative cabinet minister, John Crosbie once said that the problem with the Reform Party was that 90% of its members gave the other 10% a bad name.

The Conservatives failure to punish intolerance makes the entire Conservative government look intolerant. When Conservative parliamentary secretaries utter hatred against gays and aboriginals, they face no punishment whatsoever.

Why are the Conservatives so soft on hate?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week we saw aboriginal leaders in our House of Commons, sitting on the floor, and they stood up with incredible stature and accepted the apology of our Prime Minister.

Those members on the other side heard an apology yesterday, which I feel was considerably meaningful and sincere. I would ask them to have that same stature we saw in the House of Commons on Wednesday.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Liberal leader schemes at ways to raise the tax bills of Canadians, from a regressive GST tax to a punitive carbon tax, our Conservative government is implementing unprecedented measures to reduce the federal tax burden. We have cut taxes in every way. We kept our promise and cut the GST by a full two points. We reduced the overall tax burden to its lowest level in nearly 50 years. In total, our nearly \$200 billion in tax cuts means more Canadians keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance please advise the House on the date of tax freedom day in 2008?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kitchener—Conestoga for his hard work in helping the government reduce taxes. It is because of this government's work and after three balanced budgets that Tax Freedom Day is coming earlier.

I know the Liberals do not want to hear this. This Saturday, June 14, we celebrate Tax Freedom Day, four days earlier than last year. That is 11 days earlier than the last full year that the Liberals were in power. This is good news for everyone except for the Leader of the Opposition who wants to change—

• (1145)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas.

* * *

COPYRIGHT ACT

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' new copyright regime is far from being a made in Canada solution. It is a knock-off. It is a bootlegged cheap copy of the American law, a ripoff of DMCA.

The government claims users have the right to copy their CDs onto a digital device, but not if the record company does not want them to. All it takes is one picked digital lock and music lovers are on the hook for \$20,000 in fines.

Will the Conservatives admit their made in the U.S.A. law will get Canadian consumers sued?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is just flat wrong. We have a made in Canada approach. The educational exemptions are made in Canada. The format shifting exemptions are made in Canada. The time shifting exemptions are made in Canada. The private copying of music exemption is made in Canada. The Internet service provider liability provisions are made in Canada. The statutory damages provisions are made in Canada.

My friend's comments about the U.S. DMCA are total rubbish.

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the bill does not balance the rights of artists with the rights of consumers. The bill is about satisfying the big corporations. The Conservative copyright regime will, as noted expert Michael Geist says, "...strongly encourage the use of technological locks and lawsuits".

Is the government really certain it wants to brand this anti-consumer, class action, waiting to happen Copyright Act as a Canadian product?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our approach is a balanced approach. We have the comments of the stakeholders on this, and most people are very happy. It is a difficult approach, but we are quite confident that Canadian consumers will be happy with this balanced approach.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the United States Supreme Court ruled that Omar Khadr and other detainees at Guantanamo Bay had been denied the basic right to challenge the legality of their detention. I will remind the minister that Omar Khadr remains the only citizen of a western country still being held at Guantanamo because the Conservative government has ignored his case.

How many more rulings will it take before the Conservative government intervenes and brings Omar Khadr back to Canada to face justice in a fair court of law?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member should ask the member from his party for Pickering—Scarborough East, who said, on November 8, 2005, that the charges against Omar Khadr were very serious.

As we have said, Mr. Khadr faces serious charges. Any questions regarding whether Canada plans to ask for his release are premature and speculative at this time.

Mr. Mario Silva (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the member understood the question, so I will try it in French.

[Translation]

The government cannot continue making excuses to avoid the situation. The courts have concluded a number of times that Omar Khadr was not receiving the fair treatment that every Canadian

citizen should be entitled to expect. Worse still, the government has abandoned young Omar Khadr.

Why does the government refuse to grant the same consideration to Omar Khadr that every other western democracy grants its citizens?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, he should ask the member for Pickering—Scarborough East, who said that Mr. Khadr faced serious charges. It was the Liberal government that initiated this policy. He should ask members of his party all the questions he has asked this government, as it is the same policy.

However, questions of Mr. Khadr coming here are speculative at this time.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Brent St. Denis (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, amazingly the Conservative Party has produced a self-incriminating affidavit from the widow of the late Chuck Cadman. In the sworn affidavit she refutes most of the key arguments made by the government to claim its innocence in the 2005 Cadman affair. Contrary to the government's line, Dona Cadman confirmed that on May 17 two Conservative Party officials had indeed offered her late husband a million dollar insurance policy in return for his vote.

Given the litigious nature of the Conservative Party when confronted by its own wrongdoing, will the Prime Minister be suing Mrs. Cadman for defamation?

• (1150)

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have said from the very beginning and the RCMP has now said that this government, the Conservative Party and the Prime Minister have done nothing wrong in this matter.

Dona Cadman says that she believes the Prime Minister is telling the truth and she believes that because the Prime Minister is telling the truth. Nothing inappropriate happened here and the Liberals ought to recognize the truth when they see it. They have not. We will see them in court.

Mr. Brent St. Denis (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we can assume that Mrs. Cadman is safe from Conservative lawsuits for now.

Oral Questions

The parliamentary secretary repeatedly talks about a meeting on May 19, but last week he handed out a sworn affidavit from Mrs. Cadman in which she swore that the insurance offer was made to her husband on May 17, which is not May 19.

Why did the parliamentary secretary hold a press conference to distribute information that contradicted the Prime Minister's version of events? Why not simply explain what happened on May 17?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not at all. What we said in the press conference was that the tapes the Liberals had been using to launch false attacks against the Prime Minister of the country had been doctored. Two experts have said that. Mr. Owen and Mr. Gough are both testifying in affidavits for the Ontario Superior Court that the tapes are in fact false.

The Liberals may not want to believe the RCMP when it said that nothing wrong happened. They may not want to believe Dona Cadman when she said that the Prime Minister was telling the truth, and that is fine. We will see them in court and they will pay.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Raymond Gravel (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on May 29, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages said to us in this House that, "The government will table the second phase of the action plan very soon, in the spring". Spring will be over in two weeks and we have not seen anything yet. We have been waiting since March 31; today is June 13 and nothing has been done.

Is the minister sneaking out the back door because she does not have the ability to present this plan and, in fact, she has nothing concrete to propose?

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is taking the necessary action in the interest of minority language communities and is ensuring the vitality of French and English in Canada. I would also like to point out that our government has taken steps to ensure that official language minority communities continue to receive funding after March 31, 2008.

The minister said we that we will table the second phase of the action plan before the end of spring and that is what we will do.

Mr. Raymond Gravel (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we can see how unimportant French is to this Conservative government. There was the plaque at Vimy that was riddled with mistakes, the website for the Office for Disabilities Issues that is full of errors and now we see that Health Canada's website is full of translation errors. What is more, we have learned that the minister will not be attending the FCFA annual general meeting tomorrow, June 14, in Quebec City.

Is it because she is ashamed of her government's lack of interest in French, the common language of the Quebec nation?

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Bloc that should be

ashamed. We have promised to table the second phase of the action plan a number of times. This promise was made in our Speech from the Throne and in budget 2008. And we still intend to announce the next phase before the end of spring.

However, it should be noted that the Bloc voted against the Speech from the Throne, against budget 2008 and against official language minority communities.

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the youth awareness initiative of the youth employment strategy is "delivered at the national, regional and local levels". However, a project sponsored by Concert'Action Lachine was recently turned down because all the program's money is reserved for the Vancouver Olympics.

Why are national funds, which are sorely needed by youth across the country, being channelled to only one region?

[English]

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the fund about which the member is talking, I will have to find out which ministry it is under because I have not had any advisement on that, and I will get that together.

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RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on June 5, the Transportation Safety Board released its final railway investigation report concerning the January 2006 main track derailment of a Canadian Pacific freight train in Buckskin, Ontario.

The Transportation Safety Board is calling for the removal of 12,000 wheel sets still in use on some CP, CN and U.S. freight cars.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities please tell the House what the government is doing in response to this report?

• (1155)

Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his hard work for Canadian farmers.

Let me first assure the House that this government did not wait for the final report before taking action. Our government's number one priority is the safety and security of Canadians. This morning the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities issued an emergency safety directive to CN in order to identify and remove from use as quickly as possible any potentially faulty train wheel sets from service in Canada.

Our government is acting quickly and decisively to ensure that our railways are safe. We are getting the job done.

*Oral Questions***2010 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES**

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, recently, Washington state went looking for Canadian lobbyists to get a piece of the 2010 Olympic pie. Whom did it hire? None other than B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell's campaign manager, Patrick Kinsella.

In reports back to Washington state officials, Mr. Kinsella confirms his company lobbied the federal Olympic minister. The problem is that the lobbyists were never registered.

We know the floor-crossing member for Vancouver Kingsway has contempt for his own constituents, but can the government tell the House when he developed such contempt for the rules?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, neither the minister for the 2010 Olympics nor I, as the parliamentary secretary, have met with Mr. Kinsella with regard to the 2010 games.

Ms. Dawn Black (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister for the Olympics was entertaining the idea of sending the 2010 Olympic torch to Washington state for a day or two. A quote from the report of the unregistered lobbyist says that the minister's "office encouraged Washington state to talk with Vanoc about the possibility of having the 2010 torch relay travel through a portion of Washington state".

Can the government explain why the minister is above the rules? Can it explain why it believes it is okay to meet with Gordon Campbell's unregistered American lobbyist?

Mr. James Moore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is just not true. Neither the minister for the 2010 games nor I have met with Mr. Kinsella with regard to the 2010 games.

The 2010 games are going forward. The member spoke about the torch relay and there will be some good news about that coming forward.

The 2010 games are going to be a fantastic success for Vancouver, for Whistler, for British Columbia, and for all Canadians. We are doing everything we can to work with Vanoc and with the province to ensure that the games are a huge success for this country.

The NDP can invent its scandals about this. We know that the NDP campaigned in British Columbia against the 2010 Olympic Games and Canada hosting the 2010 games. We are going to ignore that party's false scandals and ignore its advice on the 2010 games. The games are going to be a success for Canada.

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[*Translation*]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, the Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec is the most unpopular man in Quebec. Because of his thoughtless actions and ideological cuts, he has created uncertainty in all the regions of Quebec.

Today we learned that the National Optics Institute, a centre of excellence, must abandon a number of projects and give up on expected jobs because of the minister. The crisis is getting worse, but the minister is adding fuel to the fire. His last line of defence is that he did not make the decision alone; it was cabinet that made the decision.

Can he tell us today whether it was cabinet that made the decision?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, from his response to an answer to a question the minister was asked this week, the hon. member for Honoré-Mercier apparently still thinks he is nine years old. He talked about handing out goodies, but it is still a long time until Halloween.

