



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, June 10, 2009**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1400)

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the Pages of the House of Commons.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

### ORLÉANS

**Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, next year, Orléans will celebrate its sesquicentenary. Last week, the government made a lasting contribution to the heart of Orléans. In partnership with the Government of Ontario and the City of Ottawa, we announced that \$2.5 million would be put towards construction on St. Joseph Boulevard.

[*English*]

This is an important artery in our region. Frankly, it is the spine of Orléans. It bridges together Cumberland and North Gloucester. It flows along the communities of Fallingbrook, Queenswood Heights and Convent Glen.

[*Translation*]

It brings communities and people together.

[*English*]

This boulevard, rich in history, will now more properly wear its name.

This is just another example of people working together. I salute our MPP, Phil McNeely, and councillors Rainer Bloess, Bob Monette and Rob Jellett. Teamwork does produce results. With our economic action plan, we get things done.

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### MEDICAL ISOTOPES

**Hon. Gurbax Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the head of the Ontario Association of Nuclear Medicine

says that many of Canada's hospitals will run out of medical isotopes by Thursday or Friday. This uncertainty will force hospitals to reschedule treatments and diagnoses of patients with cancer and heart and bone disease. Hospitals have been told not to expect shipments from South Africa and the Netherlands in time.

The Chalk River facility produces approximately 40% of the world's supply of medical isotopes and it will be out of commission for at least three months. The government has no credible plan and has not implemented any measures to ease the concerns of patients as we head into a global isotope shortfall.

The minister said that the situation is “sexy”, but we know that Canadian cancer patients are worried more about their health than the minister's inaction and poor judgment.

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[*Translation*]

### MICHEL CHOINIÈRE

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding contribution that Michel Choinière, a citizen and businessman from my riding, has made to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Choinière just received the Hommage bénévolat-Québec award for volunteerism for the Montérégie region at the annual ceremony held in Quebec City to honour the men and women who dedicate themselves to others.

Mr. Choinière is a visionary, but he is also the president of a charitable foundation. He was the president of the southwest chapter of Special Olympics Québec, and eight people with intellectual disabilities work for his company under the supervision of a special-education teacher.

Mr. Choinière was president of the Moulin de la source organization for 10 years, and is now the head of a fundraising committee. With the help of the money raised, people have been able to travel, dream, sing and dance, all while using adapted facilities and equipment.

We thank Mr. Choinière for his dedication and congratulate him on his community involvement.

*Statements by Members*

●(1405)

**MARION DEWAR**

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to pay tribute to the life of a remarkable parliamentarian, Marion Dewar, who passed away last year.

[English]

As mayor of Ottawa, she demonstrated enormous compassion when, in 1979, she brought 4,000 immigrants from Vietnam to Ottawa. Project 4000 created a ripple of goodwill all across the country.

[Translation]

Marion had friends all over the place, in Ottawa and across Canada. She was an extraordinary activist and served her community with passion.

[English]

On June 17, the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization will create the Marion Dewar scholarship fund for refugee and immigrant high school students. I cannot think of a more appropriate way to celebrate the life of this great Canadian.

Marion's four children, including our very own member for Ottawa Centre, carry on her legacy of public service and social justice. I hope all will join Marion's family and me in this tribute to a passionate wife, mother, grandmother and dedicated activist who touched us all.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MARIE-MICHÈLE QUIRION**

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute in this House to an athlete from Beauce, who embodies determination and hard work.

Marie-Michèle Quirion is 18 and already has an illustrious record. She has been training for archery competitions in the compound division for nine years.

Last fall, in Turkey, she was a member of the junior women's team that won the first medal for Canada in the team compound division. She also has two gold medals won at the world competitions held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in addition to many other medals.

It is very difficult to balance a career, studies and competition. I encourage Marie-Michèle to follow her dream and I congratulate her on her accomplishments. Bravo Marie-Michèle.

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**COLLÈGE BEAUBOIS STUDENTS**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to highlight the international solidarity initiative of the students of Collège Beaubois, a primary and secondary school in my riding of Pierrefonds—Dollard.

In March 2009, as in alternate years since 2005, twenty students from Collège Beaubois participated in a cooperation project in Senegal. This initiative makes young people more aware of the

reality in a developing country and allows them to help Senegalese youth learn. With the money collected, Collège Beaubois students built a kindergarten class and washrooms for the children, as well as a classroom for secondary students on Dionewar Island that has been named the Beaubois Room.

The young people at Collège Beaubois deserve to be commended by this House for their sense of solidarity and for what they are doing in Senegal. This has made each one of them ambassadors of our country's values and ideals while helping them to become responsible citizens committed to improving the lives of those around them.

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[English]

**DIGITAL MEDIA**

**Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to recognize the Canada 3.0 Forum which was recently held in my riding to discuss digital media and its importance for our global economy. This conference was part of the newly created University of Waterloo Stratford Institute.

Over 500 government, academic and business leaders attended, including Co-CEO of Research in Motion Mike Lazaridis, CRTC Chairman Konrad von Finckenstein, Open Text Chairman Tom Jenkins, and my colleagues, the Minister of State for Science and Technology and the Minister of Industry.

This conference provided an opportunity for attendees to create a digital media action plan and define Canada's future so that we can continue to be a leader in the digital economy.

I would like to congratulate the conference organizers.

The University of Waterloo's Stratford Institute is establishing Canada's place in the world as a true leader of our digital future.

\* \* \*

●(1410)

[Translation]

**LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Jean Dorion (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 265 members of Parliament, including the man who is now the Liberal leader, rose in this House on November 27, 2006 in formal recognition of the Quebec nation. Nothing at all has come of it since.

Last week, Liberals and Conservatives alike opposed the Bloc Québécois bill to apply the Charter of the French language to all businesses everywhere in Quebec, including banks, ports and airports. Not only was the Liberal leader absent during that fateful vote, but he has gone one step further from abstention to a slap in the face. On June 5, the office of the Leader of the Opposition sent an English-only reply to a person in my riding, despite the fact that the incoming letter was in French.

This is a perfect illustration of the who-cares attitude of the federal Liberals and their new leader toward the Quebec nation and the language of its people. May we soon celebrate a free and francophone Quebec.

[English]

### LOBSTER INDUSTRY

**Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for 13 years the Liberal government ignored and refused the requests of fishers for rationalization support. Their request for a capital gains exemption was refused. Their request for more harbour funding was refused. When it came to Liberal support for fishers, it is clear that it just was not there.

This morning my colleague, the hon. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, announced that our government has delivered for the lobster industry.

Today's investment of an additional \$65 million will improve the sustainability of this fishery that is so vital to Atlantic Canada and Quebec. This investment will see the lobster industry emerge from the global economic downturn in fighting shape.

During these tough economic times, this Conservative government is putting Canadians first and getting the job done.

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### SEARCH AND RESCUE

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to rise and speak of the courage, professionalism and honour of the soldiers of our search and rescue personnel.

Newfoundland and Labrador is proud of its own squadron, and that is 103 Search and Rescue in Gander. Its motto is "Seek and Save".

Recently, I attended the change of command where Major Stephen Reid had this to say about the troops and support staff of search and rescue: "Rarely is it the case that mother nature gives us a break. It must be recognized that we, too, are human. We are deeply affected when a mission proves unsuccessful, but we soldier on knowing that every Canadian is counting on us to bring necessary closure sometimes during the worst imaginable circumstances".

The nickname for those of 103 Search and Rescue is the "Outcasts". That may sound negative to most of us, but in our province, the "Outcasts" are truly our heroes.

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### BIOFUELS

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today is a significant day for the advancement of biofuels in Canada. For one month, starting today, regular gasoline purchases at the Shell service station on Merivale Road here in Ottawa will contain 10% cellulosic ethanol, ethanol made and pioneered in Canada at Iogen's world-leading demonstration plant.

Also this month, Iogen begins consultations in my riding on a proposed cellulosic ethanol biorefinery to be located at the former Prince Albert mill site.

This however is much bigger than just one plant. This is the dawn of a new, advanced biofuel chapter in Canada's role as an energy provider and pioneer. None of this would have taken place if it were not for our Prime Minister's \$2 billion renewable fuels commitment

### Statements by Members

in 2007, of which \$500 million was dedicated to the development and construction of next generation biofuel plants.

The Prime Minister took action in 2007 and now we are witnessing the harvest of the seeds that were planted two years ago by Iogen, Shell and this government.

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### NOVA SCOTIA PROVINCIAL ELECTION

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the federal New Democratic caucus, I am very pleased to extend my congratulations to the Nova Scotia New Democrats for their landslide victory in the provincial election.

[Translation]

The NDP victory in Nova Scotia is a first—the first time in history that our party has been in government east of Ontario. The possibilities for the future are better than ever.

[English]

I look forward to working with the new Premier, Darrell Dexter, and his team, to get the best results for Nova Scotia's families through the current economic crisis and beyond.

I also want to acknowledge the special role of Alexa McDonough, having given so many years in this building process, and the thousands of volunteers, candidates and donors who focused, year after year, on building our dream.

I wish Darrell and all the province's new MLAs all the best as they move forward in creating real change and real opportunities for the people of Nova Scotia.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[Translation]

### QUEBEC

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in recent days the members across the way have started showing their true colours. Considering that the Bloc Québécois has just had a new game plan imposed upon it by its real leader, these have surely not been easy days for "Pauline's puppet".

The purpose of that game plan is not to protect Quebec from the present economic crisis. Nor is it to build a better future for the children of Quebec. The purpose of the plan is to drag Quebec 30 years back in time. A time when Pauline's puppet backed the communists. In truth, it suits him fine. We all know, my Quebecois friends, that the plan has but one purpose: to break up Canada.

The truth is that, in this House, only the Conservatives truly have the best interests of the Quebec nation at heart. We, the Quebec Conservatives, will never agree to a plan written with such a hypocritical pen. Never.

*Oral Questions***OIL SANDS**

**Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Alberta sent a message stating that it now sees the Liberal leader as a greater champion of the oil sands industry than his Conservative counterpart because the leader of the Liberal Party rushed to defend the industry when *National Geographic* published a scathing report about it. Apparently, he did a better job than the Prime Minister himself.

That is in direct conflict with the interests of Quebec, which would benefit from the implementation of the Kyoto protocol. We believe—and Quebecers believe—that a Liberal government headed up by the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore would have the same attitude and be even more eager to please oil companies than the current government.

For the Bloc Québécois, the oil sands are not about Canada's national unity. They are one more reason to choose sovereignty.

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**CBC/RADIO-CANADA**

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, “I am, we are for quality public broadcasting”.

Today I wish to join with the many public figures who have launched an awareness campaign with that slogan to denounce the Conservatives' efforts to undermine CBC/Radio-Canada.

People from every walk of life are raising their voices to denounce the ideological opportunism shown by the Conservatives in this file. Since the time of the Lincoln report, when they were still showing their true colours as Reform demagogues, we have all known how the Conservatives feel about CBC/Radio-Canada. We also know their negative intentions for the corporation.

CBC/Radio-Canada should be a reflection of who we are as a society, as Canadians.

To carry out this mission, CBC/Radio-Canada must have the necessary resources, if we want to see it survive. Unfortunately, that is not the direction taken by the Conservative government, which saw the economic crisis as an opportunity to gradually stifle CBC/Radio-Canada.

They will not succeed, however, because we will be standing in their way, side by side with Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

**LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA**

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Liberal Party is out of touch with Canadians. His understanding of Canadians and their needs is questionable at best.

Through our economic action plan, our Conservative government has been providing tax relief to Canadian families, creating jobs and helping those most in need.

In response to our strong leadership, the Liberal leader has promised to raise taxes. He wants to increase the GST, impose a job-killing carbon tax, and eliminate the universal child care benefit.

He has been away from Canada for 34 years. He called himself an American. He called our Canadian flag a pale imitation of a beer label. The Liberal leader thinks Canada is the laughingstock of the world.

Yet, the Secretary General of the OECD said that Canada will be one of the first to come out of the recession. That is a record that we on this side of the House are very proud of.

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

[English]

**MEDICAL ISOTOPES**

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the long predicted crisis is now upon us. Hospitals in smaller communities will run out of isotopes in the next 48 hours. The chief of nuclear medicine in Hamilton says “that deaths could occur” if supplies fall much further.

The Prime Minister claims that the government has acted on this issue since the last shutdown on its watch in November 2007.

After 18 months of this, is this all the Conservatives have to offer, a national health care crisis?

● (1420)

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what I can indicate to the House today is the following. We have been in contact with industry with respect to the supply of medical isotopes.

I can tell the House that it has been indicated that hospitals will receive next week over 50% of their orders which is markedly up from what they had anticipated. As well, we have been working with the global network of nuclear reactors with respect to supplying even more.

OPAL has also indicated that it will be able to come on line sooner, as long as we continue to help it, which we have been doing.

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with respect, there is a dispute over the facts here.

The Conservatives keep pretending that there is an alternative supply of isotopes, but we have spoken to the Dutch and the Australians. They say yes, they can ramp up production, but they cannot make up the shortfall. They cannot say how many isotopes will actually end up in Canadian hospitals.

So where is the credibility in the minister's assurances to those Canadians whose tests are currently being cancelled?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I just indicated to the House, indeed we do have an indication of what amount of isotopes will be available next week to the Canadian public. That is what is important to get into the hands of the medical establishment, so that it can utilize the contingency plans that have been worked on with the Minister of Health.

Indeed, we continue to work with the reactors and, in fact, upon Canada's leadership there is a high level meeting of nuclear energy agencies. That is exactly what is going to be discussed in terms of scheduling.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this public health care crisis is getting worse, and we cannot count on the minister's assurances.

Yesterday, François Lamoureux, the president of Quebec's association of nuclear medicine specialists, said, "The government does not seem to realize how catastrophic this is for patients... Patients are being held hostage".

When will Canadians be able to get their diagnostic tests done?

[*English*]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of Canadians regarding this shortage. That is why we have taken swift action. It is a stressful time for many Canadians, but I can reassure the House and members that we are taking all steps necessary to address this shortage.

We have identified alternatives to the medical community while we are dealing with the shortage of medical isotopes. That list of alternatives was provided by the medical experts on medical isotopes which we acted on. Those alternatives are available right now to the provinces and territories.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in January, questions about heavy water leaks and effects on isotope production at Chalk River were dismissed by the minister as fearmongering. Then, she repeatedly claimed that isotope production was reliable.

At the Ottawa Hospital, 180 patients, 60% of whom have cancer, are now being told that their scheduled diagnostic treatments over the next few days are at serious risk.

Would the minister now explain to those patients and their families why she refused to take this crisis seriously, and can she now advise them exactly what it is they should do?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the reliability of the NRU in terms of producing medical isotopes, I can inform the House that the facts are that it has had over 90% reliability for a 50-year old reactor to produce the medical isotopes in the last year. It had been doing so at an increasingly larger rate last fall when we were supplying the world.

Now it is time for the world to help us. It is doing so. Australia is shortening its time for commissioning from approximately five months down to a few weeks, and indeed contrary to what has been said by the hon. member opposite, Australia's reactor can provide 20% of the global supply.

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has never taken this crisis seriously.

### *Oral Questions*

Specialists told the minister that there was no alternative to using isotopes to perform bone scans on children with cancer. According to Dr. Urbain, nuclear medicine specialists are having nightmares about those children because of the isotope shortage.

Seven months on, how can she have let the crisis get so bad that children are now in serious danger and have no other treatment options?

[*English*]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for the last 18 months my department has been working with the medical experts in identifying alternatives that can be used by the provinces and territories in the hospitals. Some of the recommendations that came from the medical experts on isotopes are initiatives such as triaging patients to ensure when alternatives are not available that they can receive the TC99 isotopes and working flexible hours when they do have the TC99 isotopes. This way they can maximize the use and minimize the delay.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to a number of experts in nuclear medicine, the isotope crisis was predictable, the Minister of Natural Resources has shown negligence in managing this crisis and, as a result, they no longer have confidence in her.

How can the Prime Minister justify keeping his Minister of Natural Resources on when all the experts consider her incompetent?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that we cannot control when the NRU goes down. What we can do, though, is work the best we can to both increase medical supplies around the world and to mitigate the shortage in supplies.

However, I think it is really important to notice that Canada did lead the field in the 1990s with respect to developing the MAPLEs project. In 2000, the Liberal opposition was informed that the MAPLEs could not be commissioned and indeed, in 2003, the problem that caused us to agree to shutting it down was brought to the attention of the member for Wascana.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Jean-Luc Urbain of the Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine accuses the Minister of Natural Resources of not taking the warnings seriously. François Lamoureux of the Association des médecins spécialistes en médecine nucléaire du Québec has described the minister's handling of this crisis as disastrous. In spite of this, the Prime Minister persists in defending the indefensible.

Will he finally listen to reason and fire his minister in order to start again on a more solid footing?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, the facts are important in this situation. It is this Conservative government that has actually had its eye on the issue and has been working towards a solution since 2007. Indeed a difficult decision was taken to disband the MAPLEs project in 2008. However, we also sought to increase the licence extension to the NRU to deal with the issue.

Who did not deal with the issue? The Liberals did not deal with the issue, for 13 years.

*[Translation]*

**Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what the minister said shocked patients and the health community in Quebec and Canada. Dr. François Lamoureux, president of the Association des médecins spécialistes en médecine nucléaire du Québec, stated:

The government does not seem to realize how catastrophic this is for patients. First, the government denied that there even was a crisis. Today, we learn that a minister thinks that this crisis is “sexy”.

Will the Prime Minister stop his partisanship and fire his minister, who does not have the judgment, the empathy or the credibility needed to manage this crisis?

*[English]*

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the individual that the member made reference to sits on the expert panel that we established back in 2007. That ad hoc group of health experts prepared a report on lessons learned, which this government responded to and acted upon. The information related to alternative products was provided to Health Canada. We approved those products, and they are available right now to do the testing for Canadians who require it.

● (1430)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, experts including Dr. Jean-Luc Urbain, president of the Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine, have condemned Canada's lack of leadership on the isotope issue and its lack of credibility in the eyes of the international community. Dr. François Lamoureux has even suggested setting up an independent international commission to get a clear picture of the situation.

Does the Prime Minister not understand that he must fire his minister and replace her so that the government can finally start again on a solid footing in order to manage the isotope crisis?

*[English]*

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are working very, very closely with all the provincial and territorial counterparts and, at the same time, the medical experts on isotopes with regard to identifying the options. In fact, I had a meeting with the individuals last week on continuing with the planning toward how we can mitigate situations like this when we deal with that. I will also continue to work with my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources, as she deals with the supply issue from the international community.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on the infamous tape, the Minister of Natural Resources said, “This is

an easy one. You know what solves this problem? Money. And if it's just about money, we'll figure it out”.

Well, five months later, it certainly is not figured out.

Would the minister tell this House today just how much money has been devoted to addressing this crisis that faces us?

Would she also explain why, if it is such an easy problem, she has not stepped in to fix the reactor and at the same time make sure that the patients get the isotopes they need?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously it goes without saying, if any of us had the technical capabilities to fix the issue, we would do so.

The reality is that AECL has indeed given the update with respect to where it is in the repairs to the reactor, and it is progressing.

In terms of the question of money, it is this government that actually has the eye on the ball: the importance of the nuclear industry and the importance of medical isotopes to this country. We are the ones who have been fully funding AECL for the last three years. It is the Liberal opposition that starved AECL and starved Chalk River in the 10 years—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

The hon. member for Toronto—Danforth.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives take the industry so seriously they want to sell it off. It is just not credible what the minister is saying. She said it is about money, but it is the patients who are paying the price. That is the truth of the matter. The cost of the isotopes has doubled and tripled since this crisis began.

The Hôtel-Dieu Grace, in Windsor, and the Ottawa Hospital are cancelling emergency scans right now.

Dr. O'Brien of the Ontario Association of Nuclear Medicine said that the minister, “diminished the seriousness that the medical isotope crisis is having on patient access for heart disease and cancer treatment”.

Does the minister realize that she no longer has the confidence of the medical experts or Canadians?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say again that the recommendations made by the medical isotope experts have been implemented and we are working very closely with the medical isotope experts. We are using all the regulatory powers, such as the special access program and clinical trials, to ensure access to alternatives. There are alternatives available now, Tc99 isotopes, over 50% of which is used for heart testing. These are available now to provinces and territories.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, after being caught on tape calling the Minister of Health incompetent in the isotopes affair, the Minister of Natural Resources has also said that the Minister of the Environment is pandering to the oil sands. That explains the minister's failure to act in this file.



*Oral Questions*

Can the Minister of Natural Resources confirm her statements? Is the Minister of the Environment in fact pandering to the oil sands?

• (1435)

[*English*]

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, these remarks are simply not true.

The government is committed to protecting the environment. In fact, I have just come from announcing the foundation for the development of the carbon market here in Canada, the rules and requirements to create the offset system and the verification process by which those credits will be verified. They are spelled out in a document that will be available for 60 days of public consultation, all to be finalized this fall.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**MEDICAL ISOTOPES**

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, François Lamoureux, president of the Association des médecins spécialistes en médecine nucléaire du Québec, said, and I quote, “This medical disaster was predictable. Everyone knew.”

What concrete solutions has the government put in place since these recurring problems first emerged?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, we put out a five-point plan on how to deal with a shortage of medical isotopes.

In that plan are two key issues. One is dealing with contingencies, and the Minister of Health is ably dealing with that one. In the second case, it is increasing the global supply of medical isotopes.

Through our leadership, we have been able to have the Netherlands increase its production by 50%, have South Africa increase its production by 30%, and have Australia bring on its reactor earlier than anticipated.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to again quote Mr. Lamoureux, who said, “The ill have been forsaken ... How devastating, how sad this is.”

In the meantime, in Trois-Rivières and Quebec City, appointments for testing have already been cancelled. In Joliette, they will have to be cancelled soon.

What concrete steps have been taken? What arrangements are in place and what guarantees can the government provide to patients who are suffering?

[*English*]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious issue, and we will continue to work with the provinces and territories on this issue.

I think it is very important to also identify that we are providing alternatives for tests that can be done using existing approved products. The medical isotopes community has identified alternatives. They may be old, but they still work.

Thallium-201 can be used as an alternative for most heart tests, which account for approximately half of all the Tc99 procedures in Canada. Iodine-123, gallium, are available now to provinces and territories while we manage the shortage of medical isotopes.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us be clear: two isotopes crisis in 18 months under the Conservatives, and none under the Liberals.

The minister claims to have assurances from the Dutch, the Belgians, the Australians and the South Africans to provide extra supplies of isotopes. Just exactly what is Canada's shortfall in isotopes today? How many, exactly? What will it be in two weeks? Next month? Does the minister have an absolute guarantee that all that isotope shortage in Canada will be replenished—

**The Speaker:** Order.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can say that when the hon. member from Wascana actually was the minister of natural resources and knew in 2003 that the MAPLE reactors would not work, I wish he had asked as many questions then, because we would not be in the situation we are in now.

The reality is we are dealing with this in an open and a transparent way because in 2003, when the MAPLEs did not work, the Liberals hid the crisis.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot give the numbers and clearly she cannot tell the truth either.

