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Friday, October 30, 2009

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Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, October 30, 2009

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*English*]

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM ACT

Hon. Peter Kent (for the Minister of Public Safety) moved that Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act, be read a second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have this opportunity at second reading to speak about how this government is delivering on its commitment to protect from terrorist activities the safety and security of Canadians, both at home and abroad, while giving those who do fall victim to heinous acts of terrorism an ability to fight back.

Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act, is a result of victims' initiatives championed by an organization called the Canadian Coalition Against Terror, know by its acronym C-CAT, which represents Canadian terror victims. C-CAT has played a critical role in driving this bill forward.

I would like to personally credit Danny Eisen and Sheryl Saperia, two young Canadians who put heart and soul into C-CAT. Credit is due as well to many supporters across Canada who have contributed time and effort to this important initiative. However, the driving force has been Maureen Basnicki, who lost her husband Ken in the 9/11 destruction of the twin towers in New York City. Maureen has been joined in the C-CAT cause over the years by Canadians of all communities who have also had their lives and the lives of loved ones touched by terror.

The legislation before us today would provide the Government of Canada with another important tool to protect Canadians from acts of terrorism while ensuring that victims of these heinous acts have the chance to seek justice. Over the last few years, all of us have been witness to the horrible carnage that terrorism can and does leave in its wake.

Canadians including constituents from my riding of Thornhill have been personally affected by terrorism. We have witnessed the broken lives, the broken communities and the constant state of fear

and panic that innocent bystanders as well as victims and their families are forced to endure.

Most recently, we heard of a string of terrorist attacks in Pakistan, where innocent civilians were indiscriminately massacred. The bombings in Mumbai, the attacks on Sri Lanka's national cricket team and the recent arrest of seven people on suspicion of planning a terrorist attack in Amsterdam are all chilling reminders of the continuing threat of terrorism.

[*Translation*]

Canada is not immune to this threat. Hundreds of Canadians were killed in the bombing of Air India flight 182, the worst act of terrorism in Canadian history, and the biggest in North America before the September 11 tragedy.

Canada has been designated as a potential target for terrorist attacks by organizations like al-Qaeda. We have also seen the successful action taken against terrorists born or recruited in our country before they could execute their plans. We must not stick our heads in the sand and pretend that this country has no interest in participating in the worldwide fight on terrorism. We must continue to take concrete and decisive action. That is the reason for Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act.

[*English*]

We need to take steps to prevent these acts from occurring in the first place, and when they do occur we need to ensure that victims' voices are heard. That is what Bill C-35 is all about.

Bill C-35 demonstrates this government's commitment to deterring terrorism and to giving victims the possibility to seek redress.

Specifically, it would create a course of action to allow victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism. It would modify the State Immunity Act to allow the Government of Canada to lift the immunity of states that are deemed to support terrorism. The bill demonstrates Canada's leadership in combatting terrorism and terrorist supporters.

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Providing victims with an opportunity to seek justice for violent acts committed against them is a fundamental tenet of our legal system and a cornerstone of Canadian society. Criminals, including terrorists, need to be held to account. They need to know there are consequences to their actions. Victims too need to know that their interests are paramount and that they can move on with their lives to every extent possible.

Canada applies these principles domestically. The bill before us today would further extend them to some of the most callous acts of violence imaginable, regardless of whether they are committed here in Canada or overseas.

Bill C-35 would allow victims to use courts to seek redress provided they can show a real and substantial connection between their action and Canada. The burden of proof is smaller in civil cases.

Civil suits would deter future acts of violence by bankrupting or financially impairing the terrorist infrastructure through successful judgments and/or by causing terrorist sponsors to refrain from future sponsorship out of fear of the publicity and exposure that would result from a civil suit.

Bill C-35 proposes to allow victims to seek redress not just from the perpetrators of terrorist acts but also from their supporters.

Today we know that terrorist groups seldom act alone. The scale and sophistication of terrorist operations in recent years have often required vast amounts of financial and organizational support. That support can come from other entities and even from other states. Many observers have often described the relationship between terrorist groups and certain governments as one of a state operating within a state.

The present reality is that money is the lifeblood of terrorism. One of the most effective ways to deter terrorism and to put terrorists out of business is therefore to hit them where it can hurt the most, in the pocketbook.

The bill before us today, Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act, would do just that by allowing victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, including those states that support terrorism, while respecting the important international relations that we have.

●(1010)

[*Translation*]

For example, Bill C-35 will allow victims of terrorist attacks to seek redress for losses or damages resulting from a terrorist act committed anywhere in the world on, or after, January 1, 1985, if they can demonstrate a real and substantial connection between their cause of action and Canada. Victims will be able to sue the perpetrators as well as supporters of terrorism, including some states that are known supporters.

Bill C-35 would lift the immunity of those states, under certain conditions, so that governments that support terrorism can no longer hide behind the international rules and agreements between so-called civilized, law-abiding countries.

[*English*]

As Victor Comras, one of the five international monitors appointed to oversee the implementation of security council measures against terrorism and terrorist financing, once noted:

...major terrorism's financial abettors and supporters...have successfully avoided criminal prosecution. (...) [C]ivil liability cases... associated with terrorism may [therefore] constitute the best constraints we have against their activities and our best chances to hold them accountable.

Bill C-35 proposes to do exactly this by lifting state immunity for states known to support terrorism. The decision to list such countries will be made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in consultation with the Minister of Public Safety and will be subject to review every two years. Listed countries will also be able to make a written application for delisting, which again will be reviewed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in consultation with the Minister of Public Safety.

There are, therefore, safeguards and review mechanisms built into this provision, striking the appropriate balance between accountability, justice and fairness.

The bill before us today is also reasonable. It proposes to give the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance the discretion to help victims identify and locate the property of a foreign state against which a judgment has been rendered, provided such assistance falls within the minister's mandate and it is in Canada's best interests to do so.

The provisions of Bill C-35 respond to the needs of victims. They respond to the needs of Canadians who want us to work together to put an end to terrorist acts and to ensure that we protect their safety and their security at home as well as abroad.

Several years have now passed since that terrible day in 2001 when Canadians and people from around the world became aware of just how much they were at risk and how committed terrorists are to causing untold and indiscriminate damage.