However, I am not surprised that he is so familiar with goodies, since the sponsorship scandal gave out so many goodies it emptied the pockets of Canadians. And Canadians have a big toothache because of the Liberals.

* * *

[*English*]

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recent charges and guilty pleas in a price-fixing case involving the retail gasoline industry in Quebec have generated a lot of media interest and prompted questions regarding whether the Competition Bureau will be conducting an ongoing probe.

Yesterday the Competition Bureau announced that charges have been laid against companies and individuals in four markets in Quebec.

Can the government shed light on the news out of Quebec about charges and guilty pleas in a price-fixing case involving the retail gasoline industry? Is the probe continuing?

• (1200)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Competition Bureau has laid charges against 13 individuals and 11 companies accused of fixing the price of gasoline at the pump in four Quebec markets. Three companies and an individual have pleaded guilty for their part in criminal conspiracies to fix gasoline prices. The court has imposed fines totalling over \$2 million against the companies so far. The individual was fined \$50,000.

The Competition Bureau has investigations under way in all other regions of the country. I am confident the Commissioner of Competition will take appropriate action where it is warranted.

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SENIORS

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I hosted an Internet summit so that our leader could listen to the needs of seniors from coast to coast.

Routine Proceedings

Seniors were clear. There is a pressing need for affordable housing in this country, but the Conservative government is not listening. It has made zero investments in affordable housing for seniors. In fact, in 2006 the Conservatives cut \$200 million that had been allocated by the Liberals.

Why does the Prime Minister not listen? Why is he denying Canadian seniors the right to live with dignity?

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government takes seniors issues very seriously. We have created a seniors secretariat. We have also established a seniors council.

We have invested in 630,000 housing units for social housing. We have invested a billion dollars in housing trusts, unlike the Liberals who would add a carbon tax which would drive housing and electricity costs to unaffordable limits for seniors.

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[Translation]

OMAR KHADR

Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the United States Supreme Court's decision represents the court's third decision clearly ruling that human rights must be respected. It is clear that Omar Khadr's rights were not respected in Guantanamo. They arrested a 15-year-old child soldier. Omar Khadr should face Canadian justice and not an illegal process in the United States.

We have heard enough of the parliamentary secretary's broken-record response. We want an answer. When will the Prime Minister repatriate Omar Khadr so that he can face justice here?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do not comment about the judicial system of another country.

If the member does not agree with what I have been saying, she should listen to what the member for Pickering—Scarborough East said in 2005, when he said that charges against Omar Khadr are very serious.

In light of that situation, any questions regarding whether Canada plans to ask for Mr. Omar Khadr's return are premature and speculative at this time.

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GARMENT INDUSTRY

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the garment industry in Winnipeg Centre is in crisis. We are hemorrhaging jobs, good union jobs with pensions and benefits that offered a good start to generations of new Canadians.

Now the duty remission orders that offered some relief to unfair global competition are set to expire. It is another nail in the coffin of this struggling industry.

Will the government commit today that it will extend the duty remission orders so our struggling garment industry in Winnipeg has at least a fighting chance to survive?

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to the Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we cannot help but admire the tenacity of the NDP members, because they are off on every issue in the country. They really do not want to talk about the issues that are before Parliament.

There are some serious issues facing the garment industry in Canada and we understand that. We recognize the challenges that it faces. The Government of Canada has looked at ways of assisting the industry.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICS COMMISSIONER

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 90(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House the annual report of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the "House of Commons Report to Canadians 2008".

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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to two petitions.

* * *

● (1205)

CANADA NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS ACT

Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-62, An Act respecting not-for-profit corporations and certain other corporations.

Routine Proceedings

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

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

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[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I am tabling, in both official languages, the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Health. The committee has completed its statutory parliamentary review of progress made toward implementing the 10 year plan to strengthen health care, and it wishes to share its conclusions and recommendations.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

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[*English*]

FIRST NATIONS CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Ms. Tina Keeper (Churchill, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-563, An Act to ensure that appropriate health care services are provided to First Nations children in a timely manner.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this piece of legislation, an act to ensure that appropriate health care services are provided to first nations children in a timely manner. This bill was inspired by the very short life of a boy named Jordan Anderson from the Norway House Cree Nation in my riding of Churchill and the courageous battle waged by his family and the community.

Jordan's principle is to ensure a child's health is prioritized and appropriate services are provided. This enactment implements Jordan's principle to provide that if the Government of Canada has an obligation to pay for health care services for a first nations child whose ordinary residence is on a reserve, the first department of that government requested to pay shall do so in a timely manner. With this legislation, the aim is that Canada will provide first nations children the same health care services in a comparable timeframe as all other Canadian children receive.

I encourage all members of the House to work together to ensure no child in our country is left behind when it comes to health care.

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

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PETITIONS

STUDENT LOANS

Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition on behalf of many constituents in Labrador West, which is part of my riding. They are post-secondary students and lament the burden that high student debt places on individuals and families. These students are petitioning the government to establish a system of needs based grants through the Canada student loans program for students at universities and colleges.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I present a petition in which the petitioners remind us that Parliament has a duty to be accountable and to protect the taxes that are collected from Canadian citizens. They petition that Parliament continue to investigate the location and possible allocation of the \$40 million of taxpayers' money which mysteriously vanished under the Liberal Party of Canada during the sponsorship scandal.

[*Translation*]

CHARTER OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-482 was introduced in the House and defeated, but I am still receiving petitions signed by hundreds of people demanding that Bill 101, which makes French the official language of the Quebec nation, be respected by the federal government in Quebec.

I have the honour to present two such petitions.

[*English*]

UNBORN VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr. Ken Epp (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have another 598 signatures of petitioners mostly from Quebec.

The petitioners trust that the wording of the bill is accurate when it says that it specifically does not apply to elective abortion and that it is meant totally and entirely to protect a pregnant woman and the child that she was wants from an assailant, a third party, who would come with a knife or a gun and would attack her and take away both her choice and the life of the child she wants.

The petitioners are pleading with Parliament to pass Bill C-484.

●(1210)

INCOME TRUSTS

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I present this income trust broken promise petition on behalf of many Albertans and British Columbians who remember the Prime Minister boasting about his apparent commitment to accountability when he said that the greatest fraud was a promise not kept.

The petitioners want to remind the Prime Minister that he promised never to tax income trusts but that he recklessly broke that promise by imposing a 31.5% punitive tax which permanently wiped out over \$25 billion of the hard-earned retirement savings of over 2 million Canadians, particularly seniors.

The petitioners, therefore, call upon the Conservative minority government to admit that the decision to tax income trusts was based on: first, flawed methodology and incorrect assumptions; second, to apologize to those who were unfairly harmed by this broken promise; and, finally, to repeal the punitive 31.5% tax on income trusts.

Government Orders

SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table a petition signed by many residents of Calgary and Winnipeg who call on the Government of Canada to stop further implementation of the security and prosperity partnership of North American agreement with the United States and Mexico until there is a democratic mandate from the people of Canada, some viable parliamentary oversight and a consideration of the profound consequences of such an agreement on Canada's national sovereignty and its ability to adopt autonomous, sustainable, economic, social and environmental policies.

The petitioners urge the government to undertake a transparent public accountability process and to ensure a full debate and vote in Parliament on the provisions of the SPP.

[*Translation*]

TAX CREDIT FOR NEW GRADUATES WORKING IN DESIGNATED REGIONS

Mr. Robert Bouchard (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour to present a third petition about Bill C-207, which provides an \$8,000 maximum tax credit over several years for new graduates working in designated regions.

As we all know, this bill was passed yesterday at third reading and is now before the Senate. This petition supports the bill, and it is my honour to present it.

* * *

[*English*]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 264 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is it agreed that Question No. 264 be made an order for return?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 264—**Mr. Pierre Paquette:**

As to the statistics compiled by Statistics Canada regarding the assets and liabilities of provincial and local governments according to national figures, for 2006, for all levels of government in Quebec, excluding the federal government, what were the: (a) total liabilities; (b) total financial assets; (c) total non-financial assets; and (d) net value?

(Return tabled)

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: I ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to speak to Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans), especially since the Bloc Québécois is in favour of nearly the entire bill. We would have liked to make certain amendments, but they were not approved. I will mention them in my speech.

It is important to keep in mind that, ever since it arrived in this House, the Bloc Québécois has been fighting to put an end to corporate funding and limit individual contributions, as Quebec did 30 years ago.

Earlier, I listened as the Liberal member for Toronto Centre talked about his leadership race, the difficulty of getting funding, and so on. Quebec has had legislation in place for 30 years. In Quebec, political parties successfully hold leadership races, raise funds and run election campaigns, all without corporate funding or huge contributions from individuals

That is where the problem lies. With Bill C-2, An Act providing for conflict of interest rules, restrictions on election financing and measures respecting administrative transparency, oversight and accountability, the Conservative Party tried to correct the situation. The Conservatives were in a hurry. They had just been elected and had promised transparency and accountability legislation. We remember this bill.

We warned them at the time about their Bill C-2. And we were not alone. Democracy Watch, an organization made up of democracy experts, also pointed to problems in the bill. Obviously, among the problems are the famous loans. Even if individual contributions are limited to \$1,100 a year, this is not an improvement if individuals can make loans to get around the law. That is very worrisome.

I will say it again. Earlier, I was listening to the speech by the Liberal member for Toronto Centre, a candidate in his party's leadership race, who told us it was unfair. Before it was reduced to \$1,100 per individual, the contribution limit stood at \$5,400 per individual and corporations were allowed a separate amount. He finds the bill to be unfair. However, he is one of the members who received a loan from an individual. His brother, among others, lent him \$400,000. This is just as unfair as individuals being able to contribute \$5,400 or \$1,100 to a leadership or other campaign and getting around the limit by saying that the limit does not apply if the money is given as a loan.

Government Orders

That is what Bill C-29 seeks to remedy. In law, there is a principle that ignorance of the law is no excuse. However, there is also a principle that you cannot do indirectly what cannot be done directly. That is an argument we raised with the Conservative government with respect to its Bill C-2.

It is a good thing to adopt a limit of \$1,100 for individuals and to prohibit corporations from contributing to election campaigns. That is perfect. It is similar to Quebec's law. However, we should not allow loans that would permit individuals to do indirectly what cannot be done directly. If the contribution limit is \$1,100 per individual, tomorrow morning we cannot say to an individual that the limit does not apply, that he can lend hundreds of thousand of dollars and that it is not a problem if he makes it a loan. He could declare that it is a loan and that the means will be found to repay it.

Today, it is understandable that the Leader of the Opposition—the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville—and the member for Toronto Centre have not been able to repay the debts incurred to participate in the leadership race. Nor should Canadians be fooled. I know that the Chief Electoral Officer did not make public the agreement he had with the leadership candidates; however they have not yet repaid their debts.