The Conservatives have had two isotope crises in 18 months. The Prime Minister said that they were working on the problem since—

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

• (1440)

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I think we will go directly to the question without unnecessary comments about the answers, the responses or whatever.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** Mr. Speaker, the government has been in office for three and a half years and all the crises have happened on its watch, not on our watch. It is time to get serious.

Will there be new international isotope supplies guaranteed for Canada? How many are needed and—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member indicated that there were not any outages and there were not any difficulties on the Liberals' watch. The reality is in 2003 they understood that the world's hope for medical isotopes, the MAPLEs 1 and 2, were not going to work. It was a case of either being ignorant of the situation or not caring themselves.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment has invented a new concept: variable targets.

In 2007 in Bali, the government recognized the targets of 20% to 40%, using 1990 as the reference year. Yesterday, the Minister of the Environment said that only his target of 20% by 2020, using 2006 as the reference year, has always counted.

Is this hypocrisy and double-talk not proof that the minister's approach is biased in favour of the oil companies?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we can always expect a partisan attitude from the Bloc Québécois. Once again, the opposition is wrong. Our government is actively working to protect the environment.

Today at noon, I announced the creation of the foundation for the development of the carbon market and how it will work. Over the next 60 days, we will be holding consultations on this policy. We plan on introducing this policy in the fall, and the Bloc Québécois should work with us.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am not the only one saying it. The Minister of Natural Resources has the same view of the environment minister, and that must be what she really thinks because she did not apologize. That is the reality.

Does the Minister of the Environment realize that his response in the House proves one thing, that the government does not care about international talks on climate change?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what the Bloc member is saying today. I just participated in a series of meetings in France, Norway and Denmark in preparation for the Copenhagen summit in December to fight climate change. I invited the Bloc Québécois to join me on this trip, but the Bloc prefers to play the armchair critic here.

\* \* \*

**CFB VALCARTIER**

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to federal government documents, more than 71 sites on CFB Valcartier are contaminated with toxic or radioactive substances. After the scandal with TCE contaminated water, now we have new evidence of National Defence negligence and confirmation of its lack of concern with human and environmental health.

Does the Minister of National Defence not understand that it is high time action was taken and a plan put in place to decontaminate these sites?

**Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the identification of the contaminated site at CFB Valcartier is proof of the Canadian Forces' resolve to always protect health and safety.

In fact, National Defence has had programs in place for a long time to locate contaminated sites and determine potential risks.

When contaminated sites are discovered, National Defence takes all the steps required to mitigate any potential risk.

• (1445)

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, some 23,000 people already—and many more to come—have signed a petition calling upon the federal government to acknowledge its responsibility for the contaminated water at Shannon, to compensate victims, and to clean up the sites in question.

What concrete actions will the minister take at last to reassure the members of the Shannon citizens' coalition, who are here on the Hill today.

**Mr. Laurie Hawn (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, since there is a class action before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to make any further comment on this specific point at this time.

CFB Valcartier provides drinking water to members of the Canadian Forces and their families, as well as to the municipality of Shannon. In recent years, we have invested over \$40 million in projects to improve and maintain the base water supply system as well as to help the municipality of Shannon improve its own system.

\* \* \*

**MEDICAL ISOTOPES**

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Minister of Natural Resources told Canadians that the isotope crisis was under control and that there was nothing to worry about. Yesterday, the president of the Ontario Association of Nuclear Medicine said that some hospitals will run out of medical isotopes by tomorrow or Friday.

Can the minister confirm that, yes or no?

[English]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the situation related to the supply will vary by day, by community and by provinces. We will continue to work with the provinces and territories to identify alternatives. The alternatives are there now, to be accessed by provinces and territories as they see the need. We will continue to work with the provinces and territories in addressing some of their concerns.

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of Natural Resources said that Canada was equipped to secure international supplies of isotopes. She claimed to have the international infrastructure in place to address the shortage. The minister has been trying to portray herself as leading and winning on isotopes, but Canadian cancer patients are losing precious time.

Will the minister admit she cannot predict how much of the shortage in Canadian hospitals can be made up by international suppliers?

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have indicated already that Canada has a leadership position with respect to the global supply. In fact, next week I will be chairing a panel at a conference in Toronto, which brings together, in one room, all the world leading producers of medical isotopes.

What is important is to show and indicate that we have close contact with the industry on this issue. Indeed, we can report from industry that next week more than 50% of normal supply will be available. We are going to keep in contact with the medical community and keep pushing out the information so Canadians know what is going on.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Actually, Mr. Speaker, Canada lost its leadership role under the Conservative government's watch.

Dr. Chris O'Brien of the Association of Nuclear Medicine warned that in 36 hours regional hospitals in Ontario would have no medical isotopes to do the tests they wanted to do. Smaller reactors will not enable us to fill this gap, nor will the international supply.

Where will these regional hospitals receive the isotopes they need to serve the patients who require their tests to save their lives?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, there are alternatives available to provinces and territories now, such as thallium, which is used for heart tests. More than half the medical isotopes used before were for heart scans.

These alternatives were identified by the medical experts on isotopes. They provided this list to Health Canada in 2007. We acted on that. That information and that product is available to the provinces and to the hospitals for access as needed.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is those comments by the minister are actually misleading the public. Some of these alternatives are going to work some of the time, but they are not going to work all of the time. That is what we are talking about here.

Patients do not want to hear more rhetoric. They do not want to hear wishful thinking. They want hard facts. They want a concrete plan on paper as to how Canadians will access the medical isotopes during their time of need.

Where is this plan and when will the minister release the plan to the Canadian public?

• (1450)

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 18 months ago we developed the plan on contingency measures that we could all take to mitigate the shortage of medical isotopes. That plan was developed in partnership with the experts on medical isotopes. We are moving on that plan. We have acted on that plan. We continue to implement that plan.

The plan includes using the alternatives that are available for procedures and testing in hospitals throughout the provinces and territories. It is available now. We will continue to work with the medical community to address what other options may be available.

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in August 2007 the Prime Minister referred to Nahanni Park expansion as arguably one of the most important environmental protection acts in a generation.

After a generation of Liberal neglect, as far as conservation and the protection of Canada's environment is concerned, could the Minister of the Environment share with the House some of this government's most recent successes on this file?

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government introduced legislation to expand the Nahanni to over 30,000 square kilometres, which is six times its current size. We protect the ecosystem. We advance Nahanni's national world heritage status. We bring economic opportunities to the Dehcho, the Dene and the Métis.

As they are the only party to not yet offer support in the House, I ask the Liberals to get behind the Dene and Métis people to help speed this through the House of Commons so we might achieve the great act of conservation in a generation.

\* \* \*

**TRADE**

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today the Prime Minister and the leader of the Liberal Party are rolling out the red carpet for a leader who has the worst human rights record in the western hemisphere. In Colombia dozens of labour activists and human rights advocates are killed each year. Hundreds more simply disappear. Four million poor farmers have been forced off of their resource-rich land. All of this is done by brutal paramilitary thugs who are linked to the president and his regime.

The government wants to reward the president. Does the government not realize that the regime's hands are stained with blood?

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I really wish the hon. member would stop hiding behind his ideology. The reality is the NDP has never supported a free trade agreement, including the auto pact.

The situation with Colombia is not going to be solved by isolating Colombia from the rest of the world. The situation in Colombia will be enhanced by free trade. There will be more jobs, opportunity and expansion of human rights under jobs and opportunity.

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, human rights is not an ideology. It is a principle to which the Conservative Party should be adhering.

A recently declassified U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency report describes President Uribe as "a Colombian politician dedicated to collaboration with the Medellín Cartel at high government levels. Uribe is a close personal friend of Pablo Escobar". He is a notorious drug lord.

Why is the Prime Minister and the leader of the Liberal Party legitimizing this criminal regime?

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government believes that improving human rights is inextricably linked to the economy, jobs and opportunity. We have proven time and time again that when people have better jobs and more opportunity, human rights improve.

The reality and principle here is the NDP is simply against anything that improves the status of any group of people that involves a free trade agreement. Whether it is a free trade agreement with Peru, Colombia or Mexico, those members have never supported a free trade agreement.

\* \* \*

•(1455)

[Translation]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Quebec's National Assembly unanimously adopted a motion calling on the federal government to bring Nathalie Morin and her children home as soon as possible. Nathalie Morin and her children are being held against their will and are being malnourished and mistreated.

In this case, there is no reason the government cannot negotiate their return with Saudi Arabia.

[English]

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very complex family dispute matter with no easy solution.

Due to international law, Ms. Morin and her husband must resolve custody before a Saudi court before the children, who are all Saudi citizens, are able to return to Canada.

Our government has been very active on this file, having talked with Ms. Morin and her mother over 300 times in the past year.

With the assistance of the Saudi officials, we are working to resolve this issue.

[Translation]

**Ms. Francine Lalonde (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when asked about Nathalie Morin's case, lawyer Julius Grey said:

I will be filing suit against the Government of Canada, which ... has been completely unsympathetic. ... They are not doing anything. They are hiding. They are hiding behind all kinds of excuses.

In the case of Nathalie and her children, sections 6, 7, and 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are being ignored. Will the minister bring them home soon or not?

[English]

**Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat what I said.

Due to international law, Ms. Morin and her husband must resolve the custody issue before a Saudi court, because the children are all Saudi citizens.

This government has been engaged on this file. We have talked to Ms. Morin and her mother over 300 times. We must wait for the Saudi officials to resolve this issue.

**HEALTH**

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the spread of H1N1 influenza in Manitoba's aboriginal communities has caused great concern to the World Health Organization. It is considering calling the outbreak a full-blown pandemic.

The province of Manitoba offered the federal government help 13 times since May 4 to plan for a possible pandemic in aboriginal communities. Manitoba understands the issue; the World Health Organization understands the issue; only the Conservatives do not understand the issue.

Why has there been such a delay in response?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have been in regular contact with my colleague, Minister Oswald, from Manitoba in regard to H1N1.

In fact, we have been planning for this pandemic since 2006. Our government invested \$1 billion to increase our preparedness to respond to public health threats such as a pandemic, which includes first nations communities.

I will continue to work with the Public Health Agency, Indian and Northern Affairs, and aboriginal organizations to ensure a coordinated approach.

As well, Health Canada has provided additional nurses to the community and—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, mothers have lost their babies, and children have received inadequate care. The federal government was not prepared for this outbreak in aboriginal communities.

Conditions in these communities continue to deteriorate. Homes are overcrowded. Communities do not have running water. The virus continues to spread. Experts warn that the worst may be yet to come.

What concrete plan does the government have to prepare all aboriginal communities for a possible pandemic?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, since April of this year we have been acting on our pandemic plan, which includes first nations communities. We have remained vigilant on this issue. We are in regular contact with the WHO, my counterparts in the international community, as we deal with this situation.

I will continue to work with my colleague in Manitoba as we deal with this situation, as well as the aboriginal leaders of those communities.

•(1500)

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the World Health Organization is about to announce H1N1 as a full-blown pandemic, and it has singled out its impact on Canada's aboriginal people. Everyone remembers what happened when hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. This is Canada's New Orleans.

*Points of Order*

Why is there a disproportionate impact on first nations? It is because of a lack of resources, a lack of planning, and fundamentally the third world living conditions that aboriginal people face.

When will the government call an emergency summit with aboriginal leaders, provinces and territories to put together a response?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as an aboriginal person, I find that line of questioning insulting.

H1N1 is not an illness that applies only to aboriginal people. It does not see race. It does not see class. It does not see boundaries.

We need to respond accordingly, and we have. We have a pandemic plan. We are implementing it.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to come and visit St. Theresa Point and talk to the people who are currently dealing with this crisis.

The government has failed to deal decisively with this surge in flu cases. Chief McDougall of St. Theresa Point has called for a field hospital to deal with the situation that is so bad. If we can do this in war zones, why can we not do it on the front lines of a coming pandemic?

When is the federal government going to deal with the fundamental root cause of this, which is the third-world living conditions that first nations in Canada face? When will the government wake up to the severity of what is happening?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the pandemic plan that was established for this country in 2006 applies to every single Canadian. We are implementing that plan in partnership with the health care service providers of provinces and territories.

I will continue to work with my colleagues in Manitoba as we deal with the situation, and we will continue to monitor and remain vigilant as we deal with the situation in Manitoba.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a stunning silence from the opposition parties when it comes to speaking up for victims of crime.

Although our Conservative government has done much to improve public safety, Canadians know there is still much work to be done in combating violent and drug-related crime. What we need are new strategies to stay ahead of those who victimize Canadians and terrorize our communities.

Could the Minister of Justice explain to this House what our government is doing to combat organized crime and gangs in our country?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his excellent question.

Canadians have been very clear. They want their government to be tough on crime, and that is exactly what this government is delivering. We are getting rid of the faint hope clause and double

credit for time served. We are targeting gangs, and this week the House passed the strongest drug bill in Canadian history.

The Bloc and the NDP oppose this. I can understand why drug dealers and gangsters would oppose that bill, but what is in it for the Bloc and the NDP? That is what I want to know.

\* \* \*

**CANADA-U.S. BORDER**

**Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety will not talk to the Mohawks of Akwesasne about the border crossing controversy he has precipitated. He will not talk to Mayor Kilger of Cornwall. He will not talk to the Government of Ontario.

The only person he will talk to is himself, and despite all the opinion to the contrary, he has convinced himself to move the Cornwall Island border post.

When will the Minister of Public Safety lower his hackles, drop the attitude, pick up the phone and talk to the Mohawks of Akwesasne?

• (1505)

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk going on, not just in this House. In fact, the Canada Border Services Agency has met and spoken with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne close to a dozen times, I think, in the past year to discuss our implementation initiative.

It is an initiative that is intended to protect the safety and security of the travelling public, of the community, and of our border services agents. That is why a decision was taken by this government three years ago to do that at every border crossing in Canada.

We do not think there should be any exceptions. We think that safety and security matter to everyone and we think that every Canadian is entitled to the equal protection of the law.

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**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order regarding an incident that occurred during question period.

During question period the member for Wascana quite clearly accused the Minister of Natural Resources of not telling the truth. Mr. Speaker, you know as well as every member of this place knows that is unparliamentary language.

All of this resulted, of course, from an answer that the Minister of Natural Resources gave indicating, quite correctly, that while the member for Wascana was the minister of natural resources, he did absolutely nothing to inform the public about the problems with the MAPLE reactor.

*Routine Proceedings*

When he accused the Minister of Natural Resources of not telling the truth, he breached protocol seriously in the House. Unparliamentary language is addressed in Marleau and Montpetit on page 525. It is also contained on page 149 of Beauchesne's, which talks about language only being used that would be worthy of this place.

Mr. Speaker, what makes things even more distressing is the fact that the member for Wascana used this language in a direct question. He did not do it in a heckle. He did not do it in a moment of passion. He did it in a deliberate and premeditated mode.

The honourable thing for any member of the House to do when they have been using unparliamentary language is to rise and apologize and withdraw the remarks.

Mr. Speaker, if the member for Wascana does not do that, I would invite you to check the blues and then *Hansard* to confirm what I have just stated.

One way or the other, Mr. Speaker, I will guarantee to the House that the member for Wascana will apologize.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, obviously the government is engaged in deep damage control. It is trying to develop a procedural smokescreen to hide its deficiencies in respect of managing the isotope crisis in this country where it has failed twice abjectly in the last 18 months to safeguard the health and safety of Canadians. That is the issue.

The Conservatives are trying to sling mud and trying to confuse the issue to hide their own defects.

Mr. Speaker, I invite you to check the blues. You will find the language that I chose was very careful and it was not beyond the rules of parliamentary procedure.

**The Speaker:** I have before me at the moment the list of unparliamentary terms in Beauchesne's that the hon. parliamentary secretary referred to. Of course, I would not want to read out the list.

I will check the transcript of the proceedings, as invited by both hon. members, and will come back to the House in due course. There are a number of expressions that are very close to what was used, but none are precisely the same. I will check the record against the list in this book.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1510)

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 22 petitions.

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### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian

delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union concerning its participation at the 118th IPU assembly and related meetings in Cape Town, South Africa, from April 13 to 18, 2008.

Pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union concerning its participation at the United Nations Parliamentary Stakeholder Forum on Official Development Assistance, in Rome, Italy, on June 12 and 13, 2008.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian branch of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) respecting its participation in the seminar of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the meeting of the Parliamentary Affairs Commission of the APF, held in Fribourg, Switzerland, from March 23 to 25, 2009.

\* \* \*

[English]

## COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have three reports of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration to present to the House in both official languages.

The first is the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration entitled "Migrant Workers and Ghost Consultants".

The second is the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration on the disclosure of a confidential draft report. I would like to say a few words with respect to this report by way of a succinct explanation. I wish to put on the record that the committee adopted the ninth report unanimously. The committee deplores such disclosures as interference with the ability of Parliament to function and more broadly with the democratic process.

In debating the report, members from both sides of the House voiced their bitter disappointment that someone, by leaking a draft of what has evolved into the eighth report, wilfully committed an act that is highly corrosive to the good faith that we all know is essential to the orderly operation of the committees of the House. The committee hopes that the House will see fit to deal with this matter should a member raise this as a question of privilege.

The final report which I wish to present to the House, in both official languages, is the 10th report of the Standing Committee on supplementary estimates A, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 13th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, on the 2009-10 supplementary estimates A, vote 15a under Finance, Auditor General.

Furthermore, I present the 14th report on “Chapter 2, Governance of Small Federal Entities” of the December 2008 report of the Auditor General of Canada.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, two reports, one of which is the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics on the certificate of nomination of Karen E. Shepherd, the nominee for the position of Commissioner of Lobbying. Your committee has considered the nomination of the proposed appointment of Karen E. Shepherd as Commissioner of Lobbying and reports its support for her appointment.

I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics on the funding of the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada. The chair has been authorized to table this report in the House to advise the House of a specific motion adopted by the committee wherein the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics notes with deep concern the decisions of the Treasury Board regarding funding for the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada and calls on the government to immediately end its interference in the budget and mandate of the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada by ensuring approval of the full complement of resources requested and recommended by the advisory panel on the funding and oversight of officers of Parliament for the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada.

\* \* \*

● (1515)

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-413, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Labour Code (extension of benefit period for adoptive parents).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that my bill has been seconded by the brilliant member for Hamilton Mountain.

Many people are talking about the fact that so many Canadians do not have access to employment insurance even when they pay into the program. One group that does not have access to the full benefits that we would seek for equality for parents is adoptive parents.

Parents who go through the adoption process make a financial commitment and a wide range of other commitments, including time, to raise the children they have adopted, and yet the Employment Insurance Act still discriminates against them. It does not treat them the same as biological parents.

This bill would amend the Employment Insurance Act and the Canada Labour Code to extend the benefit period for adoptive

## Routine Proceedings

parents so it is the same as already exists under the Employment Insurance Act for biological parents.

It is important to do this. Adoptive parents are making a huge commitment in time and effort to raise their adopted children. We have to make sure we provide the right support in the employment insurance program so that they can get off to the right start with their adopted children.

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

\* \* \*

## INCOME TAX ACT

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-414, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (refundable tax credit for low-income earners).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my fine colleague from Madawaska—Restigouche for seconding this bill.

One of the primary goals of any government is to help those most in need. Sadly, poverty and the poor have received very little attention on the Conservative government's watch. The tragedy is that poverty is a social blight and goes to the heart of people's ability to simply live and care for themselves.

There are too many Canadians who have to make choices between food and medication, rent or clothes. In fact, more people are having to make those decisions in this economic downturn. Poverty is reducing their opportunities to care for themselves and lift themselves out of the poverty trap.

In response to this, my bill introduces the Canadian low income supplement. It would put \$2,000 in the hands of those Canadians who make less than \$20,000 a year. The amount would decline to zero at \$40,000. It would only discriminate on the amount of money people have in their pockets. Seniors, the young, those with families or who are alone would all be included.

This would be real money, tax free, in the hands of those who need it the most. It would put money into the hands of those who are poor. It would limit demands on the public purse. It would not impede our economy. The Canadian low income supplement would help those most in need in Canada.

I hope this bill opens up the very important debate on poverty in Canada so we can implement solutions to help those most in need in our society.

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

\* \* \*

● (1520)

## CANADA MARINE ACT

**Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-415, An Act to amend the Canada Marine Act (City of Toronto) and other Acts in consequence.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am moving, seconded by the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan, a bill to amend the Canada Marine Act to return the Toronto Port Authority to the hands of Toronto city council.

*Routine Proceedings*

The City of Toronto had control of its port, but eight years ago the federal government confiscated the port, took control of it against the wishes of the people of Toronto and the government of Toronto.

Since its inception, the Toronto Port Authority has been rocked by scandal, mismanagement and wasteful spending. It refused to work with the city and other public agencies to revitalize the waterfront. Instead, this rogue agency sued the city and threatened the federal government. Some \$82 million later, this unaccountable port authority has its hand out again asking Canadian taxpayers for millions in subsidies.

For the sake of a clean, green waterfront, it is time to dissolve the Toronto Port Authority and return its assets and the land to the hands of the City of Toronto.

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

\* \* \*

**INCOME TAX ACT**

**Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-416, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (fitness).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Labrador for seconding my bill.

[*Translation*]

It is important to recognize that Canadians need to engage in physical activity in order to stay in shape both physically and mentally. When we think about physical activity, we are not just talking about people of a certain age. All Canadians are entitled to financial assistance for fitness expenses. When we talk about people of all ages, that means both young people and seniors. I had discussions with many seniors in my riding and elsewhere who told me that they were interested in government assistance, in the form of a tax credit, so that they could be physically active.

As we know today, in order to stay young, we need to be physically active. These people urge the federal government to consider introducing a tax credit so that they can receive financial assistance for fitness expenses.

Once again, I thank my colleague from Labrador for seconding this bill. I hope that this House and the government will be aware of the importance to all Canadians of having a fitness tax credit.

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

[*English*]

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. According to the rules surrounding private members' business, if a member wishes to withdraw a bill, he needs the consent of the House. I am therefore asking for the consent of the House to withdraw Bill C-301.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville have the unanimous consent of the House to withdraw this bill?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## FINANCE

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there have been the usual consultations among the parties and I believe you would find consent for the following travel motion. I move:

That, during its consideration of matters pursuant to Standing Order 83.1, the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to adjourn from place to place within Canada and to permit the broadcasting of its proceedings thereon, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

• (1525)

**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:** 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)

\* \* \*

**COMMISSIONER OF LOBBYING**

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the chief government whip said, there have been some extensive consultations among all parties and I have three motions that I would like to deal with today.

The first motion is as follows. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, in accordance with subsection 4.1(1) of the Lobbying Act, Chapter 44 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1985, this House approve the appointment of Karen E. Shepherd as Commissioner of Lobbying.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

**JUDGES ACT**

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my second motion is as follows. I move:



That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians may immediately introduce and propose first reading of a bill entitled “An Act to amend the Judges Act”, following which the said Bill shall be deemed read a second time, referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

I wish to advise that the Journals Branch is in receipt of a royal recommendation for this bill.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Just for the sake of clarification for the record, would the government House leader confirm that this has to do with certain court matters in the province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Jay Hill:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.  
(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

#### JUDGES ACT

**Hon. Chuck Strahl (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-39, An Act to amend the Judges Act.

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

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** Consequently, pursuant to order made earlier today, Bill C-39, An Act to amend the Judges Act is deemed read a second time, deemed referred to a committee of the whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage, deemed read a third time and passed.