[*Translation*]

Since then, Canada and its allies have taken a stand to say that we are not afraid, that we will not bow down to the terrorists, and that we will not give in to terror.

[*English*]

We are not going to back down from terrorists or give in to fear. We are going to meet the threats they pose head-on and take the necessary steps to protect this country, protect our fellow citizens and help ensure that terrorists do not succeed in raining havoc among our friends, our neighbours and our allies overseas.

That is the commitment all of us as Canadians made in 2001. It is the commitment that all of us today as Canadians still believe in. The bill presently before us gives this country another important tool in our efforts to both deter terrorism and help ensure that victims get the justice they so rightly deserve.

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That is what our government has committed to doing and what the legislation before us today is all about. I therefore urge hon. members to give speedy passage to the bill we are debating today and send one loud and very clear message to all those who would threaten our safety and security: Canada is prepared to do anything and everything we can to defeat terrorism.

• (1015)

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has brought in a number of pieces of legislation that attempt to address the issue of victims of crime, including the repeal of the faint hope clause, the serious fraud sentencing provisions and the limitations on conditional sentences for serious crimes. In fact we often hear victims of crime saying that they are both appalled and frustrated at some of the changes that have been made to our justice system by the former Liberal government.

Therefore I would like to ask Mr. Kent this. Is this bill just another example of our government acting strongly on behalf of victims, and is it not about time that victims' voices were given greater weight in our justice system?

The Deputy Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Kitchener Centre may have used a proper name. I would just remind him that we use titles or ridings in this place.

The hon. minister of state.

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, in Canada today, there are too many whose lives, as I have said, have been touched by acts of terrorism in recent years and who continue, in some cases, to live under further acts of terrorism.

The bill would allow any victim of terrorism, past that effective date mentioned in my speech, to file an action in Canada to seek redress for loss and damages resulting from such a terrorist act committed by a terrorist entity listed under the Criminal Code. It would also, as I said, allow redress against other persons or organizations who supported, financially or in other ways, the terrorist and the terrorist action. The court would determine whether and how to hear the case by determining whether there is a real and substantial connection between the action and Canada.

In considering the bill, we need to consider the words delivered in a speech yesterday by the new head of CSIS who said that too many in our community, in our country, in our society and in the media seem to think that terrorism is an issue that exists beyond our borders, that in fact it is unrealistic and unreasonable to pursue the sorts of changes and improvements to our criminal justice system, as mentioned by the hon. member, or in fact the sorts of measures that are provided for in Bill C-35.

The new head of CSIS made it very clear that there is a real threat and that it is around us every day for those who would open their eyes. Again, the words from a leading and informed member of the intelligence community should be heeded by all Canadians and certainly by members of this House.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of the questions and maybe a comment to start off.

The comments we all followed from the new head of CSIS should be put in context. I am not sure I see a direct connection with the bill.

I understand his concerns, but what we are referring to here in the bill is opening up a law that people have been concerned about that right now state immunity applies simply for financial concerns and not other areas. However, I will leave that aside for now.

It was mentioned in the bill that a list would be compiled. I will be speaking to the bill later and will enumerate my concerns with the bill in this area. I think everyone supports the notion of being able to deal with the issue of grievances as it relates to terrorism but many are concerned, and I share their concerns, with having the list. People who support changing the immunity of players around the world for various things have mentioned this concern.

Does the minister of state not share the concerns of others about limiting the legislation to a list that is derived by cabinet, notwithstanding the review of two years? I share that concern with them and I would like to see that amended.

I am being very straight up about this with my next question. Does the minister really think that terrorists will be deterred by legislation that is passed in Canada? I really question that assumption and I would like to hear his thoughts on that.

• (1020)

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for reasonable commentary and for perfectly reasonable and valid questions.

In order to address the matter of listings, we need to remember that there are more than 100 countries with which Canada today does not have extradition agreements. Lifting the immunity of these states would expose, it is true, some of Canada's strategic international partners, including countries with which we share a strong commitment to fighting terrorism.

The creation of a listing regime is necessary to provide flexibility in protecting both Canada's national interest as well as the needs of victims. The listing regime set out in Bill C-35 shows that the government is providing global leadership, I think it is fair to say, in denouncing and clearly identifying these supporters of terrorism.

As to my colleague's question about the reality of the impact that Bill C-35 might have in terms of discouraging those thinking of considering a terrorist act against Canadians or Canadian properties here or abroad, we realize that those determined to commit terrorist acts may not be discouraged by a mere law, by civil behaviour or the reasonable relations of communities around the world, but it does discourage those who would support and finance those individuals.

It is an equal reality that these acts of terrorists cannot be carried out without financing and, in many cases, substantial financing, and that by discouraging those who support and finance terrorists, wherever they might be in the world, and admittedly it will be easier to prosecute within Canada under the Criminal Code than abroad, but this would discourage and, we believe, would have significant benefit to discourage terrorism here and abroad.

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Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the minister of state about something that many have had concerns, and that is the limits of the bill and that many wanted to see, in terms of priority, the reach of our ability to go after those who involve themselves in torture of Canadian citizens. In fact, there are many groups who wanted to see that as a primary focus before this issue because of some of the reasons the minister just mentioned in terms of state actors and how that could affect our relations with countries that we are trying to work with to stem terrorism. That remains a concern of many.

I am wondering why the legislation did not open it up to the issue of torture. As we know, Mr. Arar and others were tortured by regimes, by state actors, and it would seem that this would be in line with where the government is going in terms of opening this facet up. Is the government contemplating going beyond terrorism—

● (1025)

The Deputy Speaker: I am going to have to stop the member there to allow the minister of state 30 seconds to respond.

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for raising valid concerns. The short answer is, no. This particular bill is aimed at terrorists and the sponsors of terrorists in the interest of victims and their families. I think that any other legislation would merely distract from the central purpose of this particular law.

Bill C-35 certainly deserves due consideration and debate but it is what it is and we believe it is a law that should pass expeditiously through the House.

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the world changed on September 11. I do not know whether the world changed or whether a darker side of our universe was somehow exposed. However, what is clear is that September 11 was a transformative event, impacting on our psyches as well as on our politics, on our priorities as well as on our purposes.

Eight years ago, the reach of global terrorism was illustrated, tragically, more vividly, viscerally and violently to Canadians than ever before. Twenty-four Canadian families lost loved ones in the 9/11 attacks, reminding us also of the horror of Air India years earlier.