• (1215)

I repeat, the hon. member for Toronto Centre said earlier that he has run in several provincial election campaigns and that he was a party leader in Ontario. He also said that anyone who runs in a leadership race will have funding problems.

Perhaps he had a problem. He was in the NDP and became a Liberal. I understand why many Liberal supporters might not have wanted to contribute to his election campaign. Perhaps he chose the wrong party. Only time will tell, but, during a leadership race and an election, the individuals involved must be reliable and obey the law. In other words, candidates must be able to raise enough money from enough supporters to campaign responsibly in an election, and the same goes for a leadership race.

It forces the people who want to become party leaders to expand their circle of supporters. If they are unable to bring in more supporters, they might as well stay at home. It is not complicated. It is as simple as that. If a leadership candidate estimates that it will cost \$500,000, he or she needs 500 people to contribute \$1,000 each. And any candidate who cannot do so does not deserve to run in the leadership race. That is it.

In my view, it only makes sense and shows respect for individuals, and it prevents one individual or group of individuals from being able to control a candidate in a leadership race or an election. It is only logical, simple and honest, and it also means that anyone can hope to enter politics one day. They must understand that, in order to run an election campaign, candidates must have people who trust them and they must be able to raise between \$80,000 and \$100,000. Thus, one must be able to raise funds, like I do and like all Bloc members do.

Indeed, we use public financing—spaghetti dinners and suppers, sugar shacks and so on—and some 100, 200 or 300 people come out and generously give us \$20. That is how, over the years, we are able to raise funds. That is why Bloc Québécois members, like the

Conservatives, are probably among those with the best backing. We also probably receive the most money from individual contributors, men and women who are thrilled to come to a Bloc Québécois fundraising activity and give \$20, knowing that \$7 or \$8 will go towards funding, depending on the cost of the meal.

With these small amounts of money, we can raise funds for an election campaign. It is simple. I can understand that the Liberals and Conservatives are not used to that, since for them, it is clearly the “establishment”, only a few individuals, that has run the party. These people were able to make some very large contributions.

So I am not surprised. What surprises me most, is that the member for Toronto Centre, a former member of the Ontario NDP, was also collecting money from some individuals. He was not used to grassroots fundraising, which surprises me about a former NDP member.

In this House, surprises are not uncommon. Every day, the Conservatives bring us revelation after revelation. It is clear that the way the Conservatives wanted to govern is looking more and more like the way the Liberals were running things. I can see that the NDP had a way of running things that is similar to the Liberals' and the Conservatives' way. Regardless, that is the problem of the federalist parties in this House. It is not the problem of the Bloc Québécois, which is used to grassroots financing.

The members of the Bloc Québécois worked very hard to get Bill C-29 passed. Why? Because in Quebec, for 30 years, grassroots fundraising has dominated, since René Lévesque, the leader of the Parti Québécois, implemented election legislation that prevents lobbyists from controlling politics. This legislation completely changed politics in Quebec. It ensures that politics must be supported by fundraising among the public.

If an individual is not able to get funding to run a campaign from the largest possible number of individual men and women, he or she does not deserve to be in power. That is what I would tell the Liberals, in particular the member for Toronto Centre, who was offended that the amount for individual contributions was reduced in the middle of the race. Except that, thanks to the \$400,000 loan he received from his brother, he did not need funding.

He needs it now, because he had 18 months to repay his debt. He was counting on the \$5,400 per person that he was allowed to collect. But along the way, the \$5,400 became \$1,100.

• (1220)

I can understand that it is hard for him to find Liberal supporters to pay off his campaign debt, because he is not a real Liberal.

In some ways, it is disappointing that not everyone in this House realizes that politics should be open to every man and woman, to every citizen. It is not a matter of money, friends or anything like that. It takes someone who is able to express their ideas and defend them, someone that many people around them or in their party are able to trust.

Government Orders

That is how we should run elections and that is how the Bloc Québécois does it. We convince hundreds and thousands of people to become members of our organization and to make donations to enable us to run election campaigns based on defending the values and interests of Quebec. That is why, once again, as in election to election since 1993, our party has the most representatives from Quebec in this House. It is precisely because we are always in contact with the public, with the people we represent. We call on them for financing and it takes a great number of supporters, people who can trust us, to build up the money for our election campaigns.

The other parties will probably have to follow our example. Quebec is often a model of innovation for the rest of Canada, as hon. members know. One such innovation came from René Lévesque and was included in the electoral legislation that he was responsible for over 30 years ago. It bans corporate donations and limits individual donations.

This bill is the logical next step to what we sovereignists in Quebec defend. In politics, we have to be able to convince as many people as possible. The best way to do so is to limit individual contributions. We cannot allow a dozen or so people to give us \$10,000 each to enable us to run an election campaign. We have to broaden our network.

When the Conservatives passed Bill C-2, we told them that, if individuals may not invest more than \$1,100 in an election campaign annually, we absolutely cannot allow them to do so indirectly by handing out loans. That is why the Conservatives have amended that in Bill C-29. We cannot prohibit people from making donations greater than \$1,100, while allowing them to lend as much money as they want and saying this is just fine. This bill corrects that.

We demanded—and we obtained this amendment at second reading of Bill C-29—that political parties not be liable for their candidates' debts. Obviously, be it an election campaign, a leadership race or a personal election campaign, it is not right that a political party be held responsible for debts that a candidate may have contracted with banks or otherwise and not from individuals.

The Conservatives decided to reverse course, with the NDP's support. That is why I find it difficult to understand the NDP. It sees itself as a grassroots party but has, I believe, a hard time fundraising. This party now has the Conservatives' support to withdraw the amendment that we presented. That means that henceforth a political party would be responsible for its candidates' debts to financial institutions, if ever they were not paid back.

Once again, when people run as candidates, they must be able to prove that they can find sufficient support. Therefore, it is normal that if a candidate borrows from a financial institution to fund an election campaign, that candidate is responsible because it is their election campaign. Under this bill, parties would be required to cover any unpaid debts.

• (1225)

This means that the people who run as candidates might not necessarily be the best. They would not need popular support. They would not need to fundraise to reimburse their debts. Inevitably, they would only have to run as candidates, knowing full well that if they do not raise enough money, the party will pay off their debt.

I will say it again: the Bloc Québécois was against this position. That is why we proposed amendments. It is difficult to understand why the Conservatives did not agree to them. Perhaps they also have trouble with grassroots fundraising in individual ridings. They are better at collecting money as the party in power. We see it with the Couillard affair in Quebec, the Kevlar situation concerning land in Quebec City that Ms. Couillard apparently pushed for. Basically, we can understand that much of the money going into the coffers comes from the way in which the Conservatives engage in politics, which means that they probably have difficulty with grassroots fundraising.

Of course, that is not the Bloc Québécois' case. We are proud to say that every day, we rise in this House to defend the interests and values of Quebecers. We do not need to be in power to do that. Citizens are the ones who give us real power. The only power we should be able to accept is the power entrusted to us by the people. The people can take it away whenever they want because it does not belong to us. The people lend us power, and we are here every day to stand up for the people.

I have a hard time every time I see a Quebec Conservative rise and say something that is not in line with the interests and values of Quebecers. That is what has been happening with the EDC file. The Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, the minister responsible for the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region, typically takes a stance that opposes what was passed unanimously. It gets even worse. Quebec's minister of regional development, Mr. Bachand, is engaged in an open war with the Minister of Labour because at some point, the latter decided that he no longer respected the Quebec consensus on economic development.

Quebec's non-profit organizations are our way of diversifying our economy and giving certain responsibilities to non-political organizations that exist not to engage in politics, but to work on community development, to make decisions about what kinds of businesses and economic interventions are needed in each region. The Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec decided that the government would no longer fund these organizations, would no longer help them. He decided that he would make direct payments instead.

That is very hard to accept. I can see how he might have trouble getting grassroots funding from the people after taking such a position in the House. All of the other Conservative members from Quebec support him. This kind of policy is contrary to the values and interests of Quebecers. I can see that they are getting more and more out of touch. Raising funds is getting harder and harder for them. Nevertheless, the law must not permit impunity.

Government Orders

Once again, we had hoped that the Conservatives would understand that it is not up to the party to repay a debt incurred by a candidate. Especially since the party now receives \$2 per voter, which means that the candidate's debt will be paid by our citizens because that \$2 contribution to the political party comes from the government. It would be taxpayers' money repaying candidates' debts.

The Bloc Québécois would never have accepted such a situation. We would never have allowed taxpayers' money to repay an election debt. That is what the Conservative Party has done with the help of the NDP. I have a great deal of difficulty with this, especially coming from the NDP, which calls itself the champion of the people and of the people's interests.

I have a great deal of difficulty with the idea of allowing taxes—through a \$2 per taxpayer contribution to political parties—to be used to repay a candidate's debt. The candidate would no longer have to fundraise because he or she would think, “If I ever go into debt, then the party will automatically pay it back out of the money provided by the government.” I have a great deal of difficulty understanding that. But, once again, it is typical of the NDP to signal that they are turning left and then turn right. They always do that. I see that they decided to turn right with the Conservatives. They will have to suffer the consequences and live with that decision in the next election.

• (1230)

Obviously, we will support Bill C-29. We wanted our amendment—that would not permit a candidate's debt to be repaid by the party, given that the contribution of \$2 per voter is paid by the government—to be adopted. We would have liked that amendment to pass. However, once again, the Conservatives and the NDP decided to oppose it. As for the Bloc Québécois, we will always respect the interests of Quebeckers.

[*English*]

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans).

Over the last number of years since 2003, we have seen a series of pieces of legislation and amendments to legislation dealing with the whole issue of election funding and financing. These pieces of legislation have attempted to provide transparency in our electoral process and prevent undue influence. Those are the two component parts.

Both parts are extremely important. Not only should the democratic process be transparent, but it also has to be a process that does not allow undue influence.

I wish to clarify where the differentiation is between those two elements. For instance, we have been watching the presidential electoral process in the United States. We have heard that this process is going to be the first billion dollar presidential election.

There are many pieces of legislation and many regulations that deal with the issue of transparency, but when the people of the United States, along with many people in other countries who look to the democracies with hope, see a system that appears to be almost a “dollarocracy”, it is worrisome.

Thus, it is quite important that these pieces of legislation which we have been enacting address both of those issues so that they in fact strengthen our Canadian democracy.

Are undue influence and lack of transparency an issue, or have they been an issue, here in Canada? I would have liked to believe that these sorts of things would not happen in Canada, but in fact just this past winter and spring we saw the spectacle of the unfortunate Schreiber-Mulroney relationship.

One of the aspects that perhaps was not given enough attention was a former leadership convention, which provided Mr. Schreiber, because of a lack of transparency, with the opportunity to influence an historic outcome for this country. Offshore moneys were used to influence the outcome of a leadership campaign in one of Canada's major parties.