(Bill read the second time, considered in committee, reported, concurred in, read a third time and passed.)

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** The hon. government House leader has another motion, I believe?

\* \* \*

#### CANADA CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY ACT.

(Bill C-6. On the Order: Government Orders:)

June 9, 2009—Report stage of Bill C-6, An Act respecting the safety of consumer products—the Minister of Health

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have one last motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, the report stage motion to C-6, An Act respecting the safety of consumer products, standing on the Notice Paper in the name of the Minister of Health, be amended by replacing the words “advise him or her”, in the first paragraph, with the words

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“provide him or her with public advice”; that the motion be deemed adopted as amended; that Bill C-6 be deemed concurred in at report stage with a further amendment; and that the said Bill be ordered for consideration at third reading stage later this day.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

(Report stage Motion No. 1, as amended, deemed adopted, bill, as amended, concurred in)

\* \* \*

#### PETITIONS

##### ANIMAL CRUELTY

**Mr. Francis Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to present two petitions signed by numerous residents of my constituency of Guelph who are seeking federal action to protect animals from cruelty.

Specifically, the petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare and for Criminal Code amendments to protect animals from cruelty.

● (1530)

[*Translation*]

##### CONTAMINATED WATER IN SHANNON

**Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of compassion that I am tabling today a petition signed by some 23,000 people asking the federal government to recognize its responsibility in the matter of the contaminated water on the Valcartier military base, provide compensation to victims, decontaminate the affected sites, identify former residents and employees of the Valcartier military base and inform them that they may have been exposed to contaminated water.

I would like to thank all those people and groups as well as a few members of the Shannon citizens' coalition, including Marie-Paule Spieser, the president, Jean Bernier, the vice-president, and Chantal Mallette, who are on the Hill today and who helped make this petition possible.

I take this opportunity to condemn the Conservative government for its lack of compassion towards the victims affected by the TCE contaminated water and toxic fumes. The matter is not resolved just because they paid for infrastructure to provide citizens with potable water. The minister's answers this afternoon to my question about Shannon's contaminated water have not reassured people. In two months, 23,000 people have shown their compassion for the victims of Shannon's contaminated water. They can say their mission is accomplished. There is solidarity in Quebec on this matter.

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[English]

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present three petitions on behalf of my constituents.

The first one calls on the government to press publicly for a review of NATO nuclear weapons policy with a view to eliminate nuclear weapons and NATO's reliance on nuclear deterrents.

Canada has signed and ratified the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and as such, it is incumbent on the government to work toward the goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

## COSMETIC PESTICIDES

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls on the government for an immediate moratorium on cosmetic pesticides until their use is conclusively proven safe and long-term consequences on human and environmental health are known.

My constituents know that while pesticides may continue to have a role in insect infestation, there is nothing that justifies the use of cosmetics, and they ask the government to enact Bill C-368.

## SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Finally, Mr. Speaker, I present the third petition from my constituents, asking the government to stop the security and prosperity partnership until there is a democratic mandate from the people of Canada, parliamentary oversight and consideration of its profound effect on Canada's sovereignty, and particularly its consequences on Canada's social-economic-environmental well-being.

## PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a petition from over 250 Canadians that calls on Parliament to pass legislation for the protection of human life from the time of conception until natural death.

In fact, this petition directly supports the event that took place on the Hill a few weeks ago, the March for Life, when over 12,000 Canadians gathered on Parliament Hill, once again asking Parliament to show respect for human life throughout all its stages.

## ENERGY

**Hon. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Scarborough East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how much I thank the fact that I am the member for Pickering—Scarborough East and I beat out the member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

I have the honour to present a petition in the House that is written and signed by well over 140 residents of the Toronto-Mississauga-Markham regions of Toronto, of our region in the GTA.

As residents they want to underscore the serious lack of competition and transparency in the energy industry, which has hampered the free market to the detriment of all Canadians. They believe that high fuel prices inflate the price of everything that is purchased, and during a period of economic uncertainty, the devastating impact this is having on the bottom line in our economy as a whole.

They wish to draw to the attention of the government and the House of Commons that many countries around the world have an energy market monitoring agency, and that an energy superpower like Canada needs such an agency.

They, therefore, call upon Parliament to finally acknowledge the high price of fuel and its impact on the economy, reinstate the office of petroleum price information, which was abolished by the government in 2006, as an energy market information service which, like the U.S. energy information agency would produce weekly reports, including all Canadian energy supply-demand inventory and storage information.

They would also finally ask that we begin hearings in the House into the energy sector to determine how the government can foster better competition and provide transparency to the energy market and to eliminate the monopolistic efficiency as a defence clause of the Competition Act, supported by my good colleague from Scarborough—Guildwood.

● (1535)

## ETHIOPIA

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first is regarding the human rights situation in Ethiopia. Bertukan Mideksa was put in prison by the Ethiopian authorities at Christmastime under trumped up charges. She has remained in solitary confinement and has essentially been denied her freedom to act as leader of the opposition in Ethiopia.

The petitioners, who range from across British Columbia, ask Parliament and the government to put pressure on the Ethiopian government to ensure that she is unconditionally released, and that she continues to be able to exercise her function as leader of the major opposition party in Ethiopia.

## SRI LANKA

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I wish to present is regarding the situation in Sri Lanka. It is signed by hundreds of individuals across the country, particularly in southern Ontario.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to use every diplomatic means at its disposal to end the violence in Sri Lanka and ensure full human rights for all the citizens of Sri Lanka, including the Tamil population of northern Sri Lanka.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions from the constituents in beautiful Langley, British Columbia.

The first one says that there are a number of severe, potentially life-threatening conditions that do not qualify for disability programs because they are not necessarily permanent. They are calling upon the House of Commons to enact legislation to provide additional medical EI benefits at least equal to the maternity benefits.

## PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the next petition calls upon Parliament to pass legislation for the protection of human life from the time of conception until natural death.

## FIREARMS REGISTRY

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the last petition says that the long gun registry was originally budgeted for \$2 million, but the price tag is now out of control at an estimated \$2 billion, a decade later. The registry has not saved a single life since it was introduced. The petitioners are calling upon the House of Commons to support legislation that would cancel the Canadian long gun registry.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions. The first petition is with respect to changes to the Employment Insurance Act. These petitioners wish to have the qualifying hours reduced to 360 hours throughout all regions of Canada, to increase the duration to 50 weeks, and to increase benefits to at least 60% of normal earnings in a worker's 12 best weeks.

## SRI LANKA

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second two petitions concern the deteriorating situation in Sri Lanka. These petitioners are very concerned about not only the ceasefire that has occurred but the cessation of hostilities. Just because the shooting has stopped does not mean that the hostilities have stopped. They are looking to have immediate humanitarian relief provided. They believe that there should be free access to the conflict zone by non-governmental organizations and international media.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table two more petitions today that were signed by hundreds of people from all over the Golden Horseshoe in Ontario. The petitioners point out that they have paid into EI all of their working lives, but now that they need the safety net that they themselves built, it is not longer there for them.

Therefore, the petitioners are calling for a comprehensive overhaul of the employment insurance system. Specifically, the petitioners are calling for a standardized 360 hours to qualify, an increased benefit period of at least 50 weeks, the elimination of the two-week waiting period, benefits at 60% of normal earnings based on the best 12 weeks, and a bigger investment in training and retraining.

I am proud to be able to present this petition on behalf of the 363,000 Canadians who have lost their jobs just since the last election in October.

[*Translation*]

## CANADA-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise here today to present a series of petitions all on the same issue.

The petitioners are calling on Parliament to reject the Canada-Colombia trade deal. What is interesting is that people from all parts

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of our beautiful country—literally, from Baie-Comeau to British Columbia—unanimously agree that an agreement with a regime like that of Colombia makes no sense, and that a free, democratic country like Canada should be ashamed.

I therefore present these petitions.

• (1540)

[*English*]

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure people will be pleased to hear from the west coast. I have three petitions.

The first petition is a call to stop the Canada-Colombia free trade deal.

This petition is specifically calling on Parliament to reject the Canada-Colombia trade deal until an independent human rights impact assessment is carried out, the resulting concerns are addressed, and the agreement is renegotiated along the principles of fair trade, which would take environmental and social impacts fully into account, while genuinely respecting and enhancing labour rights and the rights of all affected parties. I want to specifically include the rights of indigenous people in Colombia.

## MIDDLE EAST

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I have calls for a just and enduring peace in Palestine and Israel. The petitioners are calling upon Parliament and the Government of Canada to use its influence with Israel, Palestine, the United States and within the United Nations to work for a just and enduring peace.

## ANIMAL CRUELTY

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the final petition is an important petition. Other members have presented this as a petition to the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare. In this case, they are simply asking for this universal declaration. Of course, we know that the Animal Cruelty Act in Canada is decades old and sadly out of date. It needs some upgrade and the petitioners request that Canada take some action on that.

## CANADA-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present to the House today, which calls on the House of Commons not to proceed with the Canada-Colombia trade deal.

The petitioners are extremely concerned about human rights violations and violence against workers and members of civil society by paramilitary groups in Colombia that are closely connected to the current government and the current president.

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More than 2,200 trade unionists have been murdered since 1991, and there has been a host of violence against Afro-Colombians, human rights activists, workers, farmers, labour leaders and journalists.

The petitioners state that the Colombia trade deal follows a framework similar to NAFTA and that the NAFTA trade deal has not been effective in protecting labour standards, as in the case of Mexico where over one million agricultural jobs have been lost since NAFTA was signed.

The petitioners also state that labour protection and environmental protection are not adequate.

That is why Canada should not proceed with this deal.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, many Canadians have joined the call to stop the Canada-Colombia trade deal.

The petitioners call on Parliament to reject the Canada-Colombia trade deal until an independent human rights impact assessment is carried out, the resulting concerns addressed, and the agreement renegotiated along the principles of fair trade that would take into account environmental and social impacts while genuinely respecting and enhancing labour rights and the rights of all affected parties.

The violence against workers and members of civil society by paramilitaries in Colombia that are closely associated with the current Uribe government have been ongoing, with more than 2,200 trade unionists murdered since 1991, as well as a host of violence committed against indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, human rights activists, workers, farmers, labour leaders and journalists.

The Canada-Colombia so-called free trade agreement was negotiated following a framework similar to the North American free trade agreement—

**The Speaker:** I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but the time for presenting petitions has expired so we will have to move on to other business.

\* \* \*

• (1545)

#### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURN

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 145 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 145—**Mr. Alex Atamanenko:**

With respect to the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program and the AgriStability program in each of the participating provinces and in each of the program years from 2003 to 2007: (a) what were the number of applications received; (b) what were the number of payment files; (c) what was the average of all benefit payments below \$500,000; (d) how many payment files were greater than \$500,000; (e) what percentage of applicants received actual payments; (f) what was the farm type associated with each recipient of a payment of \$500,000 or greater; (g) what was the average reference year margin of all participants by farm type; (h) what

were the contributing reasons for the reduced payment percentage in 2007; (i) what were the contributing reasons for the reduced average reference year margins in 2007; and (j) what was the rationale or intended purpose of implementing the mandatory accrual reference year margin?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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#### MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Notices of Motions for the Production of Papers be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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#### REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

##### MEDICAL ISOTOPES

**The Speaker:** The Chair has a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Winnipeg North. I will now hear her submissions on this point.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on May 25, you ruled against an emergency debate on the medical isotope crisis proposed by my colleague, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley. At the time you emphasized that your decision was applicable to the circumstances at the moment and that you would entertain a further request if conditions changed. Circumstances have certainly changed dramatically, and not for the better.

At the time we had been told that the Chalk River reactor, producing 80% of Canada's medical isotope needs, would be shut down for a month. We are now facing a best-case scenario of more than a three-month shutdown. The result is a crisis in the procurement of supply of isotopes. Service has been reduced to as low as 10% in some communities, and now we are told smaller hospitals across the country will receive no isotopes this week.

Yesterday the head of the Canadian Association of Nuclear Medicine called the situation a catastrophe for the two million nuclear medicine patients in Canada. The medical chief of the nuclear medicine department at a Hamilton hospital warned that if they are unable to deliver 50% of the usual exams, she believes deaths would occur due to the additional strain placed on the health care delivery system.

The government claims we can do more with alternatives, but this is disputed by health professionals, especially in the treatment of children.

The worsening situation is of grave concern and, in my view, begs for an emergency debate as soon as possible so that all members in the House can participate in a dialogue, deliberations and debate on this crisis and propose guidance and solutions to the government of the day.

**The Speaker:** The chair thanks the hon. member for Winnipeg North for her submissions on this point. Certainly there have been a lot of questions on the subject in the last few days and plenty of media coverage.

On the other hand, I note that tomorrow is a supply day. We are nearing the end of the supply period and there are going to have to be a couple of more supply days. This matter could clearly be the subject of debate on these days if the parties within whose allotment the days fall wish to do that.

Therefore, my inclination at this time is that despite the possible concerns in terms of the importance of the issue, which I certainly share with the hon. member, I am not sure that it constitutes an emergency within the provisions of the standing order. I am not inclined to grant the debate at this time for the reasons I have just indicated and given the possibilities for debate on other occasions in the House.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### CANADA CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY ACT

**Hon. Lawrence Cannon (for the Minister of Health)** moved that Bill C-6, An Act respecting the safety of consumer products, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to launch the debate at third reading of Bill C-6, An Act respecting the safety of consumer products.

We heard at second reading that there is strong support in this House for strengthening consumer product safety. This proposed consumer product safety legislation seeks to provide improved oversight of a broad range of products, including toys for our children, and it aims to fulfill a promise made by this government in last November's Speech from the Throne.

To begin, I would like to highlight the legislation's key points. The proposed act focuses on three areas: active prevention, targeted oversight and rapid response.

First, let us talk about active prevention. The act will introduce a general prohibition against the manufacture, importation, advertisement or sale of consumer products that pose an unreasonable danger to human health or safety.

The new legislation will allow Health Canada to address consumer products in Canada that pose an unreasonable danger to the health or safety of the public. Compliance and enforcement will be strengthened through maximum fines of up to \$5 million for some of the worst offences. That is a big step up from the current

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maximum penalty of \$1 million, and this change would put us in step with our major trading partners.

Our government plans to work closely with the industry to ensure changes are understood and properly implemented. Workshops and other information sharing opportunities will be used to promote awareness of the new legislation.

Second, Bill C-6 focuses on targeted oversight. This is especially important for products where the risks may not yet be fully understood or that pose the greatest potential hazard to the public.

The proposed act would give the Minister of Health the authority to order a supplier to conduct safety tests and submit results to the minister. It would also require suppliers to notify Health Canada and, in some cases, its partners through the supply chain of defects or serious product-related incidents, including near miss incidents where injury has been averted.

Finally, this proposed legislation also includes measures to allow for a speedy response to problems once they are identified.

Under the proposed new act, we want to be able to move quickly and decisively to protect the public when a problem occurs. To do so, we need the ability to order recalls of unsafe consumer products and require suppliers to maintain accurate records to enable quick tracking of products that need to be pulled.

To implement these prevention, surveillance and rapid response activities, more consumer product safety inspectors will be hired, creating a more complete safety net for all consumer products. Through Bill C-6, our government is demonstrating its commitment to consumer product safety by proposing action that Canadians want and need.

The amended Bill C-6 we have before us today reflects the extensive analysis of the members of the Standing Committee on Health. Over the past month, the committee heard from government witnesses and 33 other witnesses representing over 24 organizations.

In total there were five separate sessions devoted to review and discussion of Bill C-6, two of which were extended. In these sessions all voices were heard and all opinions were closely considered. The result of the committee's hard work is an amended bill that we think well reflects the underlying policy intent of the bill, as well as some other key aspects of concern to some witnesses.

There were thirteen amendments to the bill, of which six were put forth by the government and seven by the opposition. Government amendments included delivering on a commitment made by the Minister of Health to make it crystal clear that natural health products would not be regulated by this act.

The other government amendments were housekeeping in nature to clarify technical aspects of the bill. For instance, Bill C-6 was amended to specify that documents that a person must retain shall only be retained for six years.

The seven opposition amendments addressed two key areas: consultation and information sharing. The first group of amendments introduced provisions into Bill C-6 to ensure that the Standing Committee on Health would be consulted on foundational regulations that will be created under this new act.

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The government remains committed to moving quickly with proposed regulations and believes that new regulations made under Bill C-6 will benefit from the analysis and advice from the Standing Committee on Health.

• (1550)

The second group of amendments demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that Canadians have the information they need. As such, the standing committee approved an amendment to Bill C-6 to explicitly state that the minister may disclose to the public information about a danger to human health or safety that a consumer product poses.

Finally, at report stage, the House agreed that Bill C-6 should be amended to include provisions for an advisory committee, which would support the implementation of the proposed Canada Consumer Products Safety Act. I thank the hon. member for St. Paul's for this suggestion.

The advisory committee will provide a forum for the exchange of informed views from the full range of experts, building on the skills and knowledge that already exist within the department, and it will provide valuable information on industry trends that may need to be addressed within the legislation or its supporting regulations.

As I conclude, I would like to remind my colleagues that Canada's consumer product legislation is 40 years and has fallen behind other jurisdictions and its update is overdue. By benefiting from a wide diversity of expert views, Canadians can be assured that this government is committed to building as strong and effective product safety regime as possible.

As a result, Bill C-6 will put in place modern safeguards and strong compliance enforcement mechanisms, and Canadian consumers deserve that. With Bill C-6, the government will have the tools it needs to act swiftly and decisively to help protect Canadians. We want there to be a greater incentive for companies to think safety first more than ever before.

We want to level the playing field for reputable companies by having a stronger hammer to bear against peddlers of unsafe goods.

I know all parties in the House support consumer product safety. I believe all members should therefore join me in supporting Bill C-6.

• (1555)

**Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have spoken with some of the members on the other side and I would like to again make the request to withdraw my private member's bill, Bill C-301. Could you seek the consent of the House for that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The member for Yorkton—Melville is seeking unanimous consent to withdraw his private member's bill, Bill C-301. Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Hon. Dan McTeague (Pickering—Scarborough East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Oshawa, the parliamentary secretary, is an individual whom I have learned to work very diligently with in the past. I know his deep commitment to this legislation. If he brings to the health committee his same ability to

make the industry committee work as he did last year, I have no doubt there will be further results for that good member.

It is in that spirit that I want to ask the hon. member something he probably will not find all too different from my line of questioning on committee last week.

It seems to be that the intentions of the bill are certainly there, and many people support this. However, I question whether there is a need for a new bill at all. Could we have simply amended the Hazardous Products Act, which has helped Canadians for the past 40 years? It has certainly been responsible for the kind of changes that were necessary from time to time, particularly as we saw products from around the world that were dangerous in nature and that brought forth concerns about things like product safety, toys, food and so on.

What is in the bill that could not have been done by simply amending the Hazardous Products Act and cause, in effect, a year and half delay, while the government was doing a bit of its own window dressing to make it and package it under something that it could have been originally?

**Mr. Colin Carrie:** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said, we have worked together quite well in the industry committee. I did enjoy his presence at the health committee and the questions he posed.

There are a couple of the things in the bill that we did not have in any other bill. The most important is probably the general prohibition, which is very important today. We have a changing economy, a globalized economy. This allows us to remove unsafe products immediately from the market. With the old bill, we were unable to do this.

We also have AMPs, these monetary penalties in the new bill. The size of the fines have increased. More important, we have a new advisory council.

We heard from stakeholders during the debates in committee. As I said during my speech, the member for St. Paul's brought this very important amendment forward, which will make the legislation even better.

We had a great response during committee from the stakeholders. I am very proud of the legislation and I look forward to all members of the House supporting it.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, our party is pleased the bill has come forward, particularly with the number of amendments we put forward, as well as amendments by other parties, which we thought were useful and also supported.

I hold the concerns of my members on that committee with the delay in moving on a comprehensive system of labelling. Increasingly, day by day, we find that a lot of the products used by Canadians contain very harmful substances.

Could the member advise us on what the government is doing to expedite moving on this? Could he tell us who will be represented on the advisory panel that will be established to look into expediting a comprehensive system of labelling?

*Government Orders*

• (1600)

**Mr. Colin Carrie:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my colleague that labelling was brought up and we found it was a very controversial issue. That is why we put forth the advisory council. With the advisory council, the department has the ability to put forward experts, who are not available within the government, to advise the minister on these very important issues.

I would like to advise her as well that during the consultations and during committee, we found that Canada was applauded for the things we had in place for hazardous substances and for Canada's chemical management plan. We have that in place with the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. I look forward to further results from the bill as it moves forward. The legislation is over 40 years old.

I want to also thank the NDP critic as well as the Bloc and Liberal critics for their co-operation in making this an even better bill.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, following the committee process, I know we are reasonably happy with the final result, although I want to ask the member to give me a better explanation of the whole issue of tobacco.

I understand we proposed removing the unique specific exemption within the Tobacco Act and including it along with the other laws listed in the bill's schedule of exempt legislation. This would have allowed the treatment of tobacco, like other dangerous products, to be changed if future circumstances dictated.

This amendment was voted down along with other proposed amendments to the schedule. One was the grandparenting of existing tobacco products, subject to any new products, to normal health requirements. The other was simply to add the Tobacco Act to the schedule.

Given our concern about the whole issue of smoking and tobacco issues in the House, what are the member's thoughts on this process and why it developed the way it did?

**Mr. Colin Carrie:** Mr. Speaker, the member brings forward a question that we heard several times during consultations in committee.

The bill works with ignition issues, as far as papers, with tobacco, but one of the things we learned in committee was that tobacco was governed under an entirely different act. It is a very unique product and because the government has a specific act for it, it was felt by the majority of committee members that it should be dealt with in this separate act.

The member may be aware of the co-operation we see in committee right now with An Act to amend the Tobacco Act, as far as banning tobacco products that are geared toward children. We had some great presentations yesterday. I think he would agree with me that we are moving forward in tobacco control. With the changes we are putting forward, this will again make Canada a leader in the world.

I look forward to the co-operation of the NDP, like the great co-operation of the critic in putting forth her ideas in improving the Tobacco Act.

**Hon. Dan McTeague:** Mr. Speaker, I know the member will want to continue and perhaps ask questions of those of us who will be speaking in a few moments, but I have one small question for him.

Why would the legislation now proposed not contain within it, at the very minimum, product certification by those who produce, distribute and sell within Canada, a certification which would ensure the authenticity as well as certify the safety of the products, rather than waiting for an accident to happen and then compelling the company, under penalty of law and possibly criminal sanctions, to come forward with that information? It ought to be the obligation of businesses to ensure this is in fact the case, which makes it a lot easier for our enforcement agents to do their jobs.