Amid the horror and outrage, our government reacted and enacted legislation in the form of Bill C-36. Accordingly, while the threat of terrorism or any legislative response to it was not even on the parliamentary or political radar screen before September 11, it dominated the discourse thereafter and since the enactment of the Anti-terrorism Act some three months after 9/11 itself.

Another measure is now before Parliament, the government's Bill C-35, which has the potential to alter Canada's approach to terrorism as well. However, I want to suggest that the private member's bill that I introduced on behalf of my party is a more dramatic and correct approach in order to provide justice and redress by way of civil remedy to victims of terror while at the same time effectively deterring the states, perpetrators and sponsors of terrorism.

What we have to understand, and this applies both to the government legislation and our own, and here I agree with the generic premise of the government legislation respecting the need to amend the State Immunity Act, for while acts of terrorism are clearly

illegal under international law, customary international law has historically given states immunity from suit in domestic courts.

Therefore, we have the situation where Canada's State Immunity Act, in accordance with this basic principle of customary international law, affirmed the principle that a foreign state is immune from jurisdiction in any court in Canada with certain specific exceptions.

Ironically, there is an exception for commercial activity but there is not an exception for terrorist activity. We have a situation where, simply put, our State Immunity Act unconscionably favours foreign states that aid and abet terrorists over Canadians who are harmed by that terror. It removes impugny with respect to commercial transactions but it retains immunity with respect to terrorist actions. It is in that context that I introduced a private member's bill to rectify this inversion of rights and remedy, this inversion of law and morality.

Under this legislation, when a state engages in the sponsorship of terrorism, it deserves no protection from our federal government. When a state supports a terrorist group that targets Canadians, our Canadian tax dollars should not be spent on defending that state's immunity from liability.

The private member's bill that I introduced sets forth in its preamble the *raison d'être* for this legislation. I would acknowledge that this *raison d'être* may well be the objective of the government's legislation and, indeed, features of its preamble in its legislation very much resemble the features in my private member's bill.

What I will seek to show is, while we both may have the same objectives in mind, regrettably, the Conservative legislation does not secure at the end of the day redress for victims of terror, nor does it deter the state perpetrators of terror because the listing framework set forth in the government's legislation undermines the very objectives in the legislation itself, as I will show.

● (1030)

However, let me turn now to our preamble in Bill C-408, which sets for the *raison d'être* for the legislation. It speaks clearly to the United Nations Security Council resolution 1373, enacted in the aftermath of 2001, and subsequent UN Security Council resolutions thereafter. It states:

—reaffirms that acts of international terrorism constitute a threat to international peace and security, and reaffirms the need to combat by all means—

As our preamble has put it. It continues:

—in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts;

It states that:

—the prohibition against terrorism, as well as the prevention, repression and elimination of terrorism, are peremptory norms of international law—

That is what I refer to as *jus cogens*.

—accepted and recognized by the international community of States as a whole as norms from which no derogation is possible;

—the support and financing of terrorism...are criminal acts under international law, not sovereign acts for which a state is entitled to immunity;

—the victims of terrorist acts include the individuals who are physically, emotionally or psychologically injured by the terrorist acts, as well as their family members;

- hundreds of Canadians have been murdered or injured in terrorist attacks;
- the Government of Canada reported to the Security Council that fighting terrorism is...the highest priority for the Government of Canada;

I close, with respect to our preamble, and I acknowledge that many of these same principles are set forth in the preamble of the government legislation. As to objective, there may well be a shared objective, but as to the achievement of that objective, the legislations then diverge, and I will show in a few moments exactly how that divergence undermines the very purpose of the legislation of the government, but I will suggest that this purpose is secured by our private member's legislation.

Finally the preamble states that:

- it is in the public interest to enable plaintiffs to bring civil lawsuits against terrorists and their sponsors, which will have the effect of impairing the [function] of terrorist groups, thereby deterring and preventing future [terrorist] attacks;

Admittedly, and this needs to be said, prior to the introduction of Bill C-35, or the introduction of my private member's bill, victims of terrorist acts, arguably, had the capacity to sue individual terrorists, or terrorist entities, or groups, for loss or damage suffered, using Canadian civil responsibility or tort principles in that regard. In fact, if one looked into the situation, there indeed have been civil suits previously in this regard that in fact address the sponsors themselves.

Also, in that regard, at first blush, there may be some concern therefore that while the existing legislation has allowed, under civil law, delictual law in Quebec or the common law of tort, remedies to be taken, this legislation, either that proposed by the government or that proposed by us, raises some constitutional concerns because it attaches civil remedies to federal legislation when such civil remedies are normally thought to be matters within a provincial jurisdiction.

However, as the constitutional law will show, Parliament can establish provisions related to civil redress if they are established within the context of broader regulatory or administrative schemes, which are themselves within Parliament's legislative jurisdiction under the constitution act or, more specific, if they are under the federal jurisdiction in matters related to criminal law, and certainly anti-terrorism law, in its pith and substance, is not only matters related to criminal law but matters of national concern, matters that the courts have held are within the peace order and good government clause and that the civil remedies are, in that sense, ancillary to a power that already exists within a federal jurisdiction.

● (1035)

Other concerns have been raised, which I will very quickly refer to because they have risen in debate this morning and they will arise in discussions before the committee. It might be useful to address them very quickly.

Apart from the constitutional issue, a reference has been made by my hon. colleague from the New Democratic Party on the matter that this legislation gives a right of civil remedy to victims of terrorism, but does not give a right of civil remedy to victims of torture.

That is correct, but the reason for this is not that victims of torture do not have a right to civil remedy. They do. I could even give notice now that I will be introducing legislation that will also provide a civil remedy for victims of torture in the same way that my private

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member's bill purports to give a civil remedy to victims of terror. However, the issues from a legal point of view, as I will point out at the time of the introduction of my private member's bill, are different in terms of the characterization of the issues, the nature of the remedy, the character of the perpetrator and the like and one could not comingle the two in this legislation because one would do a disservice to both.

Another concern that has been raised is the fact that diplomatic concerns may arise with respect to this legislation and this leads to the final concern and that is the matter of listing of legislation. Here we come to the core of the differences between our legislation.