Quite clearly, that one example demonstrates that we need to have a transparent process. In fact, we could use another example that is a little closer in time, because at this point neither Mr. Clark nor Mr. Mulroney are in this House. They no longer occupy the political positions of power that they have in the past. However, in 2002, the current Prime Minister underwent a leadership process that was not transparent.

I would like to believe that there was no undue influence. I believe that all of us want to assume and believe that, but now, with the example of Mulroney and Schreiber, as I have said, we see that these things have happened in the past.

It begs the question of why the Prime Minister would not want to address that particular issue. I know he is not required to by law, but there is the very fact that he does not wish to come clean.

There is a higher standard that we expect of our elected officials. To have responsible government, we must have confidence in our ministers and especially in our Prime Minister, our first minister. Quite clearly, it is necessary to have laws that provide this sort of transparency.

Then there is the whole issue of undue influence. As we know, electoral processes culminate with election day when collectively we as a people gather, travel to the vote locations and cast our ballots. At the end of the day and the end of the process, the people have decided.

• (1235)

People decide, based upon a campaign during which they have had the opportunity to listen and to examine party platforms, whether a party leader inspires with a vision for the future and whether locally the candidates speak to the hopes, dreams and principles upon which the local communities are built and believe in.

However, we know that to communicate one's vision is not an inexpensive process. There is a cost to communicating with the public and if we are unable to communicate with the public then we undermine the democratic process.

We need the money and the resources to get out there, to meet with people and to give people a sense of who we are, where we stand as a party and where the leader wishes to take the country.

Government Orders

It would be tremendously unfortunate if single individuals or corporations had the ability, through donations or loans, to influence potential candidates or parties because of their ability to provide large sums of money for their campaigns. Therefore, I think there is a clear case of why we need this sort of legislation, and Canada seems to be at the forefront. It is encouraging that we have been working on this process.

However, we now need to ask whether this most recent legislation addresses those issues. Have we perhaps gone a step too far, to the point where it acts as a brake on our democratic processes, prevents individuals from putting themselves forward as candidates or as leadership candidates or prevents people who perhaps have a point of view that better fits with one of the smaller parties, such as the Green Party or other parties that are out there?

● (1240)

Does the legislation act in a way that is conducive to the democratic process or are we at the point where, inadvertently, or perhaps, as some would say cynically, advertently, we have begun undermining the very process?

Let us take a look at what, in this legislation, are some of the unintended consequences may be.

We are in an era right now of minority governments and, although politics are unpredictable, we can assume that over the next period of time we may be in a situation of minority governments.

When it comes to actual fundraising, we do not necessarily face a campaign every four years, providing enough time to raise, whether it is locally, the \$70,000 approximately that is required for a campaign, we have a series of sequential elections in much shorter timeframes.

With a limit of \$1,100 per donation, it has made it incredibly difficult for many people to step forward as candidates. For many people it has now become a barrier that prevents them from putting themselves forward. There is the question of whether \$1,100 is the barrier that we should put in place or should it be \$2,500, especially when it comes to leadership campaigns. It is difficult to make the argument that \$1,100 is the perfect amount.

We are in a world of minority governments. We have set the barrier very high with this very low limit of \$1,100, so we have forced candidates into the situation of having to go out and look for loans. This legislation proposes to put limits on where and how one could go about doing this. Unfortunately, it has a series of unintended consequences that are corrosive to the democratic process.

Each one of us here have a group of volunteers in our riding associations, tremendous people who believe in their candidates, their parties, their platforms and want to be part of the process. This legislation would entail a requirement that they provide loan guarantees to banks for loans that are necessary for election campaigns.

Many of these volunteers are not people of modest means. They are people of conviction. It would be a terrible situation if we limited the ability, not just of candidates, but the ability of people to engage in a formal manner in political parties unless they were people of

modest means and willing to take on this sort of guarantee risk with financial institutions.

Probably some of the most wonderful volunteers over the years with whom I have dealt were not people of modest means but they were people of principle and character. These are the people this type of legislation would now prevent from taking part in the process. We have almost come full circle.

By wanting to ensure that big money would not have undue influence so the average Canadian, a person of conviction, could take part in the process, we are now preventing those individuals from taking part in the process. We then take the unfortunate step of saying that it is only big money, the banks, that can provide the financial loans for electoral campaigns. That is truly an undesirable consequence.

● (1245)

I heard my NDP colleague from Winnipeg Centre state that, from a position of principle, he supports this because it would prevent unions from providing loans, just as it would prevent corporations. It is to be lauded that he approaches this with that mind frame. However, the legislation would prevent unions and most corporations from providing loans but not banks. I am sure many members in this House have over the years been lobbied by unions. As he stated, it is an uncomfortable situation because if a union has provided members with a loan then, at some point, as legislators they would need to sit through a union presentation on particular issues of interest.

Why would we want to provide banks, which lobby in very sophisticated ways and sometimes not very transparent ways, with that additional clout?

I can imagine how difficult it might be in certain ridings where there are not a lot of bank branches, especially some of our northern ridings where perhaps someone lives in one small particular community how it would feel for a candidate to have to go to the local bank branch manager and talk about a loan. If we truly intended to address the issue of undue influence of those who would provide loans, we would have spent a little more time, instead of trying to rush this legislation, thinking it through. Perhaps we need an arm's length body whose sole purpose would be to provide loans to campaigns and not lobby members of Parliament. It would prevent undue influence.

I have just thrown that idea out and it is something we should perhaps look at in the future. However, as I have just referenced, this seems to have moved very quickly and not truly been thought through in a collective manner where all the parties sat down, discussed it and tried to go about this in a way in which we truly could have addressed the issues of transparency and undue influence.

Government Orders

Unfortunately, besides the inadvertent consequences, perhaps there were some cynical reasons for this legislation. It does not inspire confidence when we see some of the past tactics that have been used by the Conservative government when it comes to this whole issue of finance. I reference the disappointing situation of not being provided with open books on the 2002 leadership campaign of the current Prime Minister. It would be tremendous if he set an example but, unfortunately, that is not forthcoming. Therefore, we take it with a grain of salt when there is such tremendous interest to pass this legislation.

We also note that the Conservative Party truly is the party of big money now because its coffers are overflowing. We should note that the parties have the ability to provide loans to their various candidates. We often talk about democratic deficit in this House and how members of Parliament have been diminished in their role because of the strength of the central party apparatus, the so-called party backroom boys, and this has just provided another lever to ensuring there is limited independence of thought.

• (1250)

What we note here is that there are parties which virtually do not have an ability to provide that sort of financing. I mentioned the Green Party earlier. It does not have the same sort of resources and there are other parties, other points of view. I can imagine how difficult it would be for those particular candidates, from those parties, when it came time to get their executive together, to walk over to the local bank branch manager and to convince him or her that at some point in time they would have the ability to repay the loans required to run a \$70,000 campaign.

There appears to be even more cynicism in this because we see and have heard on tape the Prime Minister reference how two high-powered backroom operators within the Conservative Party approached a potential candidate with financial considerations. It does not inspire confidence in this particular piece of legislation brought forward by a government whose party's head office potentially engages in those sorts of activities and a Prime Minister who is not willing to come forward with his own leadership campaign details.

Many have insinuated that big oil and gas perhaps provided financing for that particular campaign. I just cannot imagine why the Prime Minister would not want to put to rest those sorts of insinuations, a Prime Minister who talks about accountability so often would want to be transparent to set an example.

People say that was in the past and that these cannot be done retroactively. Of course, but he could also set an example, show true leadership, especially on these issues and especially in this era when we have heard of things that we could never have imagined half a year ago. Once again, I would like to reference how Mr. Mulroney's relationship with Mr. Schreiber and the leadership convention undermined our electoral processes here in the country.

In conclusion, there are tremendously negative and corrosive inadvertent consequences to this particular piece of legislation and it does the exact opposite of its stated intention.

Mr. John Maloney (Welland, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member referenced the current Prime Minister's leadership campaign expenses. Although he is aware that it was not legally required at the

time, and although he has been asked many times to disclose those expenses and donations, he has declined to do so.

With suggestions of rumours and innuendo he might wish to clear that up and also show leadership in the spirit of this current legislation. Could the member offer any reason why he would not want to comply with the recommendation that he provide public transparency and show his expenses and donations?

• (1255)

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Mr. Speaker, it is puzzling, but more than just puzzling, it is disturbing.

As I already mentioned, the public expects a higher standard of its elected officials, of its public servants, and the terminology is public servant. We are here to serve the public. That is why the very process that brought us here should be transparent.

Mr. Schreiber, a lobbyist for an arms company, did not just attempt to influence, but he actually did have an influence on the final outcome of the leadership of a party. It makes the case that the Prime Minister should be the one setting the standard, and the standard that we expect is higher of our first minister, among all ministers, especially in the recent situation of scandal after scandal. We would all hate to assume the worst.

We would hate to think that big oil and gas could have influenced a leadership campaign, could have influenced a decision to get rid of the Kyoto accord. I do not want to assume that, but the only way we could clarify that situation would be for the Prime Minister to come clean. Why has he not?

It is absolutely perplexing for all of us in the know. Unfortunately, Canadians do not know. The Prime Minister has every intention of keeping Canadians in the dark so that they will not know.

I would like to believe that our democratic processes, our policies, our legislation, are not being undermined due to undue influence by the corrosive influence of big money. The only way to address this would be for the current sitting Prime Minister to come clean. He has been asked many times and people will continue to have questions. There is only one way he can address these questions. He could rise to the occasion and open up the books. If he does not do that, those questions will linger.

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all accept the principle of transparency here and to the extent that this legislation imposes or extends it. That is fine. Does my colleague not think that the measures imposed with the additional prohibitions would potentially straitjacket the political process? Is there some chance that, in the government's fear of the Liberal Party of Canada, it has approached this legislation in a way that would restrict legitimate, registered, political parties in Canada who have not managed to elect members to the House yet? There are approximately half a dozen parties I am referring to. Does my colleague think these restrictions are totally unnecessary and arguably unfair, and maybe unconstitutional, simply because the Conservatives have been blinded by either their dislike or their fear of the Liberal Party?

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Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear to anyone who has listened to this debate that this, in fact, is the case, notwithstanding the name of the legislation or how it is preambled. The legislation deals with accountability with respect to loans.

We have heard members of the Conservative Party, the backbench members, refer often to the current Prime Minister's Office as the Kremlin. However, we never thought that they would go so far as to engage in doublespeak, and that is exactly what is taking place here.

The title, the preamble, speaks to something which is the exact opposite of what the outcome of the legislation would be. It would straitjacket. And it would not just straitjacket and prohibit individuals but, as the member pointed out, parties.

We would now have a limited spectrum of political debate in this country. Smaller parties would not have the capacity to jump through these hoops to provide them with the resources necessary to communicate their particular visions, whether we agree with them or not, or their particular platforms.