**Mr. Colin Carrie:** Mr. Speaker, we have different certifications in Canada, for example, the CSA, or the Canadian standards. However, what is really important in the bill is the general prohibition. It allows the government to act immediately to get any products brought into the market off the market regardless of certification. This would occur even before any certification.

As the member knows, when one goes through a certification process, it takes a bit of time. With the general prohibition in the legislation, it allows the Canadian government to act quickly and with certainty. By having it in the bill, it also brings us up to what our trading partners are doing in this regard.

• (1605)

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to support Bill C-6, An Act respecting the safety of consumer products, on which our committee worked collegially for extended hours, having heard testimony from consumer products organizations, to environmental defence organizations, to toy manufacturers and struggled through challenging issues for both consumer health and well-being and for industry.

Reducing risk to human health has been a preoccupation of people, physicians and politicians for the last 5,000 years. Virtually every major advance in public health has involved the reduction or the elimination of risk, with the result being that the world is a safer place today. It is safer from accidents and deadly or incurable diseases and safer from hazardous consumer goods.

Therefore, it is the government's duty to do all it reasonably can to accurately assess and reduce risks, such as making sure that food, medicines and other products are safe. Although government can rarely hope to reduce risks to zero, it can aim to lower them to a more acceptable level and should openly and transparently communicate risk and risk-reduction strategies to the public.

*Government Orders*

The Canadian government introduced Bill C-6 in January 2009 to ensure through regulation that risk is reduced and that Canadians have access to safer consumer products. It is important for members to understand that natural health products will not be regulated under Bill C-6, but rather, under their own regulatory framework, the natural health products regulations under the Food and Drugs Act.

Bill C-6 focuses on three key areas: working to address problems before they happen, through building and improving safety throughout the supply chain; targeting the highest risks through conducting tests upon a minister's orders; and rapid response to protect the public when a problem occurs. The bill is needed as the laws overseeing consumer safety have not been thoroughly reviewed in over 40 years, and chemicals, technology and trade have all changed significantly.

For example, we live in an increasingly chemical society. Toxic chemicals are found in everyday consumer products, including art supplies, kitchenware, personal products, pet food, toys, water bottles and many products intended for babies. It is important for members to understand that over 100,000 chemicals were on the market before the 1980s and an additional 3,000 have been developed since that time. While some hazardous chemicals such as DDT and PCBs are banned, others are still widely used despite the fact that they cause cancer, mutation, or interfere with the body's reproductive function, take a long time to break down, accumulate in the body and are toxic, and have serious and irreversible effects on humans and the environment.

When researchers test the air in our homes, the average reading for volatile organic compounds increases in areas where cleaners are stored. CBC's *Marketplace* showed Pledge registered over 270 parts per billion; and Clorox wipes, over 1,000 parts per billion. Anything over 500 could be a problem for people with sensitivities. Lysol disinfectant spray, however, recorded 1,200 parts per million, a thousand times higher than Clorox.

Bill C-6 is important because it would fill many regulatory gaps and give government the power to issue recalls and raise fines. Companies and their directors, officers and employees may be held criminally liable for contravention and penalized up to \$5 million. Specifically the bill would prohibit the manufacture, importation, advertising and sale of a consumer product that is a danger to human health or safety, is the subject of a recall, or does not meet the regulatory requirements that apply to the product.

● (1610)

The bill would require that all persons who manufacture, import or sell a consumer product for commercial purposes maintain documents identifying from whom they obtained the product and to whom they sold it and provide regulators with all related information once becoming aware of an incident. These mechanisms will help ensure that products can easily be removed from store shelves when a recall is made.

Bill C-6 would also give regulators the power to order manufacturers and importers to conduct tests on a product, provide documents related to those studies, and compile any information required to confirm compliance. The bill would also give inspectors new wide-ranging powers, including the power to order a recall if they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a consumer product is a

danger to human health or safety. These powers may be invoked even when there is a lack of full scientific certainty.

This is a real strength of the bill, as scientific standards for demonstrating cause and effect are extremely rigorous and often time-consuming and substantial damage to humans may result during long testing. For example, many experts strongly suspected that smoking caused lung cancer long before overwhelming proof became available. Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of smokers died waiting for a definitive answer. Thousands of others, however, quit smoking because they suspected, as there were 7,000 articles by 1964, that tobacco probably caused lung cancer.

When a product raises threats of harm to human health, precautionary measures should be taken, even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.

The committee struggled through key questions such as should the bill phase out or ban known carcinogens and other toxic chemicals in consumer products? Science is continually evolving and experts might not always know how dangerous chemicals really are, particularly for children, who are not little adults.

In fact, children have special vulnerabilities to the toxic effects of chemicals, because they are constantly growing. They breathe more air, consume more food, and drink more water than adults in proportion to their weight. They virtually live on the floor. Everything goes into their mouths, and their basic body systems are still developing. Exposure to chemicals at critical stages in their physical and cognitive development may have severe long-term consequences for health.

Priority concerns for children include exposure to air pollutants, arsenic, lead, mercury, pesticides and persistent organic pollutants. Dr. Gideon Koren, a pediatrician at the Hospital for Sick Children, asks:

How can we, as one of the most advanced countries in the world, allow these to enter our household for small children, without the appropriate testing to see that it's safe?



*Government Orders*

In October 2008, Canada became the first country in the world to ban the import and sale of polycarbonate baby bottles containing bisphenol A, or BPA, a chemical used in the lining of canned beverages and food. The chemical mimics estrogen in the body, and researchers have found links between BPA and numerous health problems, including cancer, diabetes, heart disease and metabolic disorders. A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found BPA in the urine of over 90% of Americans tested.

Committee members also explored whether the bill should include a mandatory testing and labelling scheme, whether the government will dedicate the necessary resources to enforce the bill, and whether the bill goes far enough to protect the health of Canadians from toxic imports.

The United Steelworkers remind us that recalls and fines happen after the fact. Canada needs a strategy that repairs trade deals that have led to toxic imports crossing our border in the first place, such as in 2007, when millions of Chinese-made toys were recalled by both the EU and the U.S. The European Commission subsequently identified over 1,600 products that were considered risky.

• (1615)

Other important questions addressed by the committee included what is a safe chemical and a safe threshold, and can cumulative and synergistic effects of exposure be addressed?

A May 2009 study suggests that chemicals, including BPA, pesticides and phthalates, found in many cleaning, cosmetic and food products pose a real and cumulative threat to male fertility, namely feminization of boys in the womb. Prior to this study, demasculinization effects due to chemical pollutants in the environment were reported in many species of wildlife.

While exposure to a single chemical may cause no harm, the cumulative effect could be at least partly to blame for sperm counts falling, by blocking the action of testosterone in the womb.

Richard Sharpe, the researcher, reported:

Because it is the summation of effect of hormone-disrupting chemicals that is critical, and the number of such chemicals that humans are exposed to is considerable, this provides the strongest possible incentive to minimise human exposure to all relevant hormone disruptors, especially women planning pregnancy, as it is obvious that the higher the exposure the greater the risk.

The committee also considered the possibility of a phase-out schedule, what chemicals should be considered, how might a carcinogen be identified, and according to what lists of hazardous chemicals. Will the Globally Harmonized System of the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, or GHS, be available in the future? Would a labelling system make sense, and if so, what products should be labelled and how should they be labelled?

The discussions were fulsome and wide-ranging. Other important questions were, what guidance, if any, does the California Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, otherwise known as Proposition 65, provide? This law requires companies to warn the public of potentially dangerous toxins in food. California has filed lawsuits seeking a range of warnings, including the mercury content of canned tuna and the presence of lead in Mexican candy.

A particular concern to industry is acrylamide, a chemical linked to cancer that forms in starchy foods cooked at high temperatures, such as french fries and potato chips.

The committee also explored what other approaches have been taken to eliminate toxic chemicals in the production process and whether substitution of safer alternatives is required. What do other jurisdictions, such as the European Union, Massachusetts, and now Ontario, have to offer?

A key commitment under the Ontario Toxics Reduction Act is to reduce Ontarians' exposures to toxic substances by requiring businesses that employ 10 or more people and involve 10,000 kilograms or more of specific substances to report and track harmful chemicals and develop pollution prevention plans. The implementation of these plans, like a successful law in Massachusetts, is voluntary.

Bill C-6 is an important step to protecting Canadians and was largely and widely supported by witnesses.

I would, however, like to stress that we cannot continue to repeat the key mistake of the past, namely responding late to early warnings as we did with benzene and PCBs.

Ever since anemia was diagnosed among young women engaged in the manufacture of bicycle tires in the 19th century, benzene was known to be a powerful bone marrow poison. Recommendations made in the U.K. and the U.S. in the 1920s for substitution of benzene with less toxic solvents went unheeded. Benzene-related diseases of the bone marrow continued to increase dramatically through the first half of the 20th century. Benzene was not withdrawn from consumer products in the U.S. until 1978, and this was done by manufacturers on a voluntary basis.

• (1620)

A chief medical inspector of factories wrote in 1934, "Looking back in the light of present knowledge, it is impossible not to feel that opportunities for discovery and prevention of disease were badly missed."

Bill C-6 would significantly improve the product safety regime in Canada, which would translate into improved health and safety for Canadians. Product safety is in everyone's best interest and everyone has a role to play, Canadians, government and industry.

*Government Orders*

A relevant lesson from history is that animal slaughterhouse wastes were recycled into animal feed since the beginning of the 20th century. In the mid-1970s the U.S. department of agriculture decided that carcasses of sheep afflicted with the disease scrapie should not be used in animal or human foods. Tragically, the U.K. government decided that its industry should be left to decide how its equipment should be operated. It was not until 1996 that processing standards were introduced.

In the United States government oversight and relatively inexpensive restrictions may have prevented the mad cow epidemic. In the United Kingdom industry self-policing provided ideal conditions for the development of the progressive fatal disease that affects the brain.

How many chemicals are therefore currently on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act's environmental registry? How many of these have been comprehensively tested for any risks to ecosystems and people? What is the projected timeline for testing untested chemicals?

Members should think about what chemicals they are exposed to each and every day, from washing their hands to brushing their teeth to shampooing their hair to eating their breakfast cereal. What timeline for testing for toxicity, longevity in the environment and bio-accumulation in our bodies is acceptable?

Going forward, the question that begs to be asked is this. What world do we want 25 years from now, in 2034? It is my fervent hope that Bill C-6 is the beginning of a dialogue with Canadians with regard to what chemicals we are exposed.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate my colleague from Etobicoke North on her excellent speech and on the wonderful work she did in committee on Bill C-6.

During the entire process of the committee's examination of the bill, I had questions about the number of inspectors that will be on the ground to conduct verifications. As we have seen in many other areas under federal jurisdiction, the serious shortage of inspectors has drawn attention to the many gaps and shortfalls in the verifications carried out by those inspectors.

I would therefore like to know how my colleague, and the entire Liberal Party, sees this adjustment in the number of inspectors.

[*English*]

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague and friend who has worked very hard in committee, asking very probing questions.

Inspection is very important. It is a tremendous part of enforcement. Part of what the bill would do is ask that industry self-identify so if there were a problem, industry would come forward. That will be part of the enforcement.

•(1625)

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her very thoughtful presentation on what is a very critical bill. I may have missed it, but she may have specifically spoken to the precautionary principle,

which is supposed to be the underlying principle of all our environmental health laws in Canada. It is a principle that we have signed on to through the United Nations.

It is incumbent upon the government to take intervening action and not wait. As an environmental lawyer, after waiting many years and giving the power to recall, I would like the member comment on two things.

First, should the government perhaps give more attention to asserting its powers to intervene and preclude the sale or use of certain products in Canada to prevent the introduction?

Second, as I understand with a lot of these products, while a lot of them can harm humans who are intended to use them, there is a sidebar further impact when these substances enter into the environment and previously unthought of or perhaps not assessed impacts occur to our ecosystems.

Could she comment on those two issues and does she think the bill has adequately addressed those matters?

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree that the precautionary principle has to be front and centre in the legislation, and it does occur in the preamble.

The example I used was that there were 7,000 articles on tobacco by 1964. Some people did show precaution and they stopped smoking. Therefore, the precautionary principle does have to be front and centre.

Regarding the banning of chemicals, it was something at which the committee looked very carefully. There were a lot of questions regarding carcinogens, neurotoxins and hormone interruption. I come back to what I talked about in my speech, that we were the first country to ban BPA.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member has made a very interesting speech once again in the House, but I see one of the big deficiencies of Bill C-6. The labelling of consumer products containing hazardous materials has been more or less left out of the bill.

That, in addition to the whole area of enforcement, which I have a lot of suspicions the government will not be overly strong on the enforcement side of the bill, caused me to have great concerns about the bill, regardless of the fact that we plan to vote for it and support it.

Does the member share those concerns about the whole issue of labelling and how might we look to the future to ensure the bill gets enforced properly so we catch problems before they become huge problems?

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member brought up two issues. One was labelling and the other was enforcement.

*Government Orders*

Labelling was a key discussion throughout the committee hearings. We have to decide which chemicals are important. There was tremendous discussion around carcinogens, neurotoxins and other chemicals. What lists would we use? Would we use IARC? There was difficulty coming to agreement on this. What is important is we have started those conversations and I think those conversations will continue.

On the hon. member's second point, enforcement is key in any bill. Part of this enforcement is requiring that business self-identify. The government has increased the penalties to up to \$5 million.

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on labelling as well. I understand that it was discussed extensively at committee. In fact, the member for Winnipeg North had proposed some amendments that would deal with a comprehensive system of labelling consumer products. It was defeated at the committee, but the government did indicate that labelling would be the priority of the new advisory panel expected to be set up through a government amendment.

Could the member comment specifically on whether this advisory panel will do the work for which Canadians have asked?

Canadians want appropriate consumer labelling on consumer products. They want to know what they are purchasing. They want to know what the impact will be to their families. I know in this case we are talking about hazardous products, but when I was on the health committee in the past, we were also talked about labelling genetically modified organisms, for example.

Could the member comment on what she thinks is critical for this advisory panel and whether she thinks this is a good first step?

• (1630)

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, it is very encouraging that we have an advisory panel for the bill. We recently passed Bill C-11, which is around biosafety and biosecurity. At that time, we also called for a scientific advisory group, experts in the field who would have the best judgment to suggest which viruses and bacteria belonged in what schedules. Having the advisory panel go forward on this bill will allow the experts to continue this good work.

On her second point, yes, Canadians are very interested in labelling. Recent studies suggested 90% to 95% would like to see labelling and right to know.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question with regard to children's products. A couple of amendments that would have provided more consumer choice were brought forward in committee, but they were defeated.

As a parent, I have discovered that some of the toys I have purchased for my children were made with inappropriate chemicals and substances, which were supposed to be banned in the first place. Would specific amendments have been more appropriate?

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan:** Mr. Speaker, child safety has to be paramount. Children cannot buy their own products, so we have to provide safe consumer products for them. As an example, Canada was the first country to remove BPA.

Recently we had problems with 1,600 products from China. Child safety was certainly a key point of discussion in committee. There was strong support from children's safety organizations. It is important we continue to push to do better. Chemicals need to be banned from children's products.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, Aboriginal Affairs; the hon. member for Random—Burin—St. George's, Employment Insurance.

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate all members of the Standing Committee on Health, on which I sit, for all their work on this bill.

I believe this is proof that, when we have a good bill, one that is well drafted and one we can work on, when the amendments proposed by the opposition are adopted by the majority, and when the committee operates under good discipline, all of these elements move things along even more quickly and solid common sense always prevails. That is what has led to the bill we have before us which will have the support of the Bloc Québécois, the NDP, the Liberal Party and the government, or so I understand. That same solid common sense is what makes me a sovereignist.

Getting back to Bill C-6, according to an Auditor General's report, the government had known since at least 2006 that the current legislation, the legislation amended by Bill C-6, did not protect the public properly.

It was not until the incident in the summer of 2007, when toys containing lead were recalled, that the government indicated its intention to amend this legislation. Three months later, it made the official announcement of its action plan to ensure food and consumer product safety.

At that time, the Bloc Québécois had called on the minister to tighten up safety requirements for dangerous products so the manufacturing, promotion and marketing of any product that might present an unacceptable risk or be harmful to health could be banned.

We also called upon Ottawa to put the burden on manufacturers to inspect their products and prove that they are not hazardous to consumer health and safety. This is included in the amended Bill C-6.

We also insisted that the approach taken by the government should not put the industry wholly in charge of the safety of consumer products, thereby leaving the public's health in their hands.

One of the amendments I proposed called for beefed-up financial and human resources in order to ensure there would be enough inspectors to enforce the law that Bill C-6 will eventually become.

*Government Orders*

This bill is a good one and is based on fine principles. We all agree with this bill in principle. However, the problem we come up against every time is the number of inspectors. The Bloc Québécois often raised this issue in committee, because if we implement this bill without having the necessary inspectors or the financial and human resources that are needed, it could quickly become useless.

The Bloc Québécois succeeded in getting an amendment through calling for beefed-up human and financial resources so that the law is properly enforced.

We cannot leave it up to the industry to regulate and manage itself. That could create problems. It is not that we assume that any industry is acting in bad faith, but a company could unfortunately make a mistake in its data or in its research on toys, food or something else.

We want to ensure that the government makes good on a promise it has made many times but unfortunately never kept. It was to ensure that it had enough inspectors.

In committee, we heard from Mr. Burns, vice-president of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada. He told us essentially the same thing: if we do not have enough inspectors to enforce the law, the bill will do absolutely nothing.

The Auditor General had also pointed out that Health Canada did not have enough inspectors to do the work properly. Her findings were consistent with what Mr. Burns said and the questions I repeatedly asked in committee.

Even though the bill requires that companies ensure that products are harmless, the government will have to ensure that there are enough inspectors, as I said.

• (1635)

We support Bill C-6 as amended. I would like to provide some background. This bill is the old Bill C-52, which was tabled on April 8, 2008, and passed at second reading in May 2008. It is part of the food and consumer safety action plan, which the Conservative government announced on December 17, 2007. Budget 2008 allocated \$113 million over two years to implement the plan. We have yet to see what kind of structure will be put in place and whether more people will be hired to ensure consumer product safety.

Currently, the federal government's primary legislative instrument regulating consumer product safety is the Hazardous Products Act, which was enacted in 1969. Over the past 40 years, technology and inspection systems have advanced tremendously in the industry, Health Canada and the federal government. The new Bill C-6 has come not a moment too soon and may in fact be a little too late. The government could have done a course correction a long time ago. Unfortunately, frequent elections have killed various bills, including Bill C-52, which was at second reading.

Part I of the Hazardous Products Act deals with regulated consumer products or those prohibited from being advertised, sold or imported into Canada. Some 30 products and categories of products are regulated, including toys, chemical products and about 25 other prohibited products, such as baby walkers, lawn darts with elongated tips, and products containing toxic materials, such as jequirity beans,

which contain a resin-like toxin. The manufacture, import and sale of these products may also be regulated and restricted by other laws.

Bill C-6 repeals Part I of the Hazardous Products Act and replaces it with:

At present, in the event that a consumer product that is not regulated or prohibited poses a health or safety risk, it is up to industry to voluntarily issue and manage a product recall. The federal government's authority in this regard is limited to issuing a public warning and, in the event that it is deemed necessary, subsequently taking steps to regulate or prohibit the product under the HPA.

Bill C-6 appears to tighten up the safety requirements for hazardous products. It creates prohibitions with respect to the manufacturing, importing, selling, advertising, packaging and labelling of consumer products, including those that are a danger to human safety. It also makes manufacturers and importers accountable, and requires them to ensure that their product is not a danger to human health and safety.

However, although clauses 7 and 8 are more strict concerning the responsibilities of manufacturers, importers and anyone selling similar consumer products, clause 6 refers to requirements set out in the regulations. Clause 6 states:

No person shall manufacture, import, advertise or sell a consumer product that does not meet the requirements set out in the regulations.

So, just how some of the requirements for consumer products will be tightened up will be stipulated in the regulations, but the committee will not have any details.

Still, we believe that the government is acting in good faith, and as proof we have the creation of an advisory committee on labelling, for example. It is now in the hands of the government, which plans on discussing with the opposition parties how the issues of labelling and potentially hazardous products will be referred to the committee. We are putting our faith in the government on this. It is very rare, but in the case of the advisory committee on Bill C-6, we are going to give them a chance.

• (1640)

The bill defines an "article" as a consumer product, which is a product, including its components, parts or accessories that may reasonably be expected to be used for non-commercial purposes, including for domestic, recreational and sports purposes. This definition naturally also includes its packaging, any object used to manufacture, import, package, sell, label, test or transport a consumer product or advertise it, or the documents pertaining to these activities or any consumer product.

*Government Orders*

The bill contains five measures to reverse the burden of proof regarding safety. First, let us examine the safety of consumer products. At present, there is no constraint whatsoever imposed upon manufacturers or importers. They do not have to demonstrate that their products pose no danger or threat to consumer safety. Bill C-6 proposes to reverse this burden of proof and to impose it on manufacturers in future, under the supervision of federal inspectors from Health Canada and other departments.

The bill suggests that manufacturers and importers of consumer products will be required to test their products for safety on a regular basis and, significantly, to disclose the results of these tests. As I mentioned earlier, we cannot allow only the manufacturers to examine these tests. Far be it from me to doubt their good faith, but independent government inspectors should conduct surprise tests from time to time. It is extremely important to me that we ensure that the studies are conducted properly and that there are no irregularities in these reports. I would have to say that, in the committee proceedings, based on what I heard and the questions I asked of Option consommateurs representatives—who were very well received and kindly answered our questions—and businesses or groups of businesses, having surprise inspections did not pose a problem. Many companies encouraged us to do so and to have enough inspectors, as did Mr. Burns, the vice-president of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.

Inspectors need to be given greater authority. As I have already indicated, the Auditor General stated in a report that in order to ensure that this bill is implemented and effective, inspectors on the ground will have more powers when Bill C-6 comes into force. For that to happen, consumer products will have to be subject to recall or a licensing amendment. These inspectors will be the means to enforce this bill's most important provisions. However, such an increase of duties and responsibilities can raise a certain number of concerns and questions, which is why we hope to pass an amendment to ensure more human and financial resources

Bill C-6 also gives the minister new powers concerning recalls. At this time, health authorities do not have the power to recall consumer products found to be dangerous. Recalls are issued on a voluntary basis by manufacturers and importers themselves. Bill C-6 corrects the inadequacy in the current legislation. That is why we want this bill to pass quickly, since at this time, industries recall products on a voluntary basis, and that goes for toys and all other consumer products. We must ensure that the minister has the means to recall products herself, instead of simply leaving it in the hands of the companies.

Bill C-6 would give the minister the power to recall any products that are defective or endanger consumer safety. However, the regulations will stipulate the requirements and the conditions under which the minister can act.

Stricter punitive measures will also provide a greater deterrence. The fines imposed on manufacturers were usually around \$5,000. Now, with Bill C-6, an offence could lead to a fine of up to \$5 million and the guilty party could face up to two years in prison.

• (1645)

Issuing a \$5,000 fine to a company that might make millions or billions of dollars a year is rather laughable, especially when we are

talking about safety, and we could jeopardize the safety or even the lives of the youngest members of society: our children.