Simply put, the Conservative legislation takes as its basic premise that state immunity should still operate. In other words, and this is crucial, victims of terrorism under the government legislation will be unable to sue a country that should be held responsible unless the Canadian government decides it should be held responsible. Therefore, whether a foreign state is listed will always be the subject of political negotiations between government. It will always be an issue of executive discretion. It will always have an element of arbitrariness about it. It will take away the basic right of civil remedy from the victims themselves.

In other words, after studying the government's proposed legislation and while I may share its purpose, and I am not questioning the intention, I regard it as necessary in terms of justice for victims of terrorism to put before the House a bill that properly addresses the evil of transnational terrorism, that properly targets the impunity of those states that perpetrate, sponsor or finance acts of terrorism and that properly allows Canadian victims of terrorism to seek justice.

We have an opportunity to provide redress for Canadian victims anchored in principles of domestic and international law. Regrettably, the government's bill handcuffs the victims of terrorism by subjecting them to a political list of countries that the government chooses to target. In this the government bill fails victims of terrorism and places politics above justice.

Simply put, the government's bill takes as its basic premise that state immunity should still operate, which undermines its own purpose in the legislation even when a state is charged with supporting terrorism. Only those states that the government chooses to single out will be held accountable. The government's legislation politicizes the legislation as victims of terrorism have themselves noticed.

Our legislation, my private member's bill's premise on the foundational principle that sponsors of terrorism do not deserve to be shielded by Canadian law and thus state immunity should not continue to operate for such perpetrators of terrorism as it will continue to operate under the government bill.

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I move to a close, referring to the words of Victor Comras, which were invoked by the government in order to support its legislation, a former senior official in the U.S. state department who testified before a Senate Standing Committee for Legal and Constitutional Affairs, he explained how maintaining a list of designated countries ended up undermining the U.S. legislation. Therefore, the authority that the Conservatives rely on is Mr. Victor Comras, who came before our standing committee in the Senate and said, “don't go there, don't enact that legislation”. His exact words were, “If we had to do it over again, I have no doubt we would have done it without a list”.

● (1040)

Then he concluded in his testimony here in Canada, “Please learn from our lesson...do not make the same mistake”.

The government, which is invoking Mr. Victor Comras as authority for its legislation, is making the exact mistake that Mr. Comras warned against. I invite the government to in fact respond to Mr. Comras, whom itself has quoted.

While we share the basic principle with the government that victims of terror must have a civil remedy with respect to deterring acts of terror, with respect to providing justice for victims of terror, with respect to giving them standing before the courts to confront the terrorist perpetrators and the like and with respect to removing any immunity from civil liability before Canadian courts, that will only be accomplished if we adopt the private member's bill or if the government is responsive and amends its legislation so as to include the basic principled approach to providing civil remedies for victims of terror that is contained in our private member's bill.

Then we can go forward in common cause, the government and the opposition, to provide victims of terror with a civil remedy that will effectively deter terrorism, that will effectively hold terrorists liable, that will effectively remove immunity from such terrorists, their sponsors, their agents and their like and that will give and secure justice as it must be done for victims of terror.

Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am indeed reassured that both the private member's bill and the government Bill C-35 have a common objective.

My colleague is absolutely correct in characterizing the only significant difference as being between the listing of states. This list will be created by the government and it will be created to recognize the 41 terrorist entities, which are now listed pursuant to the Canadian Criminal Code.

The words of Mr. Comras are indeed correct. Mr. Comras has said many things. It is quite reasonable for a government or an individual to accept some of his opinions, statements and conclusions as worthy of inclusion and consideration in Canadian law, but not necessarily, *holus bolus*, everything that he said.

Canada recognizes that lifting of immunity of all states may in fact have a significant effect on Canada's international relations, interests and foreign policies, particularly on democratic allies, which have little or no likelihood of ever being listed as supporters or sponsors of state terrorism.

The ability to amend and to add to the list as time changes, and there is provision for a review every two years after all, is that not a pragmatic way of moving forward?

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. minister that we have the same objective. The minister says that the only significant difference, or the only single difference as he might even have put it, is the issue of listing. That is a dramatic difference which goes to the core of the difference in our legislation. It undermines the very purpose, as I indicated, of the government's *raison d'être* in its legislation. It is a crucial difference, for listing retains the principle of state immunity for the most part.

In our private member's legislation we wished to reverse the notion, whereas the Conservative bill takes as its basic premise that state immunity should still operate and victims of terrorism would be unable to sue a country that should be held responsible unless the Canadian government decides it should not be held responsible. Under our private member's legislation we take the basic premise that state immunity should not operate an injustice by denying victims of terrorism their day in court.

The minister, if I can sum him up, made a point about listing possibly preventing frivolous or vexatious lawsuits against our democratic allies and the like. While our private member's bill would remove immunity from perpetrators of terrorism and state sponsors of terrorism, it also has an exception with respect to civil remedies for victims of terrorism. It refers to those countries with whom we have an extradition treaty; that is, those countries that respect and are anchored in the rule of law, have an independent judiciary, a democratic process and the like. Victims of terrorism could seek redress in those countries because of the democratic nature of the regimes, the independent judiciary and due process. We have addressed that issue.

What we are saying is that with the rest of the international community the situation should not be an arbitrary listing, which is always going to be subject to political negotiation, which in turn is going to make our foreign relations more difficult, where the government makes the choice as to who should be sued rather than the victim being able to exercise the judgment as to whom should be sued. In other words, it still retains the principle of state immunity. Our private member's bill would remove state immunity except for democracies anchored in the rule of law.

It is possible to frame legislation between the government's bill and our bill that would protect victims of terrorism, offer them an effective remedy, and remove the principle of state immunity, which continues to operate under the government's legislation through the listing process.

● (1045)

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of State of Foreign Affairs for the Americas a question about listing. I am wondering if my colleague could speak a bit about the possibility of changing this bill. Unless that is taken out of this bill, this bill would be hard to support. The member has underlined crucial amendments.

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Can we amend the bill to also protect victims of torture? If we cannot do it in this bill, then I would like my colleague's feelings on when we should do that. His private member's initiatives are important in this area. I would like his comments on that.

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond. I think that victims of torture deserve a right of civil redress no less than do victims of terror.