This is an issue of fundamental democracy. It is not just parties but, as I already referenced, individual members. Some of the best that we have in our country, some of the best among our people, are those who volunteer. They expend a tremendous amount of time volunteering their time for NGOs, but they also believe in democratic principles, the fundamentals of our country, and they want to have input in the process, and some of them take active interest; that is, they join executives.

This would dampen people's ability to do that because they would have to provide guarantees for loans from the bank. The candidates, potentially, and they would not want to do that I am sure, could walk away from these outstanding loans. Let us remember, we are in a situation of minority government, where we could have election after election, and these are not inexpensive processes. We would saddle well-meaning volunteers with loan guarantees to our big banks.

My goodness. Why would we give that sort of power to big banks, a corporate sector, and a very particular corporate sector? And why would we remove the little guy from being able to be part of the process?

If we take a look at the scales in this case, this particular piece of legislation has just given tremendous influence and weight to a portion of our corporate sector, the banking sector, and taken away the ability to influence the democratic process from individuals who are not people of modest means, and smaller parties who would like to have the opportunity to put their points of view across.

It is a terrible piece of legislation. It should not have been rushed through. It should have been thought through. I hate to have to say this, but it appears that this particular legislation is a cynical attempt to freeze in a particular advantage of one particular party at this point in time. It is a tremendous disservice to anyone who believes in a democratic process.

As has been stated over and over, the Liberal Party is against this piece of legislation. We will stand up for the small people in this country.

• (1300)

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to debate Bill C-29, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (accountability with respect to loans).

There are aspects of the bill which I support. In fact, when it returned from committee, the bill had been amended in such a fashion that I might have been unable to support it at third reading. Unfortunately, the government, with the help of the NDP, undid three very sensible amendments which would have improved the bill. It remains a mystery to us why the NDP members would want to sidle up with the Reform Conservative movement in Canada today. I still think that they have to justify to their supporters and Canadians at large why they might undermine this progressive piece of legislation.

As a result of those amendments and the NDP support of the government, and for many reasons, I will not be able to give Bill C-29 my support on the vote at third reading.

The majority of the bill comes from recommendations in a report from the Chief Electoral Officer to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. That, by the way, would be the same Chief Electoral Officer, a highly accomplished lifetime public servant whom the government derided because of its own legislation dealing with veiled voting. However, we will leave that for another debate.

In that report the Chief Electoral Officers found that when loans are given to a political candidate by a person who is not regularly in the business of lending money, it can be perceived by some as a means to influence the political process with money. The report made a series of recommendations to end this perception. All of us, I think, want to see that perception eliminated in Canadian society. We want to drive up trust in our democratic institutions and processes, not drive it down.

One such recommendation was to ensure that all loans granted to a candidate were signed at the going commercial lending rate. A second was to establish a limit on loans made by individuals that would be equal to their annual political contribution amount. If we look at the year 2007, for example, that amount was \$1,100. These measures are contained in Bill C-29.

The bill will also ensure that corporations and unions are prevented from making loans to political candidates and parties, just as they have been prevented from making campaign contributions, a theme I will come back to in a moment.

Bill C-29 will ensure if an individual lends and donates money to any candidate that the sum total of his or her contributions and loans will count toward his or her maximum. For instance, a person will not be able to make a \$1,000 loan and a \$1,000 donation.

Yet another important recommendation made by the Chief Electoral Officer was that the information surrounding any loans be made public. Why? In order to mitigate the chances of a perceived conflict of interest, something that all of us as parliamentarians must fight against, again with the higher public interest in mind, that is, to drive up trust in democratic institutions and the democratic processes that bring us here.

According to the report, the information to be disclosed should include the identity of the lender, the interest rate, and a repayment schedule for the loan, over what period of time, how much, with a beginning, a middle and an end to the schedule. The reason it is important to disclose this type of information throughout a campaign is that after a vote, while the information may be telling, it comes too late to help a voter make an informed decision about which candidate he or she may choose to support or not.

I can support this measure in Bill C-29. It is the right thing to do.

• (1305)

In fact, for Canadians watching or reading *Hansard* at some point, let me take a moment to remind them it is the Liberal Party of Canada that was well ahead of the curve on this issue.

During the last Liberal leadership race, our leadership candidates went way above and beyond the call of duty to disclose this type of information. It is an excellent idea. I strongly believe that the other parties in the House should be brought under the same type and level of scrutiny that the Liberal Party of Canada has voluntarily adopted.

We have heard from numerous speakers this afternoon and throughout this debate specifically about the Prime Minister. It is revealing. It is more than interesting. It is not somewhat passing that the Prime Minister has not yet revealed the names of the people and organizations that contributed to his leadership campaign in 2002. Why? Why would a leadership candidate not want to reveal the people and organizations supporting, in this case, his leadership bid? This kind of secrecy is exactly what leads many Canadians to become distrustful of the political process.

Who exactly, they might ask, put the Prime Minister at the helm of the Conservative Party? Who? Who wrote the cheques? Which Conservative members? Was it the big oil companies? An objective Canadian might ask, is this why the Prime Minister continues to deny the existence of climate change? When faced with one of the greatest ecological threats of our time, in the wake of the loss of 2,500 of the highest paying jobs in the manufacturing sector in Canada, how does the Prime Minister respond? How does he respond to the climate change crisis facing the planet? With a talking oil stain that tells Canadians there is no point in trying to curb our greenhouse gas emissions.

It is actually encouraging. I encourage the Prime Minister and his party to pursue exactly those kinds of tactics. I encourage him to run those advertisements at every gas pump in every service station in the country. Why? Because Canadians would then see that the response to the climate change crisis by the Prime Minister is a cartoon character. I ask him to please go forward in that regard and continue to proliferate those kinds of race to the bottom tactics.

Was he funded, for example, by groups like Charles McVety's at the Canada Christian College, who was recently in Ottawa to help the government push through Bill C-10? That bill would give the Conservative government the right to censor Canadian films based on whatever they seem to find offensive.

Or is it the same Charles McVety who actually cybersquatted on over 40 MPs websites, including my own? Having seized it, he was confronted by me, and was shamed into actually transferring mine back to me and the others back to the other members from all sides

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of the House, all parties? Dr. McVety, whatever his doctorate might be in, was opposed to the notion of same sex civil marriage and he used cyber theft and cybersquatting as his modus operandi to achieve his objectives. Is this the group that funded the Prime Minister's leadership bid?

We should know those things. If either of these are the case, I believe that Canadians deserve an answer. They have a right to know. I encourage my colleagues on the Conservative side of the House to urge their leader to disclose those contributions as quickly as possible.

While they are at it, why do they not ask the Minister of National Defence which sole contributor paid off up to half a million dollars of his leadership debt. One cheque, one donor, the amount has never been disclosed. The Minister of National Defence has never come clean with Canadians.

It is no surprise that some of the measures we find in this bill are supported by the Conservatives.

• (1310)

Those are two examples and there may be more. That is exactly the kind of transparency the House should be seeking to increase, not decrease, to drive up trust in the democratic institutions and the processes that brought us here.

I understand that members in the Conservative Party are not allowed to question their leader or even to express their own ideas, failing which we see the kind of despicable content which has emerged in the last 48 hours from the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board. On that note, we know the apology is not enough. It is not enough because it is not the first time.

This is about restoring the faith of Canadians in the democratic process. Over the past five years the Liberal Party has done tremendous work, I believe, to help restore faith. It was in 2003 that the previous Liberal government introduced the very first annual limits on individual contributions to a political party and to our candidates. In that same bill we also banned contributions from corporations and unions to political parties. That is progressive. Those changes stand today as the most significant ones that have been made to political financing at the federal level in decades. We went further.

In 2006 the maximum contribution amounts were lowered even further. They are now tied to the rate of inflation and in theory should rise slightly each year. I say "in theory" because we have yet to see if Canada's Minister of Finance will be able to steer the economy well enough to meet targeted inflation rates. Given his past behaviour at Queen's Park and his performance in the Ontario government, Canadians are of course deeply suspicious of an individual who increases provincial debt by \$28 billion and leaves a \$5.6 billion deficit in Canada's largest province.

Nevertheless, we did support lowering those maximums, which brings me to the part of my speech where I have to raise my concerns about this bill. There is a danger that sometimes we, as legislators, in our zeal to make things better, often make things worse through a variety of unintended consequences.

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This bill, unfortunately, finds itself well across the line of what is needed in order to make things better. To their credit, the members from all sides of the House who studied the bill at committee stage tried to make the bill better. At least in this case it was not one of the six standing committees that have been filibustered, blocked, toyed with and brought into disrepute by the conduct of Conservative members, most recently of course in a number of standing committees with respect to their cheap and dishonest talk about carbon pricing.

The members who studied the bill did try to make the bill better. There were, however, three amendments made at committee which the government did not agree with and which were eliminated at report stage, again with the help of the NDP. It is a shame because it was widely recognized that these amendments would have improved the bill.

One such amendment has to do with who is liable for loans that go unpaid. The Bloc and the Liberal members of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs were concerned that the original wording of the bill could have made political parties responsible for loans that their candidates took without even knowing that their candidates had taken those loans. Let me give an example.

The local candidate takes out a \$30,000 loan to finance his campaign. He does not inform the central Conservative Party that he is doing this. The central party, however, is now responsible for that loan should the candidate not win and declare bankruptcy. That is right; a political party would not have authorized the loan, would have had no knowledge of the loan, yet it would be required to assume liability for the loan if the candidate declared bankruptcy.

I do not think this is right. I actually do not even think it is legal, particularly when we consider that there are parties not represented in this House and for whom a \$30,000 debt is an extremely high sum of money to be stuck with through no fault of their own. In short, this is not good for democracy. It does not give rise to the possibility of new political parties, for example.

• (1315)

That brings me to my last point. It is about who will be disenfranchised by Bill C-29. Every single politician cuts his or her teeth in politics by taking a chance and running for office. From a local councillor to a federal cabinet minister, we all start that way; everyone except, of course, for the Minister of Public Works, whom the Prime Minister appointed to the Senate and who, in his own words, did not feel like running for office.

I will admit that in mounting a campaign for office some people will have advantages. They might have a recognizable name or face because of their past activities. There is nothing wrong with that, but it does give them an early advantage in getting the early stage donations that are so crucial to a candidacy.

Others come to politics with a good amount of money in their bank accounts. That is neither a good thing nor a bad thing. Any political bodies should be represented by a broad spectrum of the citizens who vote them there. The advantage that these types of candidates will have, however, is that it will be far easier for them to secure loans from a financial institution to get their candidacy up and

running. If they have a big house or other assets to use as collateral against a loan, the banks will be all too willing to give them that loan.

Banks and financial institutions, of course, are the only places where federal political candidates will be allowed to secure loans for over \$1,100 if Bill C-29 passes. That would be for a nomination campaign, a leadership campaign or an election campaign.