We have already seen extremely hazardous products with lead toys. A simple \$5,000 fine means nothing to these large and multinational companies. I think that it is an excellent idea to make the fines higher.

With a fine of \$5 million and the possibility of imprisonment, at least companies will pay much more attention during their research, to ensure that products will not cause problems, as well as during recalls.

Bill C-6 proposes the creation of a system for preparing and maintaining documents, similar to a product traceability system. The bill states:

13. (1) Any person who manufactures, imports, advertises, sells or tests a consumer product for commercial purposes shall prepare and maintain

(a) documents that indicate

(i) in the case of a retailer, the name and address of the person from whom they obtained the product and the location where and the period during which they sold the product, and

ii) in the case of any other person, the name and address of the person from whom they obtained the product or to whom they sold it, or both, as applicable.

(b) the prescribed documents.

(2) The person shall keep the documents at their place of business in Canada or at any prescribed place and shall, on written request, provide the Minister with them.

(3) The Minister may, subject to any terms and conditions that he or she may specify, exempt a person from the requirement to keep documents in Canada if the Minister considers it unnecessary or impractical for the person to keep them in Canada.

This requirement to keep the product provenance documents for a set period as determined by our studies in committee will make it possible to quickly trace merchants who are in possession of the product, as well as its origin. What is more, should an incident arise concerning this product, in Canada or anywhere else in the world, the manufacturer or importer has an obligation to notify the minister.

Returning to the text of the bill:

14(2) A person who manufactures, imports or sells a consumer product for commercial purposes shall provide the Minister and, if applicable, the person from whom they received the consumer product with all the information in their control regarding any incident related to the product within two days after the day on which they become aware of the incident.

I am getting the two minute signal, but I could have gone on for hours. I will just say quickly that we examined similar legislation on the international level. We checked with companies in committee. So we did a good job.

I would like to congratulate the chair of our committee for her extraordinary job of keeping us on track. Not that the members of the Liberal Party, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP are an unruly lot, far from it. She did, however, do an excellent job of making sure everything moved quickly and in an orderly manner. Once again, my congratulations to her on that.

I also wanted to point out that we have worked extremely hard, we listened to both consumers and businesses, and I believe we have here an excellent bill, which, as amended, will receive the assent of the entire House.

*Government Orders*

•(1650)

[English]

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all the members of the committee and certainly the member for Repentigny. He contributed in a major way to the success of this bill, and I want to thank him for that.

Clearly, by raising the strength of our product safety system up to the level of our major trading partners, we are safeguarding the marketplace against the risk of becoming a dumping ground for substandard products.

In his speech, the member for Repentigny pointed out some very important aspects of the bill that strengthened what the committee was trying to find out.

I believe that we have created an ideal package of consumer protection by combining measures to improve prevention, monitor high-risk products, and act swiftly if a dangerous product enters the country.

Would the member for Repentigny please outline some of the very important aspects of the bill that would very greatly improve the safety of our products here on Canadian soil?

[Translation]

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour:** Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier in the debate, this bill is extremely important, in that it puts us on an equal footing with our trading partners, to prevent dumping in Canada. Before I conclude, I looked at the regulations in other countries, including European Union countries that had laws similar to Bill C-6, although it is one of the most advanced pieces of consumer product safety legislation in the world, and we are proud of that.

It is therefore extremely important, as my Conservative colleague said, that we be on a more or less equal footing and that our regulations be consistent with international regulations so that Canada is not used as a dumping ground.

•(1655)

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we are simply deluding ourselves if we think that the free market is going to self-regulate. Clearly, voluntary measures do not work. The banks in the United States could not regulate themselves. The financial services sector in the United States went through a whole deregulation process and we saw what happened when regulations are stripped away and supposedly have a free market operate to the benefit of the public.

Just two years ago the government, for example, passed legislation requiring all-inclusive pricing by the airlines in Canada, meaning that rather than advertising a price of \$99 for a flight from Vancouver to Montreal, the full cost had to be provided. Parliament passed that legislation over two years ago and still the Conservative government has not implemented that legislation.

Last September the airlines agreed in Canada to the flights rights proposals of the former minister of transport. They voluntarily limited tarmac delays to 90 minutes. Guess what? Only three months later, they were holding passengers hostage for eight hours on the tarmac.

Why does the member think that without proper labelling legislation in this bill and other tough requirements—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The hon. member for Repentigny.

[Translation]

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour:** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that my colleague still feels so strongly about the bill on air travel that he introduced in this House during the session. I can honestly say that I agree completely with what my NDP colleague said. As I mentioned several times during my speech, we cannot let companies regulate themselves. Even with no bad faith or ill will on the part of the companies, having independent government inspectors would ensure that the studies conducted by these companies are valid.

That is the main reason I fought in committee to ask questions of the Professional Institute of the Public Service, companies, Option consommateurs, lobbies and consumer advocacy groups, so that the government understood the message that we have a serious shortage of inspectors. That is why we succeeded in getting through an amendment to the bill, with the government's support, calling for beefed up financial and human resources. I hope that the government will comply with this act and not do as it has done in the case of most of its legislation, which is fail to comply with it.

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague from Repentigny for sharing his knowledge of Bill C-6 and for his hard work on this file. I have a question for him.

Other countries have similar laws, but inspectors from other countries go to countries of origin to inspect products before they are exported. Does Bill C-6 provide for the same kind of inspection before consumer goods leave the countries in which they were made? After all, if products are found to be unacceptable and polluting after they arrive here, they will end up in our landfills, where they will continue to pollute our water tables, among other things. Is there some way to conduct inspections before these products are exported, before foods leave their countries of origin?

•(1700)

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Brome—Missisquoi. It is clear that he cares about the environment, like all other Bloc Québécois members. I would like to thank him for all the good work he has done on this file over the years.

*Government Orders*

Unfortunately, I have to say that there is no mechanism to institute inspections in countries where products are made. My colleague's concern is absolutely justified. I completely agree with him. It will now be up to the government and the advisory committee to take aggressive action to ensure that we will not be importing troublesome products that will pollute our water tables and harm our wildlife.

[English]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the issues over disclosure by the minister was reintroduced. There was an NDP and a Bloc motion that brought that back. Perhaps the member could briefly discuss the issue of ministerial disclosure and why it is important. It was part of Bill C-52, the precursor to this bill, and is now part of this bill.

[Translation]

**Mr. Nicolas Dufour:** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I had not yet been elected when Bill C-52 was before the House. However, I have to say that we worked very hard with the NDP to ensure that some of the clauses in Bill C-52 were included in Bill C-6, and most of the amendments were passed.

[English]

**Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (Winnipeg North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak at third reading on a very important bill that has seen a very thorough process throughout the House.

[Translation]

I would like to thank my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois for their work on the amendments. I would also like to point out that all the parties were able to work together on this very important bill. It has truly been a process of cooperation and we have made many important changes to this bill.

[English]

Bill C-6 has been identified as a key concern over a number of parliamentary sessions and a number of governments. Promises were made to change the Hazardous Products Act and other related legislation to bring them up to the 21st century, so that we would be truly in line with consumers' thinking about what is appropriate when it comes to consumer safety and health protection. This legislation has been a long time coming.

This legislation is not perfect. We wish it had much more in terms of teeth and much more emphasis on the precautionary principle. We in the NDP believe that the most significant thing government can do in this day and age is to bring in legislation that follows the do no harm principle, that ensures that all products, whether children's toys or household cleaners or consumer gadgets, are safe beyond a reasonable doubt.

That is quite different than the risk management model which says consumers should be warned that a product is not necessarily safe, and if they run into problems and that information is brought forward to government, it might deal with it.

The bill moves a bit toward the precautionary principle but only with baby steps. It could have gone a lot further. The precautionary principle stops in the whereas' of the bill.

I am not going to dismiss this legislation because we in the NDP are going to support it. We are going to support it because we think it is important, it is long overdue, and we have made some changes to make it better. Unfortunately, we did not get all of our changes.

Many of the groups that worked so hard on the bill were disappointed. I am thinking in particular of the Environmental Defence, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the Canadian Cancer Society, three groups that worked tirelessly on the bill and worked with all members of health committee. These groups informed us, taught us, proposed amendments, made suggestions, and educated us. We learned a great deal from them. I am very grateful for the major role that they played throughout the legislative process.

In the end we were forced to concede to changes that were fairly small in nature, but significant at least in terms of finding some way down the road to protect Canadians, even if they do no harm principle was not firmly entrenched in every aspect of the bill.

We did that by ensuring, and this is where I want to take some credit on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, an amendment in the bill that requires the bill, once it is passed, to come back to both the House of Commons and the Senate for scrutiny in terms of regulations.

There will be a chance to provide some kind of oversight once the government begins to find ways to implement a legislative initiative that is so vital and so important in terms of the health and well-being of Canadians.

We are also pleased to support an amendment proposed by the Liberals which would add an advisory committee to the gambit of tools available to the government. With the assistance of the government, members of the committee, and the whole House, we saw that the amendment was included with a royal recommendation and is now part of the bill. That was another indication of cooperative work on the part of all of us.

That means there will be a body of experts who will devote themselves to furthering the broad principles of the bill and will try to apply the precautionary principle, the do no harm principle, in more ways than is apparent at present.

The bill has certainly been noted for many significant reasons. It has very substantive recall provisions with significant punishments attached. I do not want to underestimate the significance of those provisions.

Over the last number of years we on this side of the House have raised numerous concerns with the present government and the Liberal government before it about unsafe products on the market.

● (1705)

For years we have been dealing with lead in children's toys and phylates in plastics that are put in the mouths of babies and children, which are toxic, dangerous and cause very serious life-threatening debilitating problems.

*Government Orders*

We are pleased that the government has provided for a way to ensure that once we have identified serious problems, action can be taken. I think we will all agree that the problem with this bill is that it is not readily apparent how action will be taken and products that are problematic in the first place are identified.

We did not get an amendment in this legislation that lists hazardous products. We did not get, as the Environmental Defence, the David Suzuki Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society wanted, a provision in this bill that would ensure that all products with hazardous substances would be listed in this legislation, and they would be labelled accordingly.

In that way there would be some certainty for all Canadians that even if the government did not take steps to ban a product, remove a product, or recall a product, at least consumers would know what substances were in that particular product. If they believed that there was enough science to be of concern for usage of that product, then they could at least take personal responsibility.

That was a very important contribution to the process throughout this bill. All of the organizations I have mentioned, time and time again, pointed out just how important it would be for us to take those lists of carcinogens and hormone-disrupting and endocrine-disrupting substances, toxins and chemicals and list them, and have them denoted and labelled, including the labelling of all products.

We did not get those amendments, and there was certainly major disappointment. Now, our job is to ensure that the government lives up to its commitment to say that if we can prove that something is a problem in terms of health and safety then the government will take action. Well, we will hold it to that, and we will try every step of the way to remind it of those obligations.

I hope that through the advisory committee and through the reporting back to this House, we will have some extra checks in place.

Suffice it to say, this bill falls short of where some of the international community is at with respect to very dangerous chemicals and substances. The European Union has in fact taken the steps of listing all such carcinogens, hormone disrupters, and dangerous chemicals and toxins, and is moving toward a phased-in process of labelling.

That is something this country cannot avoid. In the long run we will have to do the same. It is too bad because this bill should have been the ultimate, having waited for 40 or 50 or 60 years, in improving the Hazardous Products Act. This should have been the moment when we actually did a perfect job and produced legislation that was the best in the world. We fall short of that objective and we will now have to play some catch up.

I want members to know that I believe the obligation will be on this House and all members of Parliament to push that envelope, to advance that agenda. We have to make sure that in the end we have in fact delineated all such toxic substances and provided consumers with the information that they need to make responsible decisions.

We have to follow the right to know principle. There is no way around it in this complex world with so many dangerous substances and so much technological development. With such rapid change all

around us, at the bare minimum we have to at least ensure that consumers are made aware of the necessary information.

It came as a shock to us to have some witnesses come before our committee and say that this would be too complicated, too much, that consumers would be overloaded, not able to choose, and would end up making the wrong decisions and would be too confused.

As we said back to those witnesses, consumers are on top of the ball. They are certainly advanced in terms of understanding and are looking to government to provide them with the information so they can make responsible decisions.

• (1710)

Consumers are looking for safe food, drugs, water, products, toys, pharmaceuticals and medical interventions. They expect the government to ensure that all of the products we have to take and need for our health and well-being are safe beyond a reasonable doubt.

I must say that we did accomplish something that was important in terms of the natural health community. Early on, the forces in this community, those people who produce, manufacture or use natural health products, rose up and said that they felt that there was no place in this legislation for those products. They said that we had to differentiate between consumer products and natural health products. The government listened and we certainly pressured it to do so. It agreed to amend the bill so that nothing about the bill would have any bearing on natural health products.

However, it did raise an interesting dilemma for the government. It showed that we have a third regulatory mechanism by which we deal with natural health products in this country that is failing. Small businesses that produce and sell these natural health products are coming to the government on a constant basis, demanding some action to improve the process and reduce the backlog.

The government itself has suggested that there is a deadline of 2010 by which all consumer and natural health products must be through the process, receive their DIN number, and be licensed or else sent back for further research. As things now stand, there are something like 36,000 applications before the government and no sign of that diminishing. Never mind the backlog. With the number of applications that have come in on a daily basis, a significant number have not been dealt with and have been added to the backlog.

The problem is only getting worse. Many of the groups, including the Canadian Health Food Association, have called on the government to start to get a handle on this and live up to its promise to end the backlog and to say whether or not this 2010 deadline means anything. If the government is not anywhere close to meeting its obligations to deal with all products by that time, they would prefer that the deadline be changed.

They would prefer more cooperative work to be done between the natural health food industry, retailers, consumers and the government to ensure that proper regulatory measures are taken to approve products and not simply to deal with the backlog by getting rid of and denying applications, which seems to be the pattern.



*Government Orders*

The government seems to be saying that it is going to deal with the backlog and it is doing it by denying more applications than not. It thereby reduces the backlog in a most unfortunate way, without the science, evidence of effectiveness or the true test of whether or not any of these products are falsified or not accurate in terms of their description and identification.

That is a problem that emerged from these discussions. It must be dealt with and it must be dealt with before the government even begins to think about reintroducing Bill C-51, which had amendments to the Food and Drug Act. We know the uproar that happened last year and the year before about natural health products. We know that there were hundreds and thousands of letters, emails, meetings, faxes, individuals speaking up, rallies and demonstrations about the government's inappropriate approach with respect to natural health products.

The message for the government is to get its act together on this because it is only going to come back and be haunted if it does not. We have to find a way to treat natural health products as a separate category, not as a food, drug or consumer product, but as a unique product that is important for Canadians and contributes a great deal to the health and well-being of Canadians.

I have said enough on that. Let me now go to the question of a government that introduces legislation that says it is concerned about consumer products and safety and yet, at the same time, cuts back in its latest budget a heck of a lot of money that is supposed to ensure a national office for workplace hazardous materials information systems, otherwise known as WHMIS.

• (1715)

This is an important office, which ensures there is a centre in government, a focal point for assessing and providing information around health and safety in terms of materials that are dealt with in the workplace and ensuring that all workers are given the benefit of information about hazardous materials they work with, that there is active international right-to-know legislation before them, that there is a global classification system that includes all the previously identified dangerous chemicals, not leaving some out because of pressure from the industry.

This cutback amounts to about \$2.6 million over two years. The Canadian Labour Congress and other national labour organizations have clearly indicated that this cutback will eliminate the national office. It will totally cut back the focal point within Health Canada to ensure that WHMIS has an active national office. It is a serious cutback and it flies in the face of all the government's talk about wanting the best possible legislation for ensuring consumer safety and protection for all Canadians, no matter where they work or what kinds of jobs they are doing for our economy.

I urge the government to reconsider that cutback and to sit down with some of the trade unions and labour movements and talk about what is needed to ensure workplace health and safety and to ensure that there is active right-to-know legislation and a regulatory process in this country. Otherwise, we will have done a great disservice to workers. We will have denied their right to work in safe conditions and ensure the risks they take are minimized as much as possible.

In response to a question I asked in the House, the government announced last week that it was finally going to eliminate all lead and phthalate products beyond certain trace levels from the market. We applaud that move, but that has come about 12 years after we started raising this issue.

In almost the first year that I was elected as a member of Parliament to this place, we started raising the question of phthalates. I remember holding press conferences with samples of baby toys, teething rings, rubber ducks, plastic knapsacks and umbrellas, which kids put in their mouths, that are made of phthalates and that were then demonstrated to be dangerous in terms of the health and well-being of babies and children.

Some 12 years later, we finally have a government that is acting. Good for it for finally doing so, but what the heck took so long? Why did it take so long with lead as well? I raise these issues because if that is the pattern, it does not bode well for the application of Bill C-6, the very legislation we are dealing with at this moment. It very much depends on the will of government, the intentions of politicians and the acceptance of scientific data.

The government continues to drag its feet and ignore the science, as it is doing right now with bisphenol A. It bans bisphenol A when it comes to baby bottles but not other products. A lot more must be done to ensure that substances are identified so that products can be banned if they are dangerous beyond a reasonable doubt, so that Canadians can live with the notion that everything on the market is safe beyond a reasonable doubt.

• (1720)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by recognizing the efforts of the member for Winnipeg North, who has done a very thorough job. She is very tenacious in her efforts to improve the lives of all Canadians.

She is correct in pointing out the shortcomings of this bill, one of which is the lack of labelling on products containing hazardous materials. It is obvious that we should be putting that in any type of bill. Can anyone imagine not having a labelling process that points out what hazardous materials are in products? It seems to me to be a basic starting point.

We will have to watch the government carefully to make sure it does not ignore the enforcement of its own legislation. I would like to ask the member whether she trusts the government to follow through on the aspects of this particular bill.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the member for Elmwood—Transcona, for his work on consumer products and advocacy for consumer rights.

In fact, we had numerous amendments proposed by many of the informed experts in this field, and we tried to advance those amendments through the legislative process.

*Government Orders*

I again want to thank members of those organizations for their diligence on this front. I think about Aaron Freeman of Environmental Defence, Lisa Gue with the David Suzuki Foundation, Rob Cunningham and Claire Checkland with Canadian Cancer Society, Anu Bose with Option consommateurs, Cynthia Callard with Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada, Ondina Love with the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists, Ken Neumann with the United Steelworkers, Richard Kinar with the Brain Injury Association of Canada and many others who worked hard getting information to us and who proposed amendments.

We tried to convince the government to do some sort of labelling requirement in this bill, and it was rejected.

We tried to get substances within products listed so we are looking at this in terms of the chronic issues that emerge from dangerous substances, not just whole products like a poisonous bottle of whatever, but those substances within a product that could over a period of time hurt one's health and well-being and contaminate the environment.

The question of bisphenol A comes to mind. We can get rid of the number 7 plastics and the bisphenol A in terms of water bottles, but when they go into the garbage dumps and then break down and leach into the environment and back into our water system, we have a big problem.

We tried that. We did not get it.

All I can say is that the government knows it is going to have to move on right-to-know legislation, that it is going to have to move on full disclosure, that it is going to have to move on full labelling. We are going to count on the expert advisory committee to make those recommendations. We are going to monitor every one of the regulations, and we are going to ensure that the government lives up to this wish and concern on the part of all Canadians.

• (1725)

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for her long-term efforts at protecting consumers. They are very much appreciated.

I have had the opportunity of working in the environmental field for some time, and part of that was with the Commission for Environmental Cooperation. One of the issues we were looking at was the ability of the enforcement officers in the field to actually detect problems, everything from the illegal trade in endangered species to the detection of hazardous products.

When I was the chief of enforcement, we faced a serious issue of importation into Canada of contaminated fuels. There are a lot of issues where we have hazardous substances we may not have presumed in products and that may not be easily regulated.

One of the things we did while we were at the commission is to run training programs for customs officials. Customs officials are overwhelmed with checking a myriad of laws at the federal level. Unfortunately, with the preoccupation with 9/11, I think we have probably backed off in giving attention to things like training and attention to the detection of contaminated products.

I wonder whether how we are actually going to enforce this act was looked at in committee. Where are we going to put our resources

to actually prevent these contaminated substances from coming into the country?

I am glad the member raised the issue about disposal. Even with the preoccupation of these better light bulbs, people do not realize they are full of mercury and we have simply passed the problem of disposing them to the municipalities.

I thank the member for her comments, and I look forward to her reply.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis:** Mr. Speaker, in fact enforcement provisions, inspection capabilities and surveillance were raised by the committee over and over again. We know that this bill, no matter how good it sounds on paper, is only as good as the active resources in the field monitoring and doing surveillance.

We were shocked that there is no real plan to ensure appropriate inspection staff or enforcement officers are in place. The government's budget allows for some increase in inspection officers, but only about 40 over the next 5 years. That is hardly commensurate with the general direction offered by this bill and the requirements of Bill C-6. It is based on the notion that we need to check things at the border, that we have to be able to do spot checks in manufacturing outlets in this country, that we have inspectors going into toy stores and other retail outlets. Yet, we do not have the capacity to do so.

This legislation could offer very little protection to Canadians, unless we can convince the government to add resources to it.

We tried very hard to get changes on a couple of issues, and we just could not. Before I get to that, let me say that with respect to workplace inspectors and surveillance, we had great presentations from the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada. We also had important representations from the United Food and Commercial Workers, in particular, Larry Stoffman, who brought us information, as well as the steelworkers. We will continue to be vigilant on that front.

There are two other issues of importance. One is with respect to tobacco.

Although we have other legislation coming forward that deals with flavoured tobacco products, which is good, we could not convince the government to include an amendment in this bill to ensure that it is also listed as an area where consumer safety and health protection laws would apply.

Although the officials were very helpful on many fronts, and I appreciate their help on this bill with the amendments and their explanations, we could not convince them or the government to include tobacco as a precautionary measure, to ensure that it has the double protection of our tobacco laws and our consumer protection laws. Why they could not do that, I do not know.

Finally, with respect to noisy toys, I want to give the government credit. It is an issue of mine. I have a private member's bill to ensure that we lower the decibel levels of toys allowed on the market. It did not get accepted as part of this bill, but the officials and the government made a clear commitment that they will be bringing in regulations to bring our standards up to the highest level anywhere in the world, to ensure that children are protected from very noisy toys and that their hearing is not hurt because of unacceptable levels of noise and unsafe toys.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[*Translation*]

### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from June 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-280, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (qualification for and entitlement to benefits), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-280 under private members' business.

Call in the members.