My only point was that from a legal point of view we could not commingle the two principles in the same bill without doing a disservice to both. Therefore, I introduced a private member's bill with respect to providing a civil remedy for victims of terror and I will be introducing shortly a private member's bill to provide a civil remedy for victims of torture.

In that way we will have two distinguishable, though related, bills with respect to the matter of principle, but in the matter of process we will be able to go forward effectively to secure the rights of victims of torture and terror respectively.

In the matter of the listing, I regard this as a fundamental issue because, as I said, it goes to the core of the principle of state immunity. The whole purpose of the government introducing its legislation and my introducing my legislation is to remove this operating principle of state immunity, so as to provide victims of terror a civil remedy which they cannot now have because of the State Immunity Act.

Therefore, if we are going to amend the State Immunity Act, we have to amend it in a way that gives an effective right of redress to victims of terror. If we keep the listing system, we not only deprive the victims of terror of an effective right of redress but we do not effectively deter the state perpetrators of terrorism and the state sponsors of terrorism because unless they are somehow arbitrarily put on that list, they themselves retain the immunity from suit.

Putting them on a list, as the government chooses to do, also invokes a kind of arbitrariness in the whole process. Therefore, to retain the principle of effectively amending the State Immunity Act to give victims of terror an effective right of redress, we strongly urge the government to remove the listing approach. Then we can combine to put together a bill that will serve the needs of victims of terror that will effectively deter terrorism, that will properly amend the State Immunity Act, and that will be consonant with both our domestic law, our international law, and the UN Security Council resolutions and the like that I referred to earlier in my preamble as a *raison d'être* to this legislation.

• (1050)

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the hon. member how proud all of us are in the Liberal caucus and I am sure in the whole House to have somebody of his calibre focusing his great attention on this question.

I would like to ask the member to comment on this thought. The minister referred to the political difficulties of listing certain countries with respect to our foreign relations. Would the member not agree with me that by turning this into a political act by the government putting countries on the list, it constantly politicizes an issue and makes an issue more difficult when in fact the purpose of the legislation is to grant a civil right to victims that would be there

in a sense regardless of politics? It is not because one country or another is on a list that there is a problem, it is because that victim can prove in court that in fact that country is responsible for an act of terrorism.

Hon. Irwin Cotler: Mr. Speaker, the government's bill regrettably will introduce a standing politicization. The government will be engaged in negotiating which governments should be on the list or should be removed from the list, and the victims of terror will be denied their effective redress. Remove the list, give the victims of terror an effective redress, and deter acts of terrorism at the same time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, given that oral question period is imminent, this major 20-minute speech that I am about to give will unfortunately be interrupted. But no one will miss anything, for I will be back to finish my speech on Bill C-35.

The purpose of this bill is to lift the immunity of states that support terrorism and expose them to private civil actions. The Bloc Québécois has already pointed out its many reservations about this bill, but we are prepared to examine it in committee. As I have always said, all legislation deserves to be examined in committee, unless it is completely absurd or goes against our values. We can study it to determine if this kind of bill can be improved in any way. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, we have many questions. There are a number of irritants in this bill that will definitely have to be eliminated in order to obtain the Bloc Québécois' support.

Right now, the State Immunity Act prevents victims from suing states. The act gives foreign states jurisdictional immunity before Canadian courts and prevents anyone from suing foreign states in Canada, even for crimes recognized under international law. This jurisdictional immunity also applies in cases where the victim is Canadian, as in the cases of Zahra Kazemi, William Sampson and Maher Arar.

In criminal cases, the law currently permits legal action against foreign officials. Legal action may also be taken against agents of a foreign government for abuses perpetrated outside of Canada. However, both the victim and the perpetrator must hold Canadian citizenship when the crime is committed, or the perpetrator of the abuse or crime must be in Canada. Even so, criminal law does not provide for compensation for the victim. That is the current situation in Canada.

I will now turn to the government's proposed changes. In creating the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and amending the State Immunity Act, the federal government is lifting that immunity and authorizing Canadian citizens to sue individuals who participated in acts of terrorism and organizations and states that financed or protected terrorists in Canadian courts. At first glance, it seems like a very good way to ensure that justice is done for victims of terrorism.

Statements by Members

Right now, state immunity prevents anyone from taking any action whatsoever to obtain redress. Some damage can never be repaired, and people tell themselves that that is what the law says, so it must be all right. But we can obtain redress and punish the guilty parties to ensure that justice is done and that the people who were hurt, the victims, have a chance to confront the ones who victimized them. However, several of the parties in this House have detected significant oversights in this bill. Because of these oversights, there will not really be any victims who succeed in obtaining compensation. The intention is good, but we have to take a closer look at how it will play out. As legislators, we have to ensure that a law will truly be effective, and that is not the case with Bill C-35.

Under the bill, foreign states and terrorist organizations can only be sued if they are on the government's list. We do not know yet which countries will be listed. Foreign states can be sued only if they did something for the benefit of the listed terrorist group that actually caused the harm in question. It appears that the cause of action does not cover situations where a state was involved directly. This refers to whether they committed one or more of the following acts: providing property for terrorist activities, providing property or services for terrorist activities, possessing property for the purpose of carrying out terrorist activities, participating in the activity of a terrorist group, facilitating a terrorist activity, committing an indictable offence for the benefit of a terrorist group, instructing a person to carry out an activity for the benefit of a terrorist group, instructing a person to carry out a terrorist activity, and, harbouring a person whom he or she knows has carried out or is likely to carry out a terrorist activity.

• (1055)

The courts may hear the cause of action only if the action has a real and substantial connection to Canada, in other words, if the victim is Canadian, the defendant is Canadian, the harm occurred in Canada or on a vessel or aircraft in Canada. That sums up what Bill C-35 is all about.

As I was saying, the Bloc Québécois has a number of questions. There are a number of irritants in this bill, but we would nonetheless like to refer it to committee in order to discuss all aspects of it.

In practice, and I was saying this a few moments ago, the recourse offered by the government through Bill C-35 could never provide justice or redress to the victims. The state being sued could quite simply refuse to compensate the victims, despite any ruling.

I will continue immediately after question period with all my concerns about this bill.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[English]

LUKE 15 HOUSE

Ms. Dona Cadman (Surrey North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important organization in my riding that has been changing lives and bettering our community one resident at a time. Luke 15 House is a Christian not-for-profit organization that

has helped hundreds of area residents in their efforts to fight addictions and to transition into a new life.