Then there is a third type of politician, one who runs for office without a lot of face recognition and without the benefit of having much wealth tucked away. These politicians run because they want to make a difference. They believe their ideas can help to shape the national debate.

These are the candidates who would be disenfranchised by the bill. They do not have the face recognition needed to get a lot of early stage donations. They might not have the assets for a bank to give them a starter loan. In the case of a nomination battle for a riding, this could easily be the difference between launching a winning campaign and losing one.

What about family and friends? Why can family and friends not support early funding start-up for nomination battles? This is exactly what has happened, for example, in our IT sector, where so much of our IT success has come from individuals with robust ideas who have drawn from family, friends, contacts and neighbours to help start up with a positive idea. I draw a parallel here between both.

An hon. member: Keep Mulroney out of this.

Mr. David McGuinty: Essentially what this bill does—

• (1320)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the House. There are two minutes left under debate for the hon. member for Ottawa South. I see that there is much interest among members from all corners to ask questions. There will be some time for that. Please be patient.

The hon. member for Ottawa South has another two minutes.

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, essentially what the bill does is further empower those people who already have influence, the influence of some amount of fame and the influence of none. Worse, it will do so at the expense of those who have neither.

This is, of course, what I think the Prime Minister wants to happen. His long time adviser and confidant, Tom Flanagan, said as much in the *Globe and Mail* just two weeks ago. Let me quote from the editorial:

—there would be fewer candidates. Only well-known candidates would be able to get start-up capital from banks....

Therefore, the aim of the bill, which the NDP supports—and which I find outrageous—is to ensure that only well known candidates can run for federal office. Let us look at who will find it much harder to run for office should this bill pass.

Many groups have said that women looking to run in a nomination contest would find it harder. A single mother who works to provide her kids with a decent apartment and a hopeful future will not be a prime candidate to secure a bank loan. She does not own her home or even a fancy car with which to back the loan.

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She has a desire to run for office to make a difference for her kids and for millions of other Canadian children like hers. Maybe she would not be able to win. Who knows? Getting elected is not easy. But if there is one thing we as the current legislators of this House should never, ever do, it is to give even more advantages to a wealthy, well-connected individual who is also seeking that nomination or seat.

That is why I cannot support the bill at third reading. The negative consequences of the bill outnumber the positives in such a stunning manner that I cannot see how any progressive-minded politician could support it.

Mr. Ken Epp (Edmonton—Sherwood Park, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one very brief question. The member says he is against it. Is he actually going to show up and vote against it?

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, the question gives me a chance to again talk about some of the major reasons why this is a bad piece of legislation for the country, and although—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the little time that is left today, I want to say that we cannot allow another federal election under the current election financing rules, because the loans loophole that we seek to plug by this bill is big enough to drive a Mazda truck through.

That is what I heard earlier in this debate. That is a graphic illustration of how the current regime can be abused by those who would seek to abuse it.

I would ask my colleague another very simple question. When is a loan not a loan? I will help him with the answer. A loan is not loan if it never gets repaid. It ceases to be a loan and becomes a donation, and it is an illegal donation if it is larger than \$1,100.

We are seeking to rub that out. It has to be eliminated before the next federal election or we will allow the same kind of abuse, but it will even be more widespread, I would suggest, than the abuse that has already taken place in this loans loophole regime and scenario that exist now.

I cannot understand for the life of me how he fails to see that we have to take big money out of politics. Big money in election financing undermines democracies. It bastardizes democracy, so to speak, and makes it less fair for those who want to seek political office on a fair and level playing field.

• (1325)

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, if the member is so concerned about eliminating big money from politics, why is he not turning his guns on and rubbing the noses of the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence in it in regard to their actual undisclosed leadership campaign contributions, debts and payers?

If he is that concerned, and here is the theory about this issue, why is he not turning his party's guns on those undisclosed loans? He is not because this is about politics for the NDP. This is not about improving the status of financing in Canada. I would remind him, even though he fails to remind Canadians of this himself, that it was

our government in 2003 that introduced the very first annual limits on individual contributions to a party and a candidate.

It was our party that banned contributions to political parties from corporations and his friends in the unions. Those changes stand today as the most significant at the federal level that we have ever seen in this country.

We went further in 2006. I would remind the member of that. We further lowered the amounts that were entitled to be contributions. They are now tied to the rate of inflation. In theory, they should rise only slightly each year.

Therefore, it is passing strange that the NDP is now turning its guns on the party that cleaned up election financing in the first place, while partnering with the Conservative Party, whose Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence, at the very least, have never come clean on who paid off their debts and who gave them money for their leadership races. It is high time for Canadians to know who put this Prime Minister in office, what influences is he now bearing, and how this is affecting public policy across the country.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): I want to thank the hon. member for Kings—Hants for his patience. He now has the floor.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question for the hon. member is a very simple one on the role and power of Canadian chartered banks. The NDP members consistently attack the chartered banks as having too much power in the Canadian economic and political environment. This legislation will in fact strengthen that concentration of power.

Does the member see the potential risk? If we in fact limit these loans to chartered banks and other major financial institutions, they would have the discretionary capacity to say no to a potential leadership candidate who was perhaps opposed to bank mergers or to some of the measures that the banks want to see implemented in legislation.

In fact, they would have the capacity to say no to almost every New Democrat running for a leadership, because New Democrats are consistently against Canada's chartered banks. In fact, this legislation could entrench and strengthen the tremendous power that Canadian banks would have over the political process and the Canadian economy.

Mr. David McGuinty: Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank my colleague from Kings—Hants enough for those insightful remarks. He is absolutely correct. NDP members are speaking out of both sides of their mouths. First they attack the big banks and now they are fighting to keep Canadian chartered banks in this, to make them more powerful, more responsible and, for that matter, more influential in political outcomes in Canadian society. They have not thought this through at all.

Private Members' Business

This is about the NDP cozying up to the Conservative Party and trying to make a cheap point. It will not resonate with Canadians, certainly not with those thousands of Canadians who do not come from fame or money and who want to be appear in elections for nominations and beyond and serve their country.

• (1330)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

When we return to the study of Bill C-29, there will be four minutes left for questions and comments for the hon. member for Ottawa South.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

FEDERAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-474, An Act to require the development and implementation of a Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and the development of goals and targets with respect to sustainable development in Canada, and to make consequential amendments to another Act, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

[*Translation*]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): I must first read a Speaker's ruling concerning Bill C-474, An Act to require the development and implementation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy, the reporting of progress against a standard set of environmental indicators and the appointment of an independent Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development accountable to Parliament, and to adopt specific goals with respect to sustainable development in Canada, and to make consequential amendments to another Act.

[*English*]

There are four motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill C-474.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 1 to 4 will be grouped for debate, and the voting patterns for the motions are available at the table.

[*English*]

I shall now propose Motions Nos. 1 to 4 to the House.

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-474, in Clause 3, be amended by replacing, in the French version, lines 19 to 21 on page 2 with the following:

« durable qui rend le processus décisionnel en matière d'environnement plus transparent et fait en sorte qu'on soit tenu d'en »

Hon. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-474, in Clause 15.1, be amended by replacing line 19 on page 6 with the following:

“into force of section 18.1 of this Act, remain in”

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-474, in Clause 16, be amended

(a) by replacing line 33 on page 6 with the following:

“11(3) of the Federal Sustainable Develop-”

(b) by replacing line 1 on page 7 with the following:

“(c) any agency set out in Schedule 2 to”

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-474, in Clause 18, be amended by replacing, in the French version, line 14 on page 8 with the following:

“justesse des renseignements qu'il contient”

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to the government's report stage amendments to Bill C-474, An Act to require the development and implementation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy, the reporting of progress against a standard set of environmental indicators and the appointment of an independent Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development accountable to Parliament, and to adopt specific goals with respect to sustainable development in Canada, and to make consequential amendments to another Act.

This motion is to correct the difference between the English and the French versions in clause 3. The discrepancy is that the English version says that the federal sustainable development strategy will make environmental decision making more transparent and the French version says the purpose of the act will make environmental decision making more transparent. This difference should be corrected and, thus, the amendment.

I would like to also begin by thanking my colleagues who are here today for their hard work in the environment committee stage in amending the bill into workable and effective legislation. I would also like to congratulate my colleague from Don Valley West, who is the sponsoring member of the bill, for his dedication. It has been a pleasure working with him to advance Bill C-474. I would like to take this occasion to wish him well as he will soon embark on a new chapter in his life, a new career. Congratulations to him, through you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased that all parties in the House were able to work together to show goodwill and a common commitment to environmental sustainability. Bill C-474 will help to increase transparency and accountability and to improve federal sustainable development planning and reporting.

The bill before us today would enable the government to better articulate its environmental sustainability priorities and to align the work of departments to support them. For the first time since the departmental sustainable development strategies were introduced in 1995, there will be an overarching federal sustainable development strategy to set the direction for the supporting departmental strategies. Federal departments will all be rowing in the same direction, together.

The forthcoming federal strategy will contain federal goals and targets for sustainable development, along with implementation strategies for each department. This approach will ensure government transparency and accountability for progress to advance sustainable development.

Private Members' Business

Indeed, the development of a federal sustainable development strategy is long overdue. There have been a number of commitments over the years to develop one. The first commitment was at the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1995. This commitment was reiterated at the 2002 world summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The government is very pleased to meet this international commitment through this legislation and to have been able to work with all the political parties for its development.

The bill would also respond to numerous calls by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to develop a federal strategy. The commissioner has often likened the existing approach to sustainable development planning in Canada to trying to assemble a large jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box. The legislation would finally provide that overarching picture.

In addition to the development and implementation of a federal sustainable development strategy, the bill includes a number of important elements that would serve to advance sustainable development here in Canada. For example, the bill calls for the establishment of a new office within Environment Canada to develop and monitor progress on the federal sustainable development strategy.

The bill would also establish a sustainable development advisory council with a broad membership that would include provincial and territorial, aboriginal and non-government representatives, as well as representatives from business and labour communities.

• (1335)

Bill C-474 outlines an important oversight role for cabinet in the development and implementation of the federal strategy. This again will increase accountability for progress on sustainable development to the highest political levels and will ensure that environment sustainability is kept at the forefront of government decision making.

The bill also outlines an important audit and assessment role for the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development largely through consequential amendments to the Auditor General Act, which outlines more broadly the roles and duties of the commissioner. Through these proposed amendments, the commissioner will be required to review a draft of the federal strategy before it is finalized to ensure that the targets and their implementation strategies will be capable of being assessed. The commissioner will also report on the extent to which departments and agencies have contributed to meeting the targets set out in the federal sustainable development strategy and assess the fairness of the information contained in the progress report to be prepared by Environment Canada. Again, these are important steps toward increasing transparency and accountability to all Canadians.