• (1755)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 84*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Bagnell
Beaudin	Bélangier
Bellavance	Bennett
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Bourgeois	Brisson
Brunelle	Byrne
Cannis	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Coady	Coderre
Comartin	Cotler
Crombie	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dosanji	Dryden
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter	Eyking
Faille	Footo
Fry	Gagnon
Garneau	Gaudet
Godin	Goodale
Guarnieri	Guay

Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	
Holland	Hughes
Hyer	Jennings
Julian	Kania
Kennedy	Laforest
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lavallée	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
MacAulay	Malhi
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Masse
Mathysen	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McTeague	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mendes
Minna	Mulcair
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Murphy (Charlottetown)
Murray	Nadeau
Neville	Oliphant
Ouellet	Pacetti
Paillé	Paquette
Patry	Plamondon
Pomerleau	Proulx
Rafferty	Ratansi
Regan	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy
Russell	Savage
Savoie	Scarpaleggia
Sgro	Siksay
Simms	Simson
St-Cyr	Stoffer
Szabo	Thi Lac
Tonks	Trudeau
Valeriotte	Vincent
Wasylcia-Leis	Wilfert
Wrzesnewskij	Zarac — 144

### Private Members' Business

### NAYS

#### Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Arthur	Ashfield
Baird	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Cadman
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Glover
Goldring	Gourde
Grewal	Guergis
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hiebert	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Jean	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenny (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lumny
MacKenzie	Mark

*Private Members' Business*

Mayes	McColeman	Bevington	Bigras
McLeod	Menzies	Blais	Bonsant
Merrifield	Miller	Bouchard	Bourgeois
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)		Brison	Brunelle
Moore (Fundy Royal)		Byrne	Cannis
Nicholson	Norlock	Cardin	Carrier
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon	Charlton	Chow
Obhrai	Paradis	Christopherson	Coady
Payne	Petit	Coderre	Comartin
Poilievre	Prentice	Cotler	Crombie
Preston	Raitt	Crowder	Cullen
Rajotte	Rathgeber	Cuzner	D'Amours
Reid	Richards	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Rickford	Ritz	DeBellefeuille	Demers
Saxton	Schellenberger	Deschamps	Desnoyers
Shea	Shipley	Dewar	Dhaliwal
Shory	Smith	Dhalla	Dion
Sorenson	Stanton	Dorion	Dosanjh
Storseth	Strahl	Dryden	Duceppe
Sweet	Thompson	Dufour	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Tilson	Toews	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Easter
Trost	Tweed	Eyking	Faillie
Uppal	Van Kesteren	Foote	Fry
Van Loan	Vellacott	Gagnon	Garneau
Verner	Wallace	Gaudet	Godin
Warawa	Warkentin	Goodale	Guarnieri
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Guay	Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-
Weston (Saint John)	Wong	Côte-Nord)	Holland
Woodworth	Yelich	Hall Findlay	Hyer
Young— — 135		Hughes	Julian
		Jennings	Kennedy
		Kania	Laframboise
		Laforest	Lavallée
		Lalonde	LeBlanc
		Layton	Lemay
		Lee	Lessard
		Leslie	MacAulay
		Lévesque	Malo
		Malhi	Marston
		Maloway	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
		Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mathysen
		Masse	McGuinity
		McCallum	McTeague
		McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)
		Ménard (Hochelaga)	Minna
		Mendes	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
		Mulcair	Murray
		Murphy (Charlottetown)	Neville
		Nadeau	Ouellet
		Oliphant	Paillé
		Pacetti	Patry
		Paquette	Pomerleau
		Plamondon	Rafferty
		Proulx	Regan
		Ratansi	Rota
		Rodriguez	Russell
		Roy	Savoie
		Savage	Sgro
		Scarpaleggia	Simms
		Siksay	St-Cyr
		Simson	Szabo
		Stoffer	Tonks
		Thi Lac	Valeriote
		Trudeau	Wasylycia-Leis
		Vincent	Wrzesnewskij
		Wilfert	
		Zarac— — 145	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills Development, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

\* \* \*

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF CANADA FOR THE REGIONS OF QUEBEC**

The House resumed from June 4 consideration of the motion and of the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion M-288 and on the amendment under private members' business.

The next question is on the amendment.

\* \* \*

● (1805)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 85)

## YEAS

## Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Bagnell
Bains	Beaudin
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Bevilacqua

Abbott
Aglukkaq
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Anders
Arthur
Baird
Bernier
Blackburn
Block
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)

## NAYS

## Members

Alblonczy
Albrecht
Ambrose
Anderson
Ashfield
Benoit
Bezan
Blaney
Boucher
Braid
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)

*Private Members' Business**(Division No. 86)*

## YEAS

## Members

Bruinooge  
Calandra  
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Carrie  
Chong  
Clement  
Day  
Del Mastro  
Dreeshen  
Dykstra  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gallant  
Goldring  
Grewal  
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
Hiebert  
Hoback  
Jean  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kent  
Komarnicki  
Lake  
Lebel  
Lobb  
Lunn  
MacKenzie  
Mayes  
McLeod  
Merrifield  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Obhrai  
Payne  
Poilievre  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Reid  
Rickford  
Saxton  
Shea  
Shory  
Sorenson  
Storseth  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Trost  
Uppal  
Van Loan  
Verner  
Warawa  
Watson  
Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Woodworth  
Young — 135

Cadman  
Calkins  
Cannon (Pontiac)  
Casson  
Clarke  
Davidson  
Dechert  
Devolin  
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
Fast  
Flaherty  
Galipeau  
Glover  
Gourde  
Guergis  
Hawn  
Hill  
Hoepfner  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kerr  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lauzon  
Lemieux  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
Mark  
McColeman  
Menzies  
Miller  
Norlock  
O'Neill-Gordon  
Paradis  
Petit  
Prentice  
Raitt  
Rathgeber  
Richards  
Ritz  
Schellenberger  
Shiple  
Smith  
Stanton  
Strahl  
Thompson  
Toews  
Tweed  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to  
Wong  
Yelich

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment carried.

[*English*]

The next question is on the main motion, as amended.

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it you would find agreement to apply the vote on the previous motion to the current motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1810)

(The House divided on the motion, as amended, which was agreed to on the following division:)

Allen (Welland)  
Angus  
Asselin  
Bachand  
Bains  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bevington  
Blais  
Bouchard  
Brisson  
Byrne  
Cardin  
Charlton  
Christopherson  
Coderre  
Cotler  
Crowder  
Cuzner  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
DeBellefeuille  
Deschamps  
Dewar  
Dhalla  
Dorion  
Dryden  
Dufour  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Eyking  
Foote  
Gagnon  
Gaudet  
Goodale  
Guay  
Côte-Nord)  
Hall Findlay  
Hughes  
Jennings  
Kania  
Laforest  
Lalonde  
Layton  
Lee  
Leslie  
Lévesque  
Malhi  
Maloway  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Masse  
McCallum  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Ménard (Hochelega)  
Mendes  
Mulcair  
Murphy (Charlottetown)  
Nadeau  
Oliphant  
Pacetti  
Paquette  
Plamondon  
Proulx  
Ratansi  
Rodriguez  
Roy  
Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Siksay  
Simson  
Stoffer  
Thi Lac  
Trudeau  
Vincent  
Wilfert  
Zarac — 145

Andrews  
Ashton  
Atamanenko  
Bagnell  
Beaudin  
Bellavance  
Bevilacqua  
Bigras  
Bonsant  
Bourgeois  
Brunelle  
Cannis  
Carrier  
Chow  
Coady  
Comartin  
Crombie  
Cullen  
D'Amours  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Demers  
Desnoyers  
Dhaliwal  
Dion  
Dosanjh  
Duceppe  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Easter  
Faille  
Fry  
Garneau  
Godin  
Guamieri  
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-

Holland  
Hyer  
Julian  
Kennedy  
Laframboise  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lemay  
Lessard  
MacAulay  
Malo  
Marston  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
Mathysen  
McGuinty  
McTeague  
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)  
Minna  
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)  
Murray  
Neville  
Ouellet  
Paillé  
Patry  
Pomerleau  
Rafferty  
Regan  
Rota  
Russell  
Savoie  
Sgro  
Simms  
St-Cyr  
Szabo  
Tonks  
Valeriot  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskij

*Private Members' Business*

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Arthur	Ashfield
Baird	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blackburn	Blaney
Block	Boucher
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Cadman
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie	Casson
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Davidson
Day	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Fast
Finley	Flaherty
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Glover
Goldring	Gourde
Grewal	Guergis
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hiebert	Hill
Hoback	Hoepfner
Jean	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunn	Lunney
MacKenzie	Mark
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Norlock
Nicholson	O'Neill-Gordon
O'Connor	Paradis
Obhrai	Petit
Payne	Prentice
Poilievre	Raitt
Preston	Rathgeber
Rajotte	Richards
Reid	Ritz
Rickford	Schellenberger
Saxton	Shipley
Shea	Smith
Shory	Stanton
Sorenson	Strahl
Storseth	Thompson
Sweet	Toews
Tilson	Tweed
Trost	Van Kesteren
Uppal	Vellacott
Van Loan	Wallace
Verner	Warkentin
Warawa	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Watson	
Sky Country)	Wong
Weston (Saint John)	Yelich
Woodworth	
Young— 135	

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

## ATLANTIC LOBSTER FISHERY

The House resumed from June 5 consideration of the motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 284 under private members' business in the name of the hon. member for Cardigan.

• (1815)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 87)

## YEAS

## Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Arthur
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bachand
Bagnell	Bains
Beaudin	Bélanger
Bellavance	Bennett
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Bourgeois	Brison
Brunelle	Byrne
Cannis	Cardin
Carrier	Charlton
Chow	Christopherson
Coady	Coderre
Comartin	Cotler
Crombie	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dosanjh	Dryden
Duceppe	Dufour
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter	Eyking
Faile	Foote
Fry	Gagnon
Garneau	Gaudet
Godin	Goodale
Guarnieri	Guay
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	
Holland	Hughes
Hyer	Jennings
Julian	Kania
Kennedy	Laforest
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lavallée	Layton
LeBlanc	Lee
Lemay	Leslie
Lessard	Lévesque
MacAulay	Malhi
Malo	Maloway
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Masse
Mathysen	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McTeague	Ménard (Hochelaga)
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Mendes
Minna	Mulcair
Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)	Murphy (Charlottetown)
Murray	Nadeau
Neville	Oliphant
Ouellet	Pacetti
Pailé	Paquette
Patry	Plamondon
Pomerleau	Proulx
Rafferty	Ratansi
Regan	Rodriguez
Rota	Roy

*Private Members' Business*

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

● (1820)

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT**

The House resumed from June 9 consideration of the motion that Bill C-279, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (amounts not included in earnings), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-279, under private members' business.

● (1825)

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 88)*

## YEAS

## Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Asselin	Atamanenko
Bachand	Bagnell
Bains	Beaudin
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Bevilacqua
Bevington	Bigras
Blais	Bonsant
Bouchard	Bourgeois
Brunelle	Byrne
Cardin	Carrier
Charlton	Chow
Christopherson	Coady
Coderre	Comartin
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	DeBellefeuille
Demers	Deschamps
Desnoyers	Dewar
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Dorion
Dryden	Duceppe
Dufour	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Easter
Eyking	Faillie
Foote	Fry
Gagnon	Garneau
Gaudet	Godin
Guarnieri	Guay
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Holland	Hyer
Hughes	Julian
Jennings	Kennedy
Kania	Laframboise
Laforest	Lavallée
Lalonde	LeBlanc
Layton	Leslie
Lemay	Lévesque
Lessard	Malhi
MacAulay	Maloway
Malo	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Marston	Masse
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	McGuinity
Mathysen	Ménard (Hochelaga)
McTeague	Minna
Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin)	Murphy (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe)
Mulcair	Murray
Murphy (Charlottetown)	

Russell  
Savoie  
Sgro  
Simms  
St-Cyr  
Szabo  
Tonks  
Valerioté  
Wasylcia-Leis  
Wrzesnewskyj

Savage  
Scarpaleggia  
Siksay  
Simson  
Stoffer  
Thi Lac  
Trudeau  
Vincent  
Wilfert  
Zarac— 146

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Aglukkaq	Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Ashfield	Baird
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blackburn
Blaney	Block
Boucher	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannon (Pontiac)	Carrie
Casson	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Davidson	Day
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fast	Finley
Flaherty	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Glover	Goldring
Gourde	Grewal
Guergis	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hiebert
Hill	Hoback
Hoepfner	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kennedy (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacKenzie
Mark	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menzies	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Obhrai
Paradis	Payne
Petit	Poilievre
Prentice	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Richards	Rickford
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Shea
Shiely	Shory
Smith	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Thompson	Tilson
Toews	Trost
Tweed	Uppal
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Verner
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth
Wong	Young— 134
Yelich	

*Private Members' Business*

Nadeau  
Ouellet  
Paillé  
Patry  
Pomerleau  
Rafferty  
Regan  
Roy  
Savage  
Siksay  
St-Cyr  
Szabo  
Tonks  
Vincent  
Zarac— 127

Neville  
Pacetti  
Paquette  
Plamondon  
Proulx  
Ratansi  
Rodriguez  
Russell  
Savoie  
Simms  
Stoffer  
Thi Lac  
Valeriotte  
Wasylycia-Leis

Sweet  
Tilson  
Trost  
Tweed  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Wilfert  
Woodworth  
Yelich  
Thompson  
Toews  
Trudeau  
Uppal  
Van Loan  
Verner  
Warawa  
Watson  
Wong  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Young— 152

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott  
Aglukkaq  
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Anders  
Arthur  
Baird  
Bernier  
Blackburn  
Block  
Boughen  
Breitkreuz  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Brown (Barrie)  
Cadman  
Calkins  
Cannis  
Carrie  
Chong  
Clement  
Day  
Del Mastro  
Dosanjh  
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
Fast  
Flaherty  
Galipeau  
Glover  
Goodale  
Grewal  
Hall Findlay  
Hawn  
Hill  
Hoepfner  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Kerr  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lauzon  
Lee  
Lobb  
Lunn  
MacKenzie  
Mayes  
McColeman  
McLeod  
Menzies  
Miller  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Norlock  
O'Neill-Gordon  
Oliphant  
Payne  
Poilievre  
Preston  
Rajotte  
Reid  
Rickford  
Rota  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
Shipley  
Simson  
Sorenson  
Storseth

Ablonczy  
Albrecht  
Ambrose  
Anderson  
Ashfield  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Blaney  
Boucher  
Braid  
Brisson  
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)  
Bruinooge  
Calandra  
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)  
Cannon (Pontiac)  
Casson  
Clarke  
Davidson  
Dechert  
Devolin  
Dreeschen  
Dykstra  
Finley  
Fletcher  
Gallant  
Goldring  
Gourde  
Guergis  
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
Hiebert  
Hoback  
Jean  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kent  
Komarnicki  
Lake  
Lebel  
Lemieux  
Lukiwski  
Lunney  
Mark  
McCallum  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Mendes  
Merrifield  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Nicholson  
O'Connor  
Obhrai  
Paradis  
Petit  
Prentice  
Raitt  
Rathgeber  
Richards  
Ritz  
Saxton  
Schellenberger  
Shea  
Shory  
Smith  
Stanton  
Strahl

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:29 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

\* \* \*

● (1830)

[*Translation*]

## ARTISTS

The House resumed from March 27 consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I hardly need say that I support this motion, since it reflects what the Liberal Party of Canada has been saying for a very long time.

My party, as hon. members will know, has been fighting from the very start against the disastrous cuts the present government is making in the area of culture. We know they were not necessary and were not based on economic considerations. They were merely based on an ideology that does not in any way fit with the values of the people of Canada.

The Conservative government would like to be able to control the content of what our artists have to say abroad, and this is unacceptable. Culture must be free, and never subject to the overview of any government.

It has been clear for a long time that the government knows nothing about culture. Worst still, it views it with suspicion. That is why they have cut such programs as PromArt and Trade Routes. Those programs enabled our artists to take part in international tours and to become known abroad, which is, incidentally, excellent for this country's image. It is also part of what is called cultural diplomacy, while at the same time making a positive contribution to the economy of our country.

As the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada so aptly put it, "Cutting culture makes us invisible to the world."

[*English*]

The government told us that the programs were cut as a result of an objective revision based on analysis and facts, yet when I asked for copies of these analyses in committee, none were supplied, nothing, no proof whatsoever.



[Translation]

Yet when the committee received and listened to dozens of artists, producers and other creators who benefited from the programs, the message was unanimous. They spoke with one voice, saying these were good programs and were made good use of, as well as meeting the objectives of the Department of Canadian Heritage. We know that these programs helped out numerous troupes and numerous artists who have performed successfully all over the world. Thanks to them, our artists and our artistic troupes, along with the culture of Canada, have been able to gain wide international exposure.

Since these programs have been cut, some tours have been cancelled, jobs have been lost, and dreams have evaporated. We know as well that Canada's image has suffered as a result.

● (1835)

[English]

How are we supposed to explain to our international partners that the Canadian government no longer supports its artists when it comes international tours?

[Translation]

What explanation can we give? None. In spite of this, some of our artists decided to go ahead with their tours, even though they knew they would lose money. It was the lesser of two evils. They preferred to lose money on a planned tour than to lose their reputation and credibility by cancelling the tour.

[English]

Our artists have always been, and continue to be, Canada's pride on the international stage. How is it even possible that we have placed them in such an embarrassing situation? The government should be ashamed of itself.

[Translation]

I said it before and I will say it again: funding for these programs must be restored. Similarly, why was the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund eliminated? With a budget of just \$1.5 million per year, this program resulted in many high-quality documentaries that launched the careers of several independent filmmakers. There is a need for this program and its funding should be restored.

And what about the National Training Program for the Film and Video Sector, a program that will shape the future of our industry in this area? How and where will future producers, directors, filmmakers and artisans in the film and video sector be trained? This program was also absolutely essential and the government has proposed absolutely nothing in its place.

[English]

I could go on and on, because the list of programs that were cut by the government is long, much too long. This situation has to be rectified as soon as possible.

[Translation]

I also believe that the Canada Council for the Arts budget should be increased. This organization has a great deal of credibility in the arts community and does absolutely extraordinary work with our creators and artists in all disciplines of the arts and culture sector.

### *Private Members' Business*

There are few organizations that have such a great reputation and have such a positive and beneficial impact on the clients that the Canada Council serves.

Having said that, if the government does not like culture because of what it represents, let it at least acknowledge its extraordinary contribution in terms of economic spinoffs.

[English]

Indeed, the arts and culture sector largely contributes to our economy. Exports stemming from this industry increase year after year.

[Translation]

Culture is all that and much more. In fact, we must recognize culture for all that it is and all that it represents. Our culture defines us, it is our identity, it is what we are. I would even say that our culture is our past, our present and also our future.

[English]

Beyond numbers and programs, culture is alive. It is fun, stimulating, and inspiring. Just try to imagine a world without music, a world without books, or a world without films.

● (1840)

[Translation]

To have all these things that are so important to us, we need creators, dreamers and artists. These absolutely amazing creators, dreamers and artists are right in front of us. We are fortunate to have them here among us. We are fortunate to have some of the best in the world, people who make Canada and every province proud on the world stage. We are fortunate to have some of the biggest stars in dance, music and theatre.

These people are not asking for handouts or favours. They want programs that will let them keep on giving the best of themselves. They want programs that will let them keep on doing what they do best, which is making us laugh, sometimes making us cry, making us sing, making us dance, making us dream.

A government that invests in culture is a government that has confidence in itself and in its own identity. When we invest in our culture, we are investing in our own quality of life and we are helping to boost the heart and soul of our own society. The Conservatives refuse to recognize this, though, and it is up to each one of us to remind them of it.

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### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following public bill to which the concurrence of this House is desired: Bill S-205, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (suicide bombings).

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS***[English]***ARTISTS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I, too, rise to support the motion by the hon. member for Verchères—Les Patriotes.

My constituents have long been supporters, defenders and contributors to our own vibrant arts community. Edmonton—Strathcona is home to a wealth of arts, theatre companies, galleries and events such as, to name a few, the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival; Catalyst Theatre; the Varscona Theatre; Timms Centre for the Arts; la Cité francophone; and Walterdale Playhouse. The TransAlta Arts Barns host countless theatre events for adults and children alike. The University of Alberta drama and fine arts departments in my riding nurture new and emerging talent, and Convocation Hall hosts a myriad of fine music events every year.

My riding is home to countless award-winning film production companies, writers and journalists. For decades, Edmontonians have come to Old Strathcona to enjoy fine jazz at the Yardbird Suite.

Each summer, Edmonton—Strathcona hosts the annual Art Walk, Nextfest, Edmonton Fashion Week, the Improvaganza theatre festival and the Edmonton International Jazz Festival.

On behalf of my constituents, I want to express my appreciation to the government for the marquee tourism events program grant provided to Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival. It is an award well deserved, for this theatre event attracts performers and tens of thousands of people every summer from across Canada and across the globe.

I am choosing to ignore the pettiness of the government in not inviting me to the event announcing this grant to this wonderful theatre company based in my constituency and in my very neighbourhood. I always attend, and I intend to this summer.

Last summer I joined 400 artists, painters, poets, actors, filmmakers, musicians and dancers and supporters of the arts who rallied against cuts to arts funding. I continue to support the efforts of Edmonton's arts community in calling for increased funding, respect for and support to the arts. I laud the theatres programs in our schools and regularly attend their theatre performances.

The arts communities contribute substantially to our economy in Canada. They decried the Prime Minister's claim that artists are a privileged lot and the cuts to federal supports for the arts. It appears some of that effort has finally paid off.

In Alberta, the average artist earns about \$24,000, less than the poverty line. They have no access to pensions or benefits, yet they write, produce and perform for the love of arts and share those with Canadians.

I look forward to participating in the discussion panel on arts funding sponsored by the Nextfest Emerging Artists Festival this Friday in my constituency.

The community benefits from investments in the arts. The community also benefits from the patrons of the arts who support the local economy by spending dollars in restaurants, cafés and shops throughout the theatre district.

I have been approached by award-winning filmmakers in my riding deeply concerned about the implications to the Canadian independent film production industry by the changes to their funding programs. They expressed concern that in killing the Canadian Television Fund, which historically supported Canadian independent film production, and rolling the dollars into the Canada Media Fund, their work may be jeopardized.

The board of this new fund will apparently include only the cable companies and the federal government. Broadcasters, producers and creators previously represented are being excluded.

Rather than incenting Canadian programs, the new arrangements and policies impose new barriers. In this time of economic recession, the government should be pursuing measures to incent and reward Canadian programming, local programming and our revered CBC.

In closing, I wish to congratulate Roland Pemberton, an Edmonton rap poet and recording artist known as Cadence Weapon, for his appointment as Edmonton's new poet laureate. This 23-year-old is the grandson of the beloved Edmonton Eskimo football star Rollie Miles.

I concur with Edmonton's mayor, Stephen Mandel, who has enthusiastically endorsed the appointment, which *The Globe and Mail* described as “clearly designed to bring Edmonton poetry from bookshelves to city streets.” It quoted Mayor Mandel as saying:

This guy will bring poetry to a whole new audience, and challenge the rest of us on our conventional perception of what it means to be a poet...

So I say to the government, bring back the funding that was cut to the arts. Restore the funds. In this time of economic recession, we need to be supporting all forms of employment. If we revere the arts, we should give it its due support.

• (1845)

*[Translation]*

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to point out how ironic it is that this motion on cultural affairs is before us today, June 10, because today is the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages' birthday and I wish him a happy birthday.