Last Friday, Luke 15 held its annual fundraiser where I had the pleasure of being its guest speaker. Two hundred and forty-eight guests attended and raised over \$16,000, but more important, they came to show their support for the organization.

While tougher laws, penalties and police are required to provide public safety on our streets, Luke 15 is aiding and protecting our community by providing an alternative to would-be criminals and lowering our petty crime. I would like to thank the board of directors, volunteers, supporters and, most important, Nigel, Anne and Joey, for their continued success in our community.

* * *

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is growing concern about the ability of volunteer fire departments to recruit new people to serve as first responders.

Volunteer fire services are a major component of Canada's public safety and security infrastructure, protecting the lives and property of thousands of citizens in communities across this great nation. In fact, over 90% of all Canadian communities are protected by volunteer fire departments.

In the villages and communities of Prince Edward Island, the greatest challenge facing volunteer fire services today is the decline of volunteers. The greater need for training and the greater emphasis on liability issues, as well as both parents often working outside the home have all added to time constraints and demands on a volunteer's commitment to serve his or her community.

Volunteer fire departments and, indeed, communities need the federal government to follow through on the tax credit proposed in my private member's bill.

* * *

[Translation]

OUTAOUAIS REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conseil régional de développement durable de l'Outaouais or CREDDO was created 20 years ago. This environmental organization has come up with a number of solutions to preserve the environment and encourage planned development so that future generations will enjoy a better quality of life. CREDDO takes part in various forums and consultations and is also active in the field. It meets with numerous associations and businesses to raise awareness and support their pro-environmental activities.

I want to congratulate the board of directors, including chair Gaëtan Provencher and director general Nicole DesRoches, as well as CREDDO's volunteers and partners, because thanks to all these people, we can wish this organization a happy 20th anniversary.

Statements by Members

The Bloc Québécois joins me in congratulating CREDDO and wishing us a healthy planet.

* * *

[*English*]

RENEWAL NORTHWEST

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, recently a gathering of progressive leaders met in northwestern British Columbia under a program we launched called Renewal Northwest to talk about a future economy, a greener economy for the people of our region.

First nations leaders, environmental activists, businesses and non-profits got together to create the kind of change that we want to see in the world, a plan for a region that has had a long and proud history of economic development but recently has suffered mightily under the downturn across the world. The list of ideas is long and includes greener transportation, greener mining practices, environmental retrofits for our homes and offices, and much more.

We need the federal and provincial governments as willing partners in the efforts of the northwest. We want others from across the region to get involved online and in other forums. Northwestern British Columbia will recover and rebuild from this. We will do it together.

* * *

FOOD BANKS

Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC): Mr. Speaker, northern Alberta takes pride in being an exceptional place to live. The beauty of the region begins with its landscapes and extends to its people, its celebrations and its quality of life. Yet the recent economic downturn has brought new challenges to our region and more people are having to live with less and less.

From High Prairie to Lac La Biche, from Athabasca up to Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan, now is the time for us to come together to show support and generosity to those in our community.

Today I would like to salute our community food banks which set a high standard for all of us. Across our country, food banks provide nourishment to over 700,000 individuals each and every month, but they cannot do it alone. Northern Alberta food banks need our help now more than ever.

I would like to encourage my constituents, all members of Parliament and all Canadians to donate what they can to support their local food banks today. Together we can continue to build strong and caring communities where no one lives in hunger or without hope.

* * *

● (1105)

[*Translation*]

ANIMAL WELFARE

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the future of animal welfare is a serious issue that governments around the world must recognize.

There is both scientific consensus and public acknowledgement that animals feel pain and can suffer.

That is why I strongly support the motion made by my colleague from Scarborough Southwest on adopting the universal declaration on animal welfare. I also strongly support the bill introduced by my colleague from Brossard—La Prairie, which seeks to reduce the maximum number of hours during which animals in transit can be confined.

Taking proper care of animals reduces the risk of transmitting diseases to humans and of food-borne disease.

I call on all my colleagues to support these two measures.

* * *

[*English*]

ST. CATHARINES COMMUNITY

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last Friday, the people of St. Catharines demonstrated the true meaning of the word “community”.

A fundraiser was organized to aid Susan Follick, whose son, Bill Howard, was tragically killed on May 13. Bill's death occurred in British Columbia and Susan simply did not have the means to bring her son's body home or to give him a dignified burial.

The community came together with donations of items, time and effort to allow Susan the opportunity to cover all of her expenses. In one evening, her \$12,000 debt was wiped out.

This event exemplified the generous spirit of St. Catharines and demonstrated the success a community can have in working together. The event allowed Susan and her family to grieve without financial burden.

This is a testament to the generosity of people in communities all across our country. It is because compassion, hard work and community spirit are the norm in St. Catharines and never the exception that I am so proud to work for the people of St. Catharines here in Ottawa.

* * *

[*Translation*]

VIEUX-TERREBONNE THEATRE

Ms. Diane Bourgeois (Terrebonne—Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on October 26, 2009, the Théâtre du Vieux-Terrebonne, under the direction of Suzanne Aubin, won a Félix award in the “entertainment presenter of the year” category at the ADISQ Autre Gala.

This was the Théâtre du Vieux-Terrebonne's fourth win in this category, and Ms. Aubin was extremely proud of this achievement. She thanked her team and the Terrebonne cultural development society, which have made this victory possible. She also thanked the public, who, even through these tough economic times, have been supporting the Théâtre du Vieux-Terrebonne for over 20 years.

Statements by Members

This recognition means a great deal to my riding, considering the drastic cuts to culture made by the Conservative government. The Quebec nation can be proud of its artists and the passionate people who have worked hard to disseminate our exceptional culture.

My Bloc Québécois colleagues and I would like to extend our most sincere congratulations to the Théâtre du Vieux-Terrebonne and its director, Ms. Aubin.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a well known fact that when it comes to justice issues the Liberal and Bloc Québécois members defend the rights of criminals.

Fortunately, Canadians know that they can count on our Conservative government to defend victims' rights. Since taking office, we have introduced stiffer penalties for criminals who commit crimes with firearms. We want to ensure that white collar criminals serve their sentences in prison and not at home. We have put in place strict measures to counter identity theft and car theft. We want criminals who abuse children to be put in prison and not be out on the streets, as the Bloc Québécois would like.