The bill is in keeping with good pieces of work brought forward by the government, all in an effort to improve environmental protection in Canada. This includes initiatives such as the national vehicle scrappage program, introduced by the environment minister on June 4, and many other initiatives through the government's comprehensive plan to combat climate change and improve air quality through our government's "Turning the Corner" action plan.

The bill represents an important step in Canada toward living up to both domestic and international calls for the development of an

overarching sustainable development strategy. The government is pleased to support Bill C-474.

Again, I want to congratulate every member who was part of the environment committee and who worked hard on this bill and, again, the member for Don Valley West.

• (1340)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The House will forgive me if I join the House in wishing the hon. member for Don Valley West well in his new career. He now has the floor and we will all be attentive, including the chair occupant.

Hon. John Godfrey (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair for his kind remarks and his friendship over the years, which will continue even after I leave this place.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the parties in the House for their support and cooperation in bringing Bill C-474, the federal sustainable development bill, to this stage and providing very helpful suggestions for its amendment.

I would also like to acknowledge those who have contributed to the drafting and revision of Bill C-474. The bill reflects, to a large degree, the work of the David Suzuki Foundation with input from the Natural Step Canada group. It was developed and amended through extensive consultation with the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The person who has worked harder on this bill than anyone, who has negotiated with all the parties and legislative council and environmental groups, is one of our own parliamentary interns, Delaney Greig, for whom I predict a great future. She was ably assisted by my legislative assistant, Bo Romaguer.

The original reason I chose to put forward Bill C-474 was a universal dissatisfaction with the existing departmental sustainable development strategies process. The system of departmental reports has received criticism from both Conservative and Liberal ministers of the environment, from former commissioners of the environment and sustainable development and from the green ribbon panel that was established last year to review sustainable development strategies process.

Specifically, there has been broad recognition of the need for greater accountability in the sustainable development strategy process and for a coherent, overarching federal strategy developed at the heart of the government.

These are exactly the changes made under the federal sustainable development bill.

Bill C-474 calls for the development of a federal sustainable development strategy containing goals and targets developed by the Minister of the Environment with cabinet oversight. The federal strategy will be examined by Parliament, an advisory council and the commissioner prior to its coming into force. A progress review will occur every three years through a report to Parliament and a corresponding assessment report from the commissioner. Further, departmental sustainable development strategies will be required to comply with and contribute to the federal strategy and will also be assessed.

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Moving through committee, a number of amendments have been made to Bill C-474 to eliminate the need for a royal recommendation, as the Speaker has earlier recognized, and to draw in features that reflect the interests of all the parties represented here today.

As the government was contemplating changes to the sustainable development strategy process, it considered the route laid out in Bill C-474. Bringing together our thinking and theirs, we have amended Bill C-474 to satisfy all four parties. We have all had to put a little water in our wine.

Working on Bill C-474 has been a constructive and collaborative experience. The bill before us in the House today is a tribute to the way in which parties can work together in this place, in committee, in a minority Parliament, where committees are not always so collegial.

In particular, recognition is due to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, who has shown leadership by bringing forward constructive amendments and building support for Bill C-474 among his colleagues, in committee and in the House. I also thank him for his very kind words about my retirement.

[*Translation*]

I also want to acknowledge the support of the members of the Bloc Québécois and the NDP.

• (1345)

[*English*]

Given the atmosphere of cooperation around our efforts to improve sustainable development planning in the federal government, we look forward to ending debate in the House of Commons on Bill C-474 today. Although this will lack the theatrics of a vote, I have elected to request that the House adopt today Bill C-474 with the required technical amendments that have been moved so that it may progress to the Senate before we adjourn for the summer.

I must express to all members my appreciation for their assistance in enabling this bill to progress to this point and, if it is the will of the chamber, sending it on to the Senate. Bill C-474 will make sustainable development a priority at the heart of Canada's government for our future generations. I am honoured to have been able to shepherd this legislation through the House of Commons as my last act as a member of Parliament.

It is in the spirit of cooperation which has characterized the debate on this bill, and having consulted with the government and opposition parties, I would like to ask for unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of this House, at the end of today's debate on Bill C-474, standing in my name on the Order Paper, all report stage motions be deemed adopted; the Bill be deemed concurred in at report stage with further amendments; and be deemed read a third time and passed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to clearly state the Bloc Québécois' position on Bill C-474, not only at the report stage, but now at third reading as well.

I would like to begin by saying that the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of this bill, although not without some reservations.

We have talked about this at length. This bill calls for the following: the development and implementation of a national sustainable development strategy; the reporting of progress against a standard set of environmental indicators; and the appointment of an independent commissioner of the environment and sustainable development accountable to Parliament. This bill sets specific goals with respect to sustainable development in Canada and makes consequential amendments to another Act.

Clearly, the purpose of Bill C-474, introduced by the hon. member for Don Valley West, is to develop a sustainable development strategy based on the precautionary principle and to create a position of commissioner of the environment and sustainable development that would be independent of the Office of the Auditor General. In any case, that was the original idea, to create an independent commissioner position. We will see this later. As the hon. member for Don Valley West said earlier, everyone has made some compromises, including the Bloc Québécois. It was not, and is still not, our first choice, far from it, but we agree with the bill on the whole.

The bill also provides for the creation of an advisory council on sustainable development tasked with advising the federal government on the national sustainable development strategy that will be developed.

Although the Bloc Québécois supported Bill C-474 in principle, it still felt that the bill needed a number of improvements. Indeed, in its first incarnation, the bill had some serious flaws in terms of respect for Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction.

In fact, as originally drafted, the bill enabled the federal government to unilaterally set Canada-wide targets in many areas for which the Government of Quebec has responsibility, including the rate of recycling, use of agricultural land and urban development. These provisions were unacceptable to Quebec, and the Bloc Québécois said as much. The Bloc Québécois always defends the interests of Quebec and the Government of Quebec, so we obviously had to oppose these amendments.

That did not prevent us from supporting the principle of a federal sustainable development strategy. However, from the outset, that strategy should have applied only to areas of federal jurisdiction and the actions of federal institutions. Consequently, as usual, the Bloc Québécois worked constructively to correct the deficiencies in Bill C-474.

We proposed an approach based on cooperation between the federal government, Quebec and the provinces, whereby all the governments could adjust their policies so as not to interfere with each other. Most importantly, we proposed that the federal government absolutely respect Quebec's jurisdictions.

Too often, the federal government interferes in Quebec's jurisdictions. It constantly creates federal initiatives that not only duplicate what Quebec is already doing, but sometimes negate the effectiveness of Quebec's own initiatives. The bill reflected this "Ottawa knows best" attitude.

Fortunately, the member for Don Valley West had an open mind and very early on adopted a cooperative attitude that led to improvements to the bill.

Still, it would be wrong to say that the bill is perfect. The Bloc Québécois feels that it could have been improved further, especially as regards the actions of the departments.

Specifically, the Bloc Québécois feels that the strategies developed by the various departments should have included a requirement to conduct an environmental assessment of policy, plan and program proposals. Currently, only the cabinet directive on the environmental assessment of policy, plan and program proposals requires that departments conduct such assessments, and this requirement is too often ignored.

Moreover, this was among the findings in the report the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development tabled in March 2008. I had prepared some lengthy quotes, but suffice it to say that the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development confirmed both that there is a lack of political will and that the directive is unevenly applied.

• (1350)

The Bloc Québécois wished to create a mandatory legal obligation to fix the problem.

As for the other problems with the bill in its original form, the vast majority of them have been corrected. The bill now applies only to the federal government, its departments and institutions. As well, it is more precise and respectful in its terminology, speaking of aboriginal peoples instead of restricting consultations to first nations alone.

Unfortunately, the bill was gutted in committee: the Commissioner of the Environment, who was supposed to be independent and subject to the same conditions as the Auditor General, who is appointed under the Auditor General Act, will not be. He will remain part of the Auditor General's Office.

The Bloc Québécois is disappointed with this outcome. We argued strongly in favour of the independence of the Commissioner of the Environment, both from the government as well as from the Office of the Auditor General, to which he now reports.

Again, this position is much too important not to be granted the same status as the position of Auditor General. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development must be able to carry out audits, conduct reviews and make recommendations objectively, in the same way as the Commissioner of Official Languages, and

Private Members' Business

cannot simply examine the department's financial statements and look at whether it is following procedures. The commissioner must be able to require real action to protect the environment.

The Bloc Québécois supports Bill C-474. The federal government must adopt a sustainable development strategy in order to limit its actions and the actions of its departments and agencies. The Bloc Québécois realizes, however, that a lot remains to be done to ensure that the environment is truly respected. This includes making the position of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development truly independent.

The national sustainable development strategy must include some standards. It should also include implementation strategies for meeting all of the targets. These include caps on emissions, by sector and region, that are consistent with the targets; economic instruments; and an emission trading system with a declining cap.

The strategy has a number of goals, including the one in clause 5 (2)(d), which says, "Canada should become globally renowned for its leadership in conserving, protecting and restoring the natural beauty of the nation and the health and diversity of its ecosystems, parks and wilderness areas."

The Forest Stewardship Council is an organization that certifies forest management. If I may, I would like to say a few words about how we need to consider whether, in addition to the measures in clauses 8 through 11 of the bill, this national development strategy should call on the government to set an example by using only FSC-certified paper.

As I just said, the FSC is an organization that certifies forest management. FSC certification recognizes that forest owners are managing the resource responsibly. They do not clearcut; they reforest and they respect biodiversity within the forest. Certification shows that FSC members have conducted a detailed evaluation.

FSC-certified paper is paper made from fibre from a certified forest. That is the kind of paper we in Parliament, in government, should commit to using, thereby providing a concrete example of sustainable development.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the sponsor of the bill, the member for Don Valley West, and wish him a happy retirement. He has earned the right to say "Mission accomplished."

• (1355)

[*English*]

Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak in what appears to be the final round of debate on Bill C-474, the National Sustainable Development Act.

This bill was introduced by the hon. member for Don Valley West. I want to add my best wishes to him as he leaves this place and goes on to new challenges. It is great that he is able to leave the House of Commons on this note, where there is all party agreement to support this important piece of legislation. It is a good way to end his career in the House of Commons.

Private Members' Business

I want to make it clear that New Democrats support this legislation. We supported the decision only minutes ago to ensure that the bill gets to the Senate after the finish of the debate today. It is very important to move this bill forward.

When we talk about sustainable development, I cannot hear that term without thinking of a friend and colleague, a former member of the B.C. legislative assembly, the former member for Burnaby-Willingdon and the former B.C. environment minister, Joan Sawicki.

Joan Sawicki is someone who has a clear vision of sustainable development for Canada. She has worked tirelessly and continually to educate Canadians and political leaders on the importance of inventing the principles of sustainable development and environmental protection in all we do as governments and as a society. I want to thank Joan Sawicki for raising my consciousness on this issue and for helping get this kind of commitment on the political agenda here in Canada.