I would like to congratulate my colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes who moved this motion to bring back the arts and culture programs that were cut last summer by the Conservative government. It also calls for more direct assistance to artists through the Canada Council and an increase in the annual budget of the Canada Council to \$300 million.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my colleague for his generosity. He is our party's health critic. His sensitivity to arts and culture is very apparent, given his decision to move this motion.

Concerning the request to reinstate these arts and culture programs, I would like to summarize the timeline. Last summer, in the middle of summer, when everyone was busy grilling on the barbecue, we happened to notice—since there were no announcements—that the heritage minister at the time was slashing seven programs worth \$26 million.

These were important programs. Two of them, Trade Routes and PromArt, were crucial in enabling artists from Quebec and Canada to tour abroad, showcase cultural products, give theatrical or dance performances or exhibit their books at shows and fairs.

Trade Routes represents \$5 million plus \$2 million. There is \$2 million that goes directly to artists, who really need this money to export their products, but the other \$5 million was like an extension of the department's own budget and was used to send officials to places around the world.

Obviously, what artists are asking is that the \$2 million be restored. The department will restore the other \$5 million if it sees fit to do so, but this is more an internal decision, because it has more to do with officials.

PromArt represents \$4.2 million. Even though the Minister of Foreign Affairs has repeatedly washed his hands of this issue, we know that the Department of Foreign Affairs cut this \$4.2 million for PromArt and today is denying any responsibility.

Continuing with this timeline, we returned to the House after the election campaign, which was quite tumultuous, by the way. Artists from Quebec, specifically, questioned this government's role in cultural affairs and caused the Conservative government some grief. Immediately after, the Bloc Québécois, true to its promises, asked questions of the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages in this House. We asked him what he had done with the money for artists, the \$26 million. Believe it or not, he answered, and this is taken from the November 20 Hansard: "We gave that money to the torch relay."

The money for artists was given to the Olympic torch relay, which was a nasty thing to do, because it pitted two groups that really need money against each other. Athletes, like artists, need this money, but it was cruel to pit the two groups against each other.

The Bloc Québécois decided to conduct a study in the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. That is how we discovered that the cuts were unjustified, since neither the deputy minister nor the minister was able to give us a single line, a single post-it, a single email, a single piece of paper to prove that these cuts were justified. Nothing. Zilch. Nada. One big zero. Not a word to provide a logical, coherent and intelligent justification for the cuts to these programs.

The artists came to the committee and made some truly heartfelt pleas for help. They told us how important it was. Furthermore, CINARS, the International Exchange for the Performing Arts, told us that nearly 2,200 tours will very soon have to be cancelled worldwide. It will be forced to lay off artists and shut down cultural organizations.

How did the Conservative government respond? The Conservative government did not shed a tear, did not offer any apologies, did not even say that it would maybe think about it and that maybe it had

### *Private Members' Business*

made a mistake. It does not understand that either. The Conservative government does not understand that it made a mistake.

• (1850)

It does not understand that this country has a cultural structure. In Quebec, we are very familiar with this structure, but it exists in the rest of Canada as well. And if we remove a single component, the whole structure will crumble. That is what artists from across Quebec told us.

I travelled across Quebec with my colleagues from Verchères—Les Patriotes and Drummond, and we met with artists and cultural organizations. They told us that they had been directly affected and that they had been forced to cancel their tours. Others told us that they had not been directly affected, but that they knew they would feel the impact indirectly. The broadcasting organizations, the cultural centres across Quebec, for example, those that showcase artists, know that they will receive less. In fact, before, dance troops would tour the world for six months, and then tour Quebec for the six remaining months. That will no longer be the case. These dance troops will no longer be able to tour Quebec because they will not have any money.

This minister and this Conservative government do not understand what they have done. They have never wanted to go back and offer something else. What are they offering in exchange? The Canada prizes. This government announced that it would invest \$25 million in the Canada prizes that would be handed out in Toronto by two friends from Toronto. No one wants anything to do with these prizes. The promotional document was cut and pasted into the budget and contained mistakes about the partners. The partners identified in the Luminato brochure were not the actual partners. These people had never been contacted or knew barely anything about it.

That is \$25 million wasted on the Canada prizes. What did the minister say, in this House, in reply to my questions three months ago? He said that we would soon know what would happen with the Canada prizes and that he would present his project. That was three months ago. Have we heard anything? Have we seen a document, or a piece of paper, a Post-it note, or email? We never even received a text message, nothing. It starts with an "n" and ends with an "a": nada. I have seen nothing about these Canada prizes, which no one wants except two guys from Toronto.

It is evident that the minister and the Conservative government do not understand. Do they not like culture? I do not know. Quite frankly, I cannot even answer that question. Is it because they do not like it? They do not understand that artists are not there to please them. Artists do not exist to do a little jig for them and make them laugh once in a while. Artists are not clowns. They can be, and it can be very amusing, but most artists want to share the joy and emotions they feel in their souls. They often want to challenge the established order of things.

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That is what the government did not like about Trade Routes and PromArt. Those artists had names. There was a rock group, for example, with a name I will not repeat here in the House because I would be thrown out immediately if I did. It is a four-letter word that starts with an *f*. It was entertaining, and its rock music was actually pretty good. But the government did not think it was good. There were two or three things like that that upset the sense of order the Conservatives established or wanted to establish. The government does not understand that. It does not understand that culture is not just a concert with some nice dancers in the background. Culture is more than that. Yes, it is that too, yes, it is interesting movies, musical comedies and comedies, but it is not just that. It can also be extraordinary films like the one that won 20-year-old Xavier Dolan three prizes at Cannes.

In closing, I would like to say that my tour around Quebec was extremely important to everyone. Artists and cultural organizations are all too aware that the Conservatives do not understand and that the Liberals are no better. The Liberals were the ones who cut \$400 million from CBC/Radio-Canada's budget. The Liberals were the ones who cut \$65 million from Canadian Heritage's budget, including \$10 million from the Canada Council for the Arts. The Liberals are no better.

There was consensus; people were practically unanimous. The government has to provide more funding to artists, restore funding programs, and transfer arts and culture responsibilities to the Government of Quebec. That is where things happen. We are a nation and we want control over all aspects of our identity, including arts and culture.

• (1855)

[English]

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I was not originally on the schedule to speak, but I heard this debate and I had to jump in the pool and swim a little with my colleagues who want to engage in a debate on this subject and I am very pleased to do so. We are debating Motion No. 297, a private member's motion moved by a member of the Bloc Québécois. There are a number of reasons to vote against this motion.

The motion reads in part:

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should give direct assistance to artists by increasing the annual budget of the Canada Council for the Arts to \$300 million and should roll back the cuts it announced in the cultural sector—

First of all, the figure of \$300 million is rather arbitrary. I should note that it was our Conservative government that has increased funding in support of arts and culture in this country in every single one of our budgets.

The member of the Bloc Québécois just stood in the House and questioned whether or not the Conservatives believe in the arts. Of course we do.

In a time of international economic difficulty and economic recession, this Conservative government made the decision to invest more money into our communities, more money into museums, more money into arts training programs, more money into culture in this country, because we recognize the value of it to our economy and to the quality of life of Canadians.

This country's arts and culture industry employs over 650,000 Canadians, that is \$46 billion to our economy. It is one of the largest industries in this country. It speaks to who we are as a people. It speaks to us as a country. It improves the quality of life of communities and of Canadians. It tells the great stories of our past and allows us to imagine a better future. Arts and culture is absolutely a key element to the future health of this country.

That is why our Conservative government has increased support for arts and culture by 8%. Every single one of the three opposition parties in the House in their speeches said that the Conservatives have cut arts and culture. It is not true. It is to mislead to stand in the House and to say that the Conservatives have cut culture. We have increased it in every single one of our budgets.

With regard to the subject matter of the motion, which is the Canada Council for the Arts, our government has increased funding to record levels, \$181 million this year. Joe Rotman, the chair of the Canada Council, said our investments are "proof that the federal government supports the arts" through our funding of the Canada Council. The Canada Council understands that our government is making investments that are important to the future of artists across this country.

[Translation]

My Bloc Québécois colleague, the member for Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, talked about the importance of touring. We understand the importance of supporting our artists on the international stage. That is why our government invested \$22 million this year to help our artists on the international stage. That is an unprecedented amount.

She wants us to reinstate the Trade Routes program. That is what the motion we are debating calls for. Trade Routes is a \$7 million program. Thus, it would cost \$5 million to obtain \$2 million in benefits. That is clear.

When I appeared before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, she asked me these questions. I told her I was prepared to defend all of our decisions, but she was not interested.

[English]

• (1900)

She was not interested. In every single one of the decisions that was made in the strategic review of last June, I was prepared to go through item by item on every single one of them for as long as the committee wanted to sit and talk about it. I was prepared to talk about why the decisions were made, how much money was reallocated and why we are getting better value for taxpayers' dollars by investing in arts and culture. They were not interested in it, because unfortunately, parliamentary committees have become an extension of question period. Reasonable debate, thorough analysis and being able to speak for longer than one or two sentences are almost not possible any more in our parliamentary committees. That is unfortunate because there are a lot of good things to say.

The Canada Council for the Arts is an important institution in this country. These are artists deciding the investments with respect to other artists, artists helping artists. The government takes its hands off and makes an investment, and artists support artists through a peer review process that is well regarded and well respected. The Auditor General has examined the Canada Council. It has always been held in high regard, and the Auditor General has affirmed that assessment.

It is because the Canada Council does such a good job of investing in the best interests of Canadians through the arts that we have increased the money for the Canada Council to \$181 million, a record level for the Canada Council. It was the Bloc Québécois that voted against it. Now the Bloc members stand in the House of Commons and put forward a motion saying that we should increase the budget for the Canada Council to \$300 million. It is at \$181 million this year. We have increased it to that level. They voted against it.

The Bloc put forward a private member's motion. If the Bloc members really believed in what they were talking about, they would have put forward an amendment to the budget. They would have put money where their mouths are. Instead, they put forward an empty motion that means nothing, so that the Bloc Québécois members can say in their flyers and newsletters in their districts that they are great members of Parliament, and they stood up for the arts and put forward a motion to increase funding for the Canada Council.

If the Bloc believed in arts and culture, it would be in the Bloc Québécois action plan that it presented in April. There is not a single word on arts and culture in its platform. If the Bloc believed in arts and culture, it would have been a centrepiece of the Liberal-Bloc-NDP coalition. It was not mentioned at all in the governing coalition that the Bloc Québécois wanted to lead.

Instead, there is a motion to increase funding to \$300 million. That and 50¢ will get us a cup of coffee, but when push comes to shove, when it comes to standing up for the arts, it is our Conservative government that in every single budget has increased funding for arts and culture, overall by 8% and the Canada Council up to \$181 million. That is record funding.

Not only that, but I will talk about some of the other things we have done. Cultural Spaces is an important part. We talk in our economic action plan about the importance of investing in infrastructure, such as bridges and tunnels. It is about projects that improve not only the productivity of our economy but improve again the quality of life of Canadians.

We said that we were going to increase funding for Cultural Spaces, \$60 million over two years. That is a massive increase in the budget for Cultural Spaces. That money is going to go to projects that will improve the quality of life of Canadians.

It is not just through Cultural Spaces. We have made all kinds of investments across the board on cultural infrastructure.

[*Translation*]

The Quartier des spectacles was a key project, one that was very important for the City of Montreal. We spoke with the mayor of Montreal, Mr. Tremblay. We had meetings and discussions, and we

*Private Members' Business*

reached an agreement with him. The Conservative government is delivering the goods for the City of Montreal.

[*English*]

Where was the member for Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert? Where was Gilles Duceppe? Gilles Duceppe, member of Parliament from downtown Montreal did nothing—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I would like to remind the hon. minister that he must refrain from naming sitting members.

● (1905)

**Hon. James Moore:** Of course, Madam Speaker. The leader of the Bloc Québécois and all of his colleagues, those who were elected in downtown Montreal, where were they? They did not stand and vote. They did not support the Quartier des spectacles, an important project in downtown Montreal that will make the Montreal Jazz Festival an even greater international attraction, that will support the cultural infrastructure of Montreal. They were nowhere to be seen.

That is the track record of the Bloc Québécois. I am getting a little sick and tired, after nine years of being in this House, that again and again the Bloc Québécois is totally ineffective, totally posturing with things like this, an empty motion which, at the end of the day, will mean nothing. And when it matters, in standing up for Quebec, for the Quartier des spectacles, in voting for a budget that increases funding for arts and culture and doing what will improve the quality of life of their constituents, the Bloc Québécois members would rather put forward empty motions, make empty speeches, make empty promises, put forward useless platforms, make all kinds of noise and in the end do absolutely nothing for Quebec and for Canadian culture.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand here on behalf of my party, the NDP, to support the motion put forward by the member for Verchères—Les Patriotes and seconded by the member for Laval.

As my colleague for Edmonton—Strathcona said, we recognize a number of aspects of the motion as being very important, for example, the call for an increase in the direct assistance given to artists by increasing the annual budget of the Canada Council for the Arts to \$300 million, noting that the government should not roll back the cuts it announced in the culture sector and that it should restore funding for a number of programs, including the arts promotion program, trade routes, the national training program for the film and video sector and many more programs that are very important to our arts community.

One of the ways in which I truly understand the importance of the arts in our country is by knowing what it means to the community from which I come. I was born and raised in Thompson, a mid-sized mining town in the north of Manitoba, about 800 kilometres north of Winnipeg. When people heard about where I came from, they thought about the mining industry. They thought of people working hard. Certainly, our community is made up of a lot of hard-working people.

*Private Members' Business*

However, what people from away often failed to recognize was the vibrancy of our community and how, in many ways, this vibrancy was a result of how active so many people were in the arts. This was in the visual arts, music, film, theatre and all sorts of ways. Those aspects of the community were what contributed to so many of the positive influences I had growing up. I know many people who make Thompson and northern Manitoba their home have had those positive influences as well.

One of the things that concerns my party and I a great deal is the disregard of the government for the arts. We have heard quite a bit about money and specifically the numbers, but what we are really concerned about is the mentality that has been at the bottom of many of the decisions as to which programs would and would not be funded. This motion points to that.

For example, in my riding artists are calling out for increased supports. In fact, just two weeks ago, I attended the northern juried art show in Thompson, which brought together artists from Norway House, Flin Flon, the Pas and all across northern Manitoba to showcase their visual arts. It was so exciting to see so much talent. However, one of the ongoing themes was the challenges that northern artists faced in being able to produce and sell their work and network with other artists, given our distance from the main hubs. In our case, it would be Winnipeg.

They talked about the need for greater access to broadband Internet, something to which we are still waiting for the government to respond. They were talking about the need for increased grants. Specifically, first nations artists have referenced this, given the fact that many of them come from communities that do not have an economic base and are unable to access employment in many cases. In order to be involved with their art, they need some sort of income to drive them in what they do.

I think of the art of Jasyn Lucas, who I am very proud to say I grew up with, and of Teresa Burrows, an amazing woman artist in our community who has done great work with northern women. I think of the Flin Flon Arts Council, which has brought together people from all across our region and does a lot of great work in Flin Flon to showcase singing and theatrical arts. I think of the talented musicians coming from our region, such as Tracy Bone, Highway 373, Prodigy and Hayley McDonald.

The latest are young people who come from communities such as Nelson House, Cross Lake and Norway House. These people, despite the challenges they face, find they are able to not just entertain, but to become stronger individuals through their art. As I noted, they certainly entertain the rest of us whose talents may not lay in this area.

•(1910)

One thing that comes up every time we either have a chance to admire this art or listen to these musicians is how important it is for our smaller communities to have access to such artists and how important it is for us to support such artists.

I noted a few of the challenges that artists have spoken to, but I also want to focus a bit on what the opportunities would be to support the arts in the region I represent in northern Manitoba. I will specifically talk a bit about first nations communities. I have risen in

the House many times to talk about the lack of extracurricular activities available to first nations youth.

We already know the high indicators in gang and criminal activities in which so many young aboriginal people become involved. Many friends of mine and many young people across the region have said that they need recreational activities to keep their young people busy and to keep them away from the negative kinds of activities.

Oftentimes, perhaps because we are such a proud country in terms of our sports, and we are certainly a proud hockey nation, one of the things we miss is how important it is to encourage the arts in our communities. First nations have been calling for money for recreation, not just for sports but also for the arts, recognizing that arts activities, whether it is music, visual arts or film and film production, would be positive, inspirational and would keep young people excited about their lives.

I mentioned some of the high rates of negative activity in which so many young people get involved. I also come from a region with very high suicide rates among aboriginal people. The need for alternatives and supports in their communities is absolutely real. So many have called out for the arts, in terms of a way that young people can be excited, become empowered and also contribute to their communities.

I remember meeting with youth leaders from the Island Lake area, one of the areas that is unfortunately dealing with what might be termed as the H1N1 pandemic. I met with them a couple of months ago in their community. One young man came up to me and told me that his dream was to become involved in multimedia, specifically documentaries.

From what I understand, there have been cutbacks and a diversion of funding away from some of the supports documentary filmmakers could receive, which concerns me. This young man has a dream. With all the technology we have here today, it should not be that difficult to provide the appropriate grants for young people like this young man so they can follow their dreams. It is absolutely incumbent on us as parliamentarians to listen to what these young people say and recognize their connection and their interest in the arts.

One of the ways in which the arts have been attacked is the cuts to the CBC. I am very proud of the region I come from and the work we did to save our CBC station. I appreciate the recognition that the CBC gave to CBC *North Country* and CBC *Keewatin Country* in Saskatchewan. It recognized how important these two stations were for our region and that they ought to be kept open.

However, I am also aware of the cuts in other northern regions, northern Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador and generally in Atlantic Canada. This really concerns me. We know the extent to which our public broadcaster supports the arts and provides a venue for artists to promote their work and for Canadians to get to know their work, whether it is literary, music, theatre or whatever it might be. By cutting at the voice for so many artists and by cutting at the venue by which we as Canadians get to hear about the work they do, we are damaging the arts community.

*Private Members' Business*

I am very concerned about the government's demonstrated lack of support for the CBC. I recognize that is a big part of how we ought to be supporting the arts.

• (1915)

I would like to note again our support for the motion. We hope the government will recognize just how important the arts are to all our communities.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to speak this evening on Motion M-297, presented by my colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes. It calls upon the government to, on the one hand, roll back the cuts it announced to various programs in the cultural sector and to restore funding for these programs to their fiscal 2008-2009 levels, and on the other hand, to provide direct assistance to artists by increasing the annual budget of the Canada Council for the Arts to \$300 million.

The minister who spoke a few moments ago tells us that we never mentioned this before. Every day, he tables in the House, or shows—and he is not entitled to do so, moreover—the two recommendations from the Bloc Québécois recovery program. The recovery plan I am holding, dated November 24, 2008, on page 5, document 20, tells us that the immediate measures called for by the Bloc are the restoration of cultural programs, which is exactly what we are talking about.

The minister also says that he has done so much for Quebec culture that it is astounding. No doubt that is why the Conservative Party is now polling lower than the NDP in Quebec. Everyone is just so thrilled with what has happened to culture.

The truth is that, during the month of August 2008, seven federal government funding programs for culture were abolished, these being the Arts Promotion Program, Trade Routes, National Training Program for the Film and Video Sector, New Media Research Networks Fund, Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund, Canada Feature Film Fund and Canadian Music Memories Program.

As we have always said, this is definitely a purely ideological decision by the government, because it has never been able, despite repeated calls from all opposition parties to do so, to provide even the tiniest bit of a cost-benefit analysis to prove the inefficiency of those programs. Lots of fine talk, but nothing in black and white. This is really a matter of nickel and diming, since we are talking in total of a measly million or so out of a budget of billions, all for culture.

Quebec is, moreover, by far the hardest hit by these cuts. According to figures from the International Exchange for the Performing Arts, CINARS, 40% of funding to Trade Routes and 68% of funding to PromArt in 2006 and 2007 went to Quebec companies. These cuts hit cultural export activities particularly hard: PromArt, at \$4.2 million, and Trade Routes, at \$2 million, really have no equivalent anywhere else.

Quebec culture, just like Canadian culture, absolutely has to be exported in order to prosper because the local market is too small to ensure its survival. For example, if an artist like Christine Brouillet, an author with a large audience, were to settle for the Quebec market of six million people, she would not earn a living. She needs the

entire francophone market, where she can sell many more books to make a living.

That is why any reduction in support for exporting jeopardizes the very survival of culture in Quebec. My colleague from Verchères—Les Patriotes, who has already spoken about this, just completed a tour of Quebec with our colleague from Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert. I tagged along for one day. All arts-related organizations told them just how much the cuts hurt them and often even wondered whether they would survive as an organization.

To improve funding for artists, the Mouvement pour les arts et les lettres and the Bloc Québécois have been asking for more than five years that the annual budget of the Canada Council for the Arts be increased to \$300 million per year. This would have a direct effect on the income of many artists, which is still below the poverty line, and would also have positive repercussions for community enrichment. We know that culture is profitable. In times of economic crisis, we should not cut back on profitable activities, we should invest in them.

Culture in Quebec represents 314,000 jobs. This economic sector provides 171,000 direct jobs to which must be added the indirect jobs.

• (1920)

In a 2008 document entitled *Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada's Creative Economy*, which the Minister of Canadian Heritage should probably read, the Conference Board states that the multiplier for the cultural sector is 1.84, which means 314,000 jobs, or 171,000 direct jobs multiplied by 1.84, which adds up to 314,000 jobs.

In Canada, according to the Conference Board, the cultural industry produces some \$85 billion in direct and indirect benefits, or 7.5% of Canada's gross domestic product. Clearly, it is not a minor industry. Some 1.1 million people make their living from jobs in the cultural industry alone. Yet the industry's funding is being cut in the middle of an economic crisis.

Tens of thousands of middle-class families earn their living from jobs in the cultural sector, and the average income from such jobs in Quebec in 2005 was \$32,000.

In Montreal, in 2005 alone, culture generated \$1.4 billion in economic spinoffs and was growing at a rate of 4.7% per year. That is not peanuts.

How many tax dollars did culture contribute to federal, provincial and municipal coffers in 2007? Nearly \$25 billion. That is three times more than all governments, taken together, contributed to culture last year. Clearly, there is money to be made, and the government gets back three times more than it invests.

*Private Members' Business*

During our tour, we found that the arts community was not the only one criticizing cuts to culture. Members of the business community, people who know their numbers and can do cost accounting and profit analysis, were critical of the cuts too.

Among those criticizing the government were Isabelle Hudon, president and CEO of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, Marcel Côté, founding partner of the SECOR Group, Bernard Lamarre, one of the wealthiest men in Quebec, of SNC-Lavalin, and Hélène Desmarais, chair of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal.

These are business people who know that the arts are important and profitable. They are calling on the government to continue investing in the arts.

Internationally, we see proof every day that culture can be very profitable.

Take, for example, Guy Laliberté, who became a multi-billionaire—billionaire, not millionaire— just 25 years after building Cirque du Soleil from scratch and with the help of a grant from René Lévesque's discretionary budget.

Today, thousands of people work for Cirque du Soleil under excellent working conditions. Almost all the shows in Las Vegas are by Cirque du Soleil, which continues to go by its French name, even in Las Vegas. It is not called Circus of the Sun; it is called Cirque du Soleil.