Canadians can count on us to ensure that our communities are safer.

I am asking the Liberal and Bloc members to put aside their political partisanship and to side with law-abiding Canadians.

* * *

[English]

VICTIMS OF TERROR

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the foundational principle that victims of terror deserve a right of civil redress in Canadian courts against their terrorist perpetrators. At present, the exercise of this fundamental right is precluded by the operation of the State Immunity Act which immunizes state sponsors of terror from such suits.

After studying the government's proposed legislation in this regard, I regard it as necessary in terms of justice for victims of terror to have alternative legislation proposed and enacted that properly addresses the evil of transnational terrorism, that properly targets the impunity of those states that perpetrate, sponsor or finance acts of terrorism, that properly allows Canadian victims of terrorism to seek justice, and that removes the immunity that still operates even under the government's bill against state perpetrators of terrorism against Canadian citizens.

Simply put, we have an opportunity to provide redress for Canadian victims of terror anchored in domestic and international law.

* * *

• (1110)

JUSTICE

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians from coast to coast support our government's legislation to target drug offences involving organized crime and gangs.

Drug trafficking and drug production is, without a doubt, the most significant source of illicit money for organized crime groups. That is why this government is working to ensure mandatory jail times for serious drug offences that involve organized crime, violence or preying upon youth.

Canadians want action. They want their government to stand up for victims and crack down on organized crime and gangs.

Despite the support from members in this House, Liberal senators continue to drag their feet and delay Bill C-15. This is yet another example of the Liberal leader's soft on crime approach. The Liberal leader needs to stand up and show some leadership.

Let us get this bill passed. Canadians deserve it.

* * *

THE CHILDREN'S REPUBLIC

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, next week, the Great Canadian Theatre Company will be launching the premier performance of the *The Children's Republic*.

This play is the story of Dr. Janusz Korczak, a champion of children's rights who ran a remarkable orphanage in pre-world war Poland. After the Nazi invasion, Janusz followed the Jewish orphans into the Warsaw ghetto to protect their rights and dignity.

This story was discovered through one of Ottawa's community leaders, Leon Gluzman, who was one of Janusz's orphans. Today, he is a businessman and a great philanthropist who supports the Ottawa School of Speech & Drama and has made our community so much better.

This powerful story of commitment and legacy has been captured in the play written by Ottawa-born playwright, Hannah Moscovitch.

I wish to congratulate the Great Canadian Theatre Company and the Ottawa School of Speech & Drama, particularly Amanda Lewis, for their joint effort in staging this timely play. I invite the community to see *The Children's Republic* at the Great Canadian Theatre Company.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government believes the rights of criminals should not come before the rights of victims and law-abiding Canadians.

Canadians lose faith in the criminal justice system when they feel that the punishment does not fit the crime. That is why, this week, our government tabled Bill C-54 to impose consecutive sentences for multiple murderers, ensuring that the punishment fits the severity of their crimes. Canadians can rest assured knowing that victims and the families of murder victims remain a top priority for this government.

I am proud of the good work our government has done to make communities safer for law-abiding Canadians, in spite of the constant obstruction of opposition members who pretend they are tough on crime but whose actions do not match their words.

Canadians know they can count on this government, under the leadership of this Prime Minister, to continue to stand up for victims and their rights and the rights of law-abiding Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

VISAS FOR MEXICAN NATIONALS

Mr. Thierry St-Cyr (Jeanne-Le Ber, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this week a CBC report showed how the sudden decision by the Minister of Immigration to require visas for Mexicans at the height of the tourist season damaged Canada's reputation in addition to being detrimental to the Quebec tourist industry. The minister's sudden and amateurish actions caused considerable harm to Canada-Mexico relations.

The large number of illegitimate refugee claimants is due to the fact that the decisions of IRB members are inconsistent. Some members accept almost every claim; others, virtually none. It is like a lottery. The only way to put an end to this chaos is to establish the appeal division, as provided for in the legislation, to ensure consistency in decision-making.

Unfortunately, the Liberal and Conservative governments have always refused to do so. It is high time that Parliament adopt Bill C-291 in order to uphold democracy.

* * *

KIDS PLAYING FOR KIDS SOCCER TOURNAMENT

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is the fourth year that a group of my constituents, Sam Gabbay, Manouk Manoukian and Ralph Nahas, have volunteered to organize a soccer tournament based on the world cup model called "Kids Playing for Kids".

This name is absolutely perfect, because all the money raised is handed over to Sainte-Justine hospital and the Montreal Children's Hospital. Healthy kids are playing for sick kids. Next year, the men's 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa will serve as the model.

I would like to warmly congratulate all the volunteers who have directly or indirectly helped make this annual event a success.

I would especially like to acknowledge the three founders of this event, to thank them and let them know how much their involvement means to our community.

Oral Questions

● (1115)

[English]

OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Olympic torch relay is beginning in Victoria this morning. Canada will soon host the world for the Winter Olympic Games.

Today, the Prime Minister is in Victoria kicking off the Olympic torch relay.

The torch is starting a cross-country tour that will visit 1,036 communities and places of interest, including my large riding of Vancouver Island North on Monday and on February 2.

This is the largest relay ever held within the borders of the host country, and the 45,000 kilometre route will ensure that every region of this great country will have a connection to the games.

Canadians are proud of our athletes, our communities and our country. We look forward to the next 106 days of the relay as we celebrate the Winter Olympic Games.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

HEALTH

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is such a profound contradiction between the experience of Canadians on the ground with respect to H1N1, where there are long waiting lines, where there are clinics that are being closed, where there are doctors who are having to turn people away because they simply do not have the vaccine, and the very benign statements that are being made by the government about how everything is under control and everything is going well.

How does the minister responsible explain this clear contradiction between the everyday experience of Canadians and the kind of unreality that is being expressed in the House of Commons by the ministers present?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has worked tremendously hard with public health officials, with Dr. Butler-Jones, the Chief Public Health Officer, and with the provinces and territories to ensure that the vaccine was both safe and effective.