I also want to note that the bill before us today is very similar to Bill C-437, which was tabled by my NDP colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster back on May 1, 2007. It seems that one way or another this legislation was going to be before the House. That shows the importance of it and the dedication from all corners of the House to see this dealt with.

The member for Burnaby—New Westminster acted quickly on the suggestions of the Suzuki Foundation when they were originally put forward. He also engaged a process of community consultation with the people of Burnaby and New Westminster before tabling his version of the bill. I know that he had looked forward to the opportunity to have that legislation discussed in the House, but as I said, we are pleased that the member for Don Valley West, who had a higher priority on the private members' list, was able to get it before the House and through the process and before us today.

At the time that my colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster tabled his legislation, which is very similar to this bill, he noted that Canada was 28th of 30 countries in terms of environmental performance and that we were the eighth largest producer of carbon dioxide. That was a record that needed to be addressed. This legislation will go some way to dealing with some of those issues.

The legislation before us was developed by the Suzuki Foundation as part of its report, "Sustainability within a Generation". In that report it noted that the countries that are ranked highest in the OECD in terms of progress on environmental issues have sustainable development strategies in place. Canada was one of the countries that did not have such a strategy in place, along with Belgium, Spain and the United States.

Canada has committed to such a strategy at many international forums, including the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the 1997 Earth Summit+5 in New York, and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Finally, we are debating legislation that would ensure that this issue remains planted firmly on the agenda of our government here in Canada.

Sadly, over the years, Canada missed the mark on some of the key best practices with regard to sustainable development, best practices such as comprehensive goals and targets. Canada was often criticized for having fragmented goals across many sectors. On the

other hand, Sweden had 16 legislated environmental quality objectives and 71 measurable targets with short, medium and long term timelines. It is a very different way of looking at the idea of comprehensive goals and targets.

Another key best practice is progressive monitoring and reporting. Canada has some monitoring, but it is not linked to targets specifically. There is no benchmarking of Canada's performance relative to that of other countries. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, monitors 68 environmental indicators and assesses them against quantifiable goals.

• (1400)

Another best practice was environmental governance and leadership. Before the legislation came forward, Canada had no single integrated strategy and no overall government leadership and coordination on the environment.

Other countries, like Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom all have central agencies and high level prime minister's office and cabinet committees that coordinate environmental development and implementation of environmental policy.

It is clear that there was lots of room for improvement, lots of room for Canada to catch up with countries to which we often look for ideas, for commitments and to whose standards we hold ourselves, so this legislation is very important in that regard.

In this corner of the House, New Democrats believe that a sustainable development strategy is a complex of important measures. It is like a three-legged stool that needs a number of measures to be successful.

We believe that a cap and trade system is very important to a sustainable development strategy. We believe that institutional changes to implement cap and trade and to promote and enforce the culture of sustainable development in government is also a key component

We also believe that selective green fiscal measures that would cover specific measures is also very important. That is why we are pleased that today we are dealing with one aspect of that which is a crucial piece of an overall sustainable development strategy and will lead us in the right direction.

It is very clear that we must integrate a commitment to sustainable development into all the work of government. It is hard to believe that anyone who reflects on the current situation of our planet would deny the importance of taking this step. I am glad that there is unanimity here in the House on this issue.

My colleague for Burnaby—New Westminster put it this way when he tabled his version of this bill. He said:

It is time that sustainable development be a front-running issue for every ministry and become a part of our political culture.

We believe Bill C-474 would do just that.

We also believe that Bill C-474 complements, in a very positive way, Bill C-377, the Climate Change Accountability Act put forward by the member for Toronto—Danforth and the leader of the New Democratic Party.

That bill provides scientifically based medium and long term targets for Canada to avoid dangerous levels of climate change. It identifies specifically the necessary steps to avoid the 2° threshold for catastrophic climate change. The destination of 80% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050 and regular benchmarks are identified in the bill of the member for Toronto—Danforth, which has passed the House and hopefully will be considered by the Senate in short order.

This bill, we believe, complements that well because it provides a legal framework for preparing and implementing a national sustainable development strategy that aims at integrating through institutional changes, through comprehensive sustainability goals and measurable targets to achieve sustainable development here in Canada.

We believe this is a very important measure to be taking to complement other measures already taken by the House and passed here in this place.

This is a very important achievement of Parliament. I again thank the member for Don Valley West and the member for Burnaby—

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New Westminster who have shown great leadership in taking the work of the Suzuki Foundation and ensuring it reached the floor of the House of Commons.

It is important to note that all parties have ensured the passage of this legislation today. Taking this step toward establishing in law a national sustainable development strategy for Canada is crucial and important and is work that we can all be proud of here today.

● (1405)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): Resuming debate.

Pursuant to order adopted earlier today, Motions Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 are deemed adopted, Bill C-474, as amended, is deemed concurred in at report stage with further amendments and deemed read a third time and passed.

(Motions Nos. 1 to 4 agreed to, bill, as amended, concurred in at report stage with further amendments, read the third time and passed)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Royal Galipeau): It being 2:07 p.m., this House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:07 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

HON. BILL BLAIKIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ROYAL GALIPEAU

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

MR. MICHAEL IGNATIEFF

MR. JAMES MOORE

MR. JOE PRESTON

HON. KAREN REDMAN

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Thirty-Ninth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage..	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill.....	Alberta	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga.....	Ontario	CPC
Alghabra, Omar	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Ontario	Lib.
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Allison, Dean.....	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West.....	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	BQ
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard.....	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior.....	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry.....	Yukon.....	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	CPC
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	Québec	BQ
Barnes, Hon. Sue.....	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Batters, Dave	Palliser.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Beaumier, Colleen.....	Brampton West.....	Ontario	Lib.
Bélangier, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Lib.
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn.....	St. Paul's.....	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon.....	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories....	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake.....	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie....	Québec	BQ
Black, Dawn.....	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker.....	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blais, Raynald.....	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooog, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	Ind.
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	CPC
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	BQ
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes— Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James— Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing— Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la- Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	Québec	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock— Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Hon. Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Ontario	Lib.
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge— Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut	Nunavut	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Manitoba	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity)	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	BQ
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloney, John	Welland	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Fabian	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	CPC
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McDonough, Alexa	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	Québec	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard.....	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre.....	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Ouellet, Christian.....	Brome—Missisquoi.....	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Paquette, Pierre.....	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Pearson, Glen.....	London North Centre.....	Ontario	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.....	Québec	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North.....	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe.....	Elgin—Middlesex—London ..	Ontario	CPC
Priddy, Penny.....	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Proulx, Marcel.....	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East.....	Ontario	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Hon. Geoff.....	Halifax West	Nova Scotia.....	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shipley, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin— Kapuskasing	Ontario	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	Ind.
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Bradley	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	Ind.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	New Brunswick	Lib.
VACANCY	Saint-Lambert	Québec	
VACANCY	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	
VACANCY	Guelph	Ontario	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Thirty-Ninth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Epp, Ken	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jaffer, Rahim	Edmonton—Strathcona	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity) ...	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of International Cooperation	Calgary East	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of Industry	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Solberg, Hon. Monte, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Medicine Hat	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
Williams, John	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary for Canadian Heritage	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Bell, Catherine	Vancouver Island North	NDP
Bell, Don	North Vancouver	Lib.
Black, Dawn	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Chan, Hon. Raymond	Richmond	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of Public Safety	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Emerson, Hon. David, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Vancouver Kingsway	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Secretary of State and Chief Government Whip	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Hinton, Betty, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of Natural Resources	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
Moore, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Priddy, Penny	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise	Victoria	NDP
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Wilson, Blair	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	Ind.
MANITOBA (14)		
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Blaikie, Hon. Bill, The Deputy Speaker	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Bruinooge, Rod, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Steven, Parliamentary Secretary for Health	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Keeper, Tina	Churchill	Lib.
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Pallister, Brian	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Simard, Hon. Raymond	Saint Boniface	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Mervin	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche.....	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Hubbard, Hon. Charles.....	Miramichi.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic.....	Beauséjour.....	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
Scott, Hon. Andy	Fredericton	Lib.
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest.....	CPC
Zed, Paul	Saint John	Lib.
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Byrne, Hon. Gerry.....	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Doyle, Norman	St. John's East.....	CPC
Hearn, Hon. Loyola, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.....	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	CPC
Manning, Fabian.....	Avalon	CPC
Matthews, Bill	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott.....	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor.....	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis.....	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brison, Hon. Scott.....	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Casey, Bill	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Ind.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark.....	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and to the Minister of International Trade.....	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	Central Nova	CPC
McDonough, Alexa.....	Halifax	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West.....	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore.....	NDP
Thibault, Hon. Robert	West Nova	Lib.
NUNAVUT (1)		
Karetak-Lindell, Nancy	Nunavut.....	Lib.
ONTARIO (105)		
Albrecht, Harold.....	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alghabra, Omar.....	Mississauga—Erindale.....	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of the Environment	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Barnes, Hon. Sue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton West	Lib.
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boshcoff, Ken	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville	Lib.
Brown, Gord	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Health and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Comuzzi, Hon. Joe	Thunder Bay—Superior North	CPC
Cullen, Hon. Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal, The Acting Speaker	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Godfrey, Hon. John	Don Valley West	Lib.
Goodyear, Gary	Cambridge	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Ignatieff, Michael	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kadis, Susan	Thornhill	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Khan, Wajid	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Welland	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane	Sudbury	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of National Revenue	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Redman, Hon. Karen	Kitchener Centre	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
St. Amand, Lloyd	Brant	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Steckle, Paul	Huron—Bruce	Lib.
Stronach, Hon. Belinda	Newmarket—Aurora	Lib.
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Hon. Andrew	Kitchener—Waterloo	Lib.
Temelkovski, Lui	Oak Ridges—Markham	Lib.
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Turner, Hon. Garth	Halton	Lib.
Valley, Roger	Kenora	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
VACANCY	Guelph	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Hon. Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.

QUÉBEC (73)

André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Barbot, Vivian	Papineau	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Leader of the Opposition	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Gravel, Raymond	Repentigny	BQ
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Harvey, Luc	Louis-Hébert	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Lebel, Denis	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Lussier, Marcel	Brossard—La Prairie	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Martin, Right Hon. Paul	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Secretary of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Perron, Gilles-A.	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Petit, Daniel	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
St-Hilaire, Caroline	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Thibault, Louise	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Ind.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
VACANCY	Saint-Lambert	

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
VACANCY	Westmount—Ville-Marie	
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Batters, Dave.....	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	CPC
Fitzpatrick, Brian	Prince Albert	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Acting Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Skelton, Hon. Carol	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar.....	CPC
Trost, Bradley.....	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	CPC
Yelich, Lynne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

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(As of June 13, 2008 — 2nd Session, 39th Parliament)

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