There is the show *Mystère* at the Treasure Island hotel; *Kà*, which based on martial arts, at the MGM Grand hotel; *Zumanity*, a slightly sexier show, at the New York, New York hotel; *Believe*, with a lot of magic, at the Luxor hotel; *O*, at the Bellagio hotel; and *Love*, at the Mirage hotel.

That is what happens when we decide to invest in culture. All of this started with the presentation of a show called *La Nouba* at Walt Disney World in Orlando. As we speak, Cirque du Soleil is developing an Elvis Presley show that will be shown at City Center in Las Vegas.

Let us not forget Celine Dion, of course, who over the years has shattered all the show and earnings records at Caesars Palace.

I must also mention Robert Lepage, who plays throughout the world, or Luc Plamondon, whose musicals, like *Starmania* or *Notre Dame de Paris*, are featured around the world.

There is also Xavier Dolan—whom my colleague mentioned—who was the producer, writer and director of the movie *J'ai tué ma mère*, also known as *I Killed my Mother*, a film that won a number of awards in Cannes a few weeks ago. His movie has been sold in 14 countries, including the United States, England and France, but Telefilm Canada refused to invest one red cent.

While English-speaking Canadians are too often willing to adopt American culture as their own, Quebecers know that their culture is profitable and is at the very heart of their identity. They support this culture in any way that they can.

●(1925)

They expect the government to do the same, and that is why we are here today to support this motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** I would ask the hon. member for Verchères—Les Patriotes to close the debate.

**Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we are reaching the end of the debate on Motion M-297, which I was very happy to sponsor. I thank all the members who have taken part, even the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who unfortunately used his time to run the same old tape, which no one wants to hear anymore. I especially want to thank my colleague from Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert—who was just applauding—for her dedication and her enlightened look at this issue, especially during the tour of the regions of Quebec that we had the pleasure of making together and that took us to Trois-Rivières, Joliette, Rouyn-Noranda, Rimouski, Matane, Bonaventure, Laval, Montreal, Victoriaville, Sherbrooke and Saint-Jérôme. My biggest thanks go to the artists, artisans and cultural organizers who shared their opinions on a host of issues they have to deal with every day. I also thank them for their generous support for our efforts to have this motion adopted by all the elected members in this House. I hope that the practical examples that I have taken from those meetings and will share with you in the too-short time I have left will convince even the most skeptical among us of the importance of adopting this motion.

Regarding the Canada Council of the Arts, I can make three observations. The first is that many organizations told us that they had seen their support from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec increase, but that they had received nothing more from its federal counterpart. Second, other organizations such as Festival La Virée in Carleton were simply cut off. Third, a number of cultural groups would like to receive support for operating expenses instead of support for individual projects.

These are just a few examples that show that Canada Council funding needs to be increased.

As for the programs that were cut, it seems clear to me that PromArt and Trade Routes are the ones that the stakeholders we met with on our tour were most upset about.

What will become of all those artists and all those troupes that need to present their creations abroad in order to develop and innovate? In Sherbrooke, I heard a comment that does not bode well. The largest institutions that can no longer afford to travel abroad will try to save their skin in Quebec, leaving little or no room for the smallest productions that managed to survive thanks to the domestic market up to now. Our small population base and the Quebec government's limited financial resources will not be enough to support everyone. This is what we could call the loss of diversity by suffocation.

In that context, what is to become of art other than entertainment? I pass that question on to you, and it could not be more pertinent.



In Victoriaville, Suzanne Richard, representing the Quebec artistic trades council, emphasized how necessary the assistance to artisans through Trade Routes is for the international dissemination of these unique skills. Without its support, this presence in other countries is compromised, yet it constitutes one of the criteria considered by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. To my mind, this is one more proof that the government carried out no impact studies whatsoever on the programs it abolished. That is, at the very least, an irresponsible way to proceed.

What about the Laval theatre troupe, Bluff, which was about to apply for funding from PromArt? Does it have to cancel a production it thought was well on the way to being exported? Where will the Sages Fous perform after the 375th birthday of Trois-Rivières if PromArt is not restored? There are plenty of other questions like these.

We were told in Montreal that foreign purchasers of cultural and artistic productions do not understand why Canada does not foot the bill for artists' and performers' travel and the shipping of their equipment, when this is what is done elsewhere. All this is totally unacceptable.

In addition to their direct impact, I invite my colleagues to reflect on another consequence of these cuts. Will the quality of the artists invited to teach or exhibit their art suffer because they no longer have the opportunity for professional development with artists and the public in other countries? That is a concern raised by the chair of the board of directors of the Concerts aux Îles du Bic.

At our meetings, many comments were made about cultural programs in general. The difficulty of keeping federal programs in sync with the realities of Quebec regions was often mentioned. It is obvious that, in light of this concern, the ideal approach would be for these programs and their budgets to be transferred to the Quebec government. While waiting for that to happen, we can vote for motion M-297.

We came to the same conclusion wherever we went in Quebec and I am convinced that it cannot be any different in Saguenay and Montérégie, where we will be going in a few days. Abolishing these seven programs not only creates uncertainty in the cultural sector, but it also results in the cancellation of foreign tours and layoffs by companies that are barely hanging on.

• (1930)

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** It being 7:30 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 17, 2009, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this adjournment debate in order to revisit a question I asked in this House concerning CBC/Radio-Canada.

On May 24, 2009, I talked about the fact that CBC/Radio-Canada might be forced to sell assets. At that time, I was speaking in the conditional, but we now know that this is the sad reality: CBC/Radio-Canada is being forced to sell some assets and lay people off. At the time, we did not know how many and there was talk of anywhere from 600 to 1,200 employees. We now know that 800 people will lose their jobs in Quebec and Canada. Furthermore, 3,200 people will be indirectly affected and will also lose their jobs.

We were waiting to hear the announcement from the president and CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada, Hubert Lacroix. He later announced the measures he had to take to deal with the \$171 million deficit projected for this year. He wanted to meet his financial obligations and, as I said at the time, all this was happening under the disinterested watch of this government, a government that was planning, and still plans, to help the private sector for ideological reasons, but chooses to close the door on CBC/Radio-Canada.

We have known for a long time that the Conservatives want to shut down the corporation. In fact, when someone was talking about the disappearance of CBC/Radio-Canada in this House, dozens of Conservative members even applauded. Since we have been denouncing their actions they no longer applaud, but that happened right before our eyes in this House. The Conservative members applauded the fact that CBC/Radio-Canada could disappear.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I would now like to talk about the minister's response, because it was completely unsatisfactory. First of all, some of the things the minister said were false. He said that in 2005-06, the Conservatives increased CBC/Radio-Canada's budget, and that the Bloc Québécois voted against it. He does not know his history, not at all, because on May 10, 2006, the Bloc Québécois voted in favour of the government's budget.

He went on to say that in 2006-07, they again increased CBC/Radio-Canada's budget, and that the Bloc Québécois voted against it. Once again, I must say that on March 27, 2007, the Bloc Québécois voted in favour of the budget. He said two things that were false, to say the least.

He went on to say that in 2008-09, they had increased CBC/Radio-Canada's budget, but that the Bloc Québécois had voted against that. First of all, it is not true that they increased the corporation's budget. The budget for CBC/Radio-Canada stayed exactly the same. Obviously, the Bloc Québécois voted against the fact that the CBC/Radio-Canada budget had not been increased and that the government had done nothing to remedy the situation. In addition, this government had just cut \$26 million from arts and culture grant programs. That is another reason why the Bloc Québécois stood up in this House and voted against the budget.

We are asking for stable funding for CBC/Radio-Canada, for \$40 per capita and for the additional \$60 million that the corporation is forced to go looking for year after year to be restored and included in its budget.

• (1935)

[*English*]

**Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise and answer this question.

I am always happy when the Bloc Québécois stands in the House and argues in favour of strong national institutions like the CBC and Radio-Canada that play such a major role here in Canada from coast to coast, and that includes Quebec.

When Bloc members stand in their place and argue in favour of national institutions, it really adds to the strength and vibrance, and culture and fabric of this country. That is a great thing. It is an admission that Canada is great and it shows how well we all work together.

I congratulate the member for speaking on behalf of Canada and our great cultural institution, the CBC.

The member is right. Bloc members did have a good roll going. They did support budget 2006, and that was a smart thing to do. They did support budget 2007, and that was a smart thing to do. They did not support budget 2008 because they felt that if they continued providing support to us that they would probably be in trouble in a lot of Quebec ridings, so they decided, for purely partisan reasons, despite the fact that budget 2008 was really good for Quebecers, to vote against it.

In each and every budget, four budgets in a row, our government increased the funding to the CBC. That is an undeniable fact. The member can do some research on her own behalf if she wants. She

can read the budget that she voted against. She will see that in the last four budgets we increased the funding to the CBC.

That is not the record, by the way, of the previous Liberal government. In 1993, the Liberal government promised to increase funding to the CBC but cut it dramatically. In 1997, the Liberals knew they had broken their promise and said they would increase funding to the CBC. They cut it again and 4,000 jobs were lost.

Our government said we would maintain or increase funding to the CBC: four consecutive budgets, four consecutive increases.

The member speaks about the arts all the time. She knows very well that, for example, the riding of the leader of the Bloc Québécois is receiving \$20 million in support for the arts. Even the leader of the Bloc Québécois would have to acknowledge that this is a record amount of money being sunk into his own riding. That is the result of a budget that he voted against. He voted against his own riding. That is unbelievable.

Bloc members were just debating Motion No. 297, a motion to increase funding to the Canada Council. It is too bad the Bloc does not support that, as the Minister of Canadian Heritage said just a few minutes ago when he spoke in the House.

When we bring forward increases for the arts, as we did in our economic action plan and budget 2009, we did not forget the arts. The Bloc did in both of its statements on the economic action plan. Those members completely disregarded it. There is nothing on the CBC or Radio-Canada in their programs. We did not forget them. We increased funding to both. We made sure that we did not forget them because we value them.

The member should well know, despite whatever she says about Conservatives having a conspiracy against the CBC, the Conservatives created the CBC. We have nothing against the national broadcaster. We believe it adds to the national fabric of this country. That is why we put money behind it.

We do not put money into programs that we think waste money. We make sure that when we spend money, we are getting the maximum benefit not just for artists but for all Canadians. We are going to make sure that every tax dollar we collect is spent effectively. We put record funding behind the CBC.

• (1940)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée:** Madam Speaker, I would really have liked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage to tell us what his government did for CBC/Radio-Canada instead of trying to attack everyone else with rude comments.

The Bloc Québécois supports CBC/Radio-Canada. It is a public institution funded with Quebecers' tax dollars. We are still part of this country, unfortunately, and we pay taxes. Until that changes, we have the right to a say in what happens to Canadian institutions.

I do not agree with what he said about a national institution. To us, a national institution is a Quebec institution, one that belongs to the Quebec nation. CBC/Radio-Canada has done a lot to honour Quebecers' values.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

If everything he said about his budget were true, it might be hard to see why 85% of Quebecers no longer support this Conservative government. Barely 15% of them think that this is a good government.

[English]

**Mr. Dean Del Mastro:** Madam Speaker, I am happy to speak to the support our government has put behind the CBC and the lack of support the Bloc Québécois members showed for artists when they voted against the economic action plan and the when they came up with not one but two economic action plans in the last six months and did not mention the CBC or Radio Canada. They did not mention artists. They forgot about them completely. It is a good thing the Conservatives did not.

The reason why the member keeps bringing me in every night for adjournment questions is because she knows the record of those members. She knows she forgot about them when it came to budgets, or economic action plans or any kind of suggestion economically. They Bloc members know they forgot them. Now they have to come in and try to demonstrate something else with questions every night. It does not cut it.

They forgot them. We did not.

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to once again stand here to call on the government to initiate a government funded public investigation into how and why the number of murdered aboriginal women and girls from the aboriginal community have gone missing and why this number is so unacceptably high.

I raised this matter in the House on May 13, 20 and 26 and again on June 2. It has been nearly a month and my colleague, the member for Labrador, and I, who both raised this issue, have heard no response from the government.

We have written to the Minister of Justice, asking for a full investigation into this matter and to date we have not heard a response from him.

It is a shameful record in our country of the number of known missing and murdered aboriginal girls. We know that 520 of them have gone missing. They are mothers, daughters, granddaughters, sisters and wives. They are young and they are old and they are victims of heinous crimes.

According to the Sisters in Spirit initiative, 347 of the 522, or 67%, have been murdered, 126, or 24%, are still missing and unaccounted for, 43% of the cases, or 223, women have gone missing since the year 2000, 150 of the 347 murder cases remain unsolved, 52% of the women were under the age of 30 at the time of their disappearance and 14% of them were less than 18 years old. These missing women have gone forgotten for too long.

We are concerned that these women have been victims of crime, yet not enough has been done investigate their disappearance and indeed to help prevent this from reoccurring. We need to find out why they disappeared, what the root causes are that contributed to their vanishing, do they include violence against aboriginal women, racism, sexism, aboriginal poverty, historical grievances and what

government policy undertakings must be strengthened or further developed.

We must protect those who are most vulnerable in society. It is critical that we implement measures to both prevent the disappearance of aboriginal women or the lack of response to their disappearance.

We have heard in response to the request before that the Sisters in Spirit initiative addresses it. It is an important initiative, but it is a research initiative. It is a recording initiative. It is not an investigation into how, why and where these women have gone missing.

We are asking the government, in good faith, to launch such an investigation and to do it in a comprehensive way, in consultation with aboriginal communities as to the best manner and method of doing so. Other models of investigations have been implemented by government. This is one that should be unique to the situation.

• (1945)

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a key priority of our government to address violence against all women, and in particular, aboriginal women, who experience both a higher rate and more serious forms of violence than non-aboriginal women.

I have to add here that my hon. colleague brings this up time and time again. I am an aboriginal Métis woman. I have worked on these specific files regarding missing aboriginal women. I trust our police agencies, who are working diligently, day in and day out, to make sure that they uncover every single clue that will lead to the discovery of why they are going missing.

It is offensive to me and to many police agencies to hear the Liberal representative continue to say that they do not do anything, that they are not investigating, and that the Liberals do not have faith in them. I want that to be understood here today because this has got to stop. We have got to show our police agencies more respect than this.

As to the question when? As stated repeatedly, we are working right now to address the complex web of issues related to the disappearance and murder of so many aboriginal girls and women in Canada. One of the ways we do that is by providing support to the Native Women's Association of Canada for the Sisters in Spirit initiative, which is a collaborative, multi-departmental endeavour.

Now in its fifth year, Sisters in Spirit is a \$5 million initiative that has been laying the foundation to address the roots of violence against aboriginal girls and women, specifically by improving education and employment outcomes; reducing poverty; providing safe, appropriate housing; working to eliminate homelessness; and improving access to justice.

[Translation]

Governments are working together and sharing best practices to improve the lives of aboriginal women and girls both on and off reserve.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Police forces across Canada are sharing their resources and their experience to put an end to the family, sexual and racial violence that threaten the lives of so many aboriginal women and weaken Canada's social fabric. Their goal is to improve investigation and intervention services and models.

Status of Women Canada is an active member of federal-provincial-territorial subcommittees on healing and subcommittees on missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Together with its partners, Justice Canada is working hard to improve the way the criminal justice system deals with cases involving missing and murdered aboriginal women.

[*English*]

Status of Women has also provided funding to address the unique issues facing aboriginal women. In 2008-09, Status of Women provided over \$3.2 million in funding to projects that directly impact aboriginal women. This funding builds on the 2007-08 Status of Women funding, which saw \$14.6 million go to projects helping aboriginal women.

The Government of Canada recognizes that the solution to the problem of missing and murdered aboriginal women, and to the more generalized problem of violence against women, lies in the achievement of equality for women.

Let me assure all hon. members in the House that the government is committed to achieving that goal, and I, as a former police officer and a Métis woman, will stand up every single time that the opposition members bring this up to negate what they are saying, and to support our police agencies and all of the partner stakeholders who are definitely invested in this, which includes our government.

• (1950)

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Madam Speaker, I will continue to raise this matter time and time again until there is a response from the government.

In no way do I mean to disparage the police officers or police forces across the country, but quite clearly when a significant number of women are still unaccounted for or have gone missing, a large number of cases have not been solved, there is a need for an inquiry to see why this is indeed the case.

We know that international forums, whether it is the CEDAW group or UN peer group, cast aspersions on the Canadian government for its lack of response for this heinous crime. The needs of this cohort of women have not been addressed.

I will continue to raise this issue. It is an important issue. It in no way says that police communities are not responding, but there is a need for something further and greater information on this issue.

**Mrs. Shelly Glover:** Madam Speaker, I will reiterate that the actions taken by the hon. member, when she stands on this issue, do suggest that our police agencies and other stakeholders invested in this are not taking this seriously when we are taking it very seriously.

Our government has done other things to make sure that the commitment to our aboriginal women is taken seriously. For example, in our economic action plan we announced \$400 million over two years for new housing projects and remediation of existing

housing on first nations reserves. We also announced \$200 million over two years in support of housing in the north.

Our government has also been working with aboriginal organizations to address the many challenges in the lives of aboriginal women. We will continue this work. We expect some support on that side of the House, for not only the work we do but the work the police officers are doing and the other stakeholders, who tell us time and time again they appreciate what we have done.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise again tonight to speak to an issue of great importance to people, not only in my riding of Random—Burin—St. George's, but in the country as a whole, particularly people who are trying to obtain employment insurance and cannot do so because the government has not taken sufficient measures to enable them to access employment insurance on a timely basis.

We are dealing with individuals throughout the country who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and find themselves in a position where in many cases they cannot pay their mortgage, buy medication, put food on the table for their families, buy clothing for their family or themselves, they cannot put gas in their vehicles, all because they do not have any income. They do not have an income because they have lost their job. Just as importantly, they are not able to access a system that should be there to ensure they can do all these things just as they could when they were working.

I have listened to the government tell the story that it put in additional resources. If that is the case, why is it that people still have to wait 50, 60, 70 days to get a response to their employment insurance claim? This is money that individuals across this country put into this program. This is not the government's money. This is money that is owned by the individuals throughout the country who paid into an employment insurance program for emergencies. When people lose their jobs it is just that, an emergency.

If the government has indeed put in additional resources and hired additional people to try to speed up the claim process because of the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who have lost jobs in the recent number of months, then why is it we are not able to deal with it more efficiently? Why is it that we are not able to get these claims moving a lot quicker than they are at present?

If in fact we are not able to respond, or not responding in a timely manner to this dire situation that people find themselves in, why are we not putting more money into the program? Why are we not taking more measures to move things quickly? I am told that the money going into doing that comes from the employment insurance program itself. It is not as if the government has to take responsibility for paying additional people. That comes out of the employment insurance program itself. If that is the case, why is the government not doing more? Why is it not moving quicker and hiring more people to make sure the process works much quicker?

*Adjournment Proceedings*

We have people who are losing their jobs through no fault of their own, and they are being victimized again because they are not able to access an employment insurance program. Why is this necessary? Why did the government not foresee that this was going to be a problem, knowing we were in a recession, knowing that companies were laying off people by the hundreds of thousands? Why is it the government did not take the measures necessary to make sure we had an employment insurance program that could respond readily to the emergency that many individuals across the country find themselves in?

• (1955)

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to be here this evening to respond once again to the hon. member for Random—Burin—St. George's.

The member ought to take notes, as I have outlined the various steps that our government has taken, both in respect to processing time and to the benefits that have been extended. She should listen to that.

We are taking real action to help those who are vulnerable and unemployed. We will continue to do that. We have made unprecedented investments to help those who, through no fault of their own, as the member said, have suffered from an unexpected job loss during this global economic recession.

Among other things, we have extended the EI benefits by five weeks, more than double the two weeks the opposition has been asking for. It will certainly be a more substantial help to Canadians when they need it the most. We have extended the EI work sharing program. That alone has saved more than 120,000 Canadian jobs by protecting them. The numbers continue to grow. We have taken action to enhance the program, to make it easier for employers to access. We have ensured the red tape has been cut. We will continue to work with Canadian employers to share the costs and keep Canadians working.

We are investing \$1 billion for further skills training through the EI program. This includes \$500 million in skills training and upgrading for long-tenured workers, and \$500 million for training for those who do not even qualify for EI. These training funds will help Canadians gain new skills so they can succeed in the jobs of the future as our country recovers from the economic downturn.

With respect to managing the substantial increase in EI claims, we have invested more than \$60 million to help manage and process these claims quickly. We have cut red tape for employers. We have invested additional resources to ensure claims are processed quicker. This is on top of the many other administrative efforts we have taken to ensure that the benefits get to the recipients as quickly as possible. We are monitoring the effectiveness of these measures, and we will continue to do that.

All of that said, I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Liberal EI scheme. The scheme proposed by that party will not help a single Canadian find a new job. It will not help a single Canadian keep his or her job. It will not help a single Canadian gain any new skills. No, it will simply add billions of dollars to the tax burden of hard-working Canadians and employers at the worst

possible time when the economy is undergoing the stress that it is currently undergoing. Of course, I am talking about the Liberal 360 hour, 45 day work year scheme.

The opposition members can say what they want about this scheme, but the fact is it is an irresponsible proposal that would result in a massive increase in a job-killing payroll tax that will hurt workers and businesses at a time when they can least afford it.

In spite of these irresponsible ideas from the opposition, our government will continue helping Canadians get through this tough time. We are going to do it in a responsible manner. We have invested millions of dollars into skills upgrading and training. We have frozen the EI premiums, injecting about \$4.5 billion into the economy. We have extended benefits. Those are the kinds of things that need to be done at this particular time, and we are doing them.

• (2000)

**Ms. Judy Foote:** Madam Speaker, once again I listened to my colleague speak about the different programs the Conservatives have invested in, but he still fails to recognize that the issue is that people are not able to obtain employment insurance in a timely manner.

He said that the government has invested \$60 million in bringing in additional resources so that there will be more people to respond to the need, in terms of people being able to access EI. My understanding is that is money that comes out of the employment insurance program. In fact, the President of the Treasury Board told us that in a recent committee meeting. It is in fact money that Canadians themselves put into the employment insurance program.

All we are asking the government to do is take a little more of that money and increase the number of people who are responding to the needs. In that way maybe more people will be able to obtain employment insurance much quicker.

**Mr. Ed Komarnicki:** Madam Speaker, it is quite ironic that the member would get up and speak that way when that party took \$50 billion out of the EI fund and used it for general revenue and expenses. We are investing billions of dollars to ensure that the benefits are there. We are investing the amount of dollars that are needed to ensure that claims are processed in a timely manner.

I would like to draw attention to the 45-day work year plan which would do nothing more than raise taxes at a time when it would hurt most businesses and individuals. In fact, the Liberal leader himself said that he would have to raise taxes. There is no doubt about that.

We have taken steps to ensure that benefits are provided, that benefits are extended, that there are no additional taxes for the employers and employees, and that during this difficult time, we are there for them to ensure that the benefits will be received in a timely fashion.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

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(The House adjourned at 8:02 p.m.)







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Wednesday, June 10, 2009

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