Last April, we set a goal to have safe and effective vaccines ready for early November. We are pleased that the efforts of the public servants at the Public Health Agency have been able to beat that by more than two weeks. What we have seen is more than six million vaccines in every corner of the country. On a per capita basis, that is better than any other country in the world.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has a credibility problem for a very simple reason: what it is saying is unfortunately completely at odds with the experience of the people in unacceptable waiting lines, people who do not have access to the vaccine and pregnant women in clinics inundated with people. That is the everyday reality.

I would like to ask the minister this question again. How does he explain the contradiction between the benign statements he continues to make in the House of Commons and—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. This is one of the largest mass immunization campaigns in the history of Canada.

Our provinces and territories and public health units right across the country are working incredibly hard. More than six million doses are available in every corner of the country. Our public health nurses are responding in a way that is really unprecedented. They deserve our support.

We must take the politics out of this important public health issue.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would rather take the words of the manager of a health clinic in Vancouver over the words of the minister.

This is what Yvonne McLeod said:

Everyone is telling them to get vaccinated but we don't have the shots and we can't even direct people because there is nowhere to go...

I could easily give out 200 a day but I don't have the staff or the vaccine.

That is the reality on the ground that Canadians are having to confront. That will be their experience this weekend and that will be their experience next week.

How does the minister explain this direct contradiction between what he is saying and what people are actually experiencing?

• (1120)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is the largest mass immunization campaign in Canadian history.

The government has worked diligently to ensure that there is a safe and effective vaccine. There will be a vaccine available for every Canadian who wants one.

The work of our public health nurses, our provinces and territories, and the Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Butler-Jones, is unprecedented. It goes without saying that the hard-working public health officials in every corner of the country cannot mass immunize 33 million Canadians in a single day or a single week.

They are working hard. Our government is working hard. We are putting politics aside.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has been confusion, frustration and line-ups across the country as people rush to get the H1N1 vaccine.

Now we learn that the federal government has warned the provinces that they will receive less vaccine than promised and, in some cases, up to 50% less, forcing clinics across the country to delay as demand soars.

Why do Canadians have to wait? Was it the choice of only one company, the late ordering date or just a lack of leadership?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tone of the question by the member opposite is rather unfortunate.

What I think Canadians expect of us is this government to work in cooperation with Dr. Butler-Jones, the Chief Public Health Officer, to work with every province and territory, and to work with public health units and nurses in every corner of the country.

We have six million doses available. The largest mass immunization campaign is well under way. More doses will be available next week and even more the following week.

We are working hard to ensure that every Canadian can get this vaccine, but let us be clear, more vaccines are available in this country than in any other country in the world per capita.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's ideology has left the provinces and territories to scramble on their own. The H1N1 outbreak is testing government resources and services, namely providing vaccine quickly to as many people as possible.

Will the Prime Minister show leadership and release the \$400 million set aside in the 2006 budget for a pandemic response to support additional medical staff for vaccinations and patient care?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have seen an unprecedented amount of work and an unprecedented financial commitment from this government in dealing with pandemic planning. The Minister of Health, her officials, Dr. Butler-Jones, the provinces and territories and the literally thousands of public health nurses in every corner of this country are responding in a major way. The good news is we have taken the time to ensure that we have a safe vaccine, that the vaccine is effective and that there are more doses of vaccine available per capita in Canada than in any other country in the world. That is a credit to the hard-working public servants in the Department of Health.

* * *

*[Translation]***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, by describing the findings of the study released by the Suzuki Foundation and the Pembina Institute as irresponsible, the Minister of the Environment is confirming the Conservatives' bias in favour of big oil and their willingness to let the oil companies pollute with impunity.

Oral Questions

Meanwhile, manufacturers in Quebec are being penalized and are unable to sell carbon credits to fund their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

How can the Conservatives be so snugly in bed with the oil companies, at the expense of the environment and the whole economy?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is working very hard to have a strong and effective plan that will produce real results for Canadians in every province and territory.

The previous government did absolutely nothing in the last 16 years. It is our job to act, and we will continue to work hard with President Obama and the rest of the world in the coming six weeks before the international conference in Copenhagen.

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister is mistaken. There is no plan. It has been put off three times, and it will be put off again after the conference in Copenhagen. What he just said is a mistake.

According to the Minister of the Environment, Canadian unity could suffer if Alberta had to step up to the plate and do its share in the fight against global warming. But the Conservatives have no problem when serving Calgary's interests—at the expense of the environment and Canada's international commitments—hurts Quebec's economy.

Is this not further proof that Quebec always comes second in the Canadian dynamic?

• (1125)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will continue to take a fair, balanced and pragmatic approach to climate change.

We will continue to strike a balance between the environment and economic recovery. We are working hard. The Minister of the Environment and his officials are working hard with the Obama administration in the United States and with our partners in the G20. We will continue to work hard to find a solution that meets our planet's needs.

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, criticism of the Minister of the Environment is increasing. The representative from the Pembina Institute did not beat about the bush when he said that the minister's comments were verging on hysteria, that the government's inaction is irresponsible and that, in four years, the government could have come up with draft regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada.

Instead of accusing those who are trying to find solutions to global warming of being irresponsible, would the minister not be better off recognizing his responsibilities and producing a fair, effective and serious framework regulation?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member well knows that we now have a North American approach, a North American target of 20% reduction by 2020. Canada will continue to work within a North American target, with our allies, with the United States. That is why we are making progress on tailpipe emission

standards, aviation standards, carbon capture and storage, a North American approach to carbon cap and trade. Why does the member and why does the Bloc continually vote against good environmental programs?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the last negotiating session before the Copenhagen conference is being held in Barcelona next week. With the minister's approach, it is clear that Canada will arrive empty-handed.

Does the minister realize that the only word that comes to mind for us, to describe his attitude toward Copenhagen, is the word sabotage?

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely wrong. This government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, working with our international partners, and working with President Obama and his administration on a North American approach.

All the member understands is a carbon tax, and he is supporting a Liberal carbon tax. Canadians said no to a carbon tax. What does he not understand about “no” on a carbon tax?

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have the ability to secretly record another party's caucus meeting. They can get HD copies of the Prime Minister's audition tape on every government website. They have even found a way to turn Mike Duffy into spam.

However, when it comes to providing the Parliamentary Budget Officer with details of stimulus funding they are still in the Diefenbaker era.

Does the minister realize that providing boxes containing thousands of pages of untreated information without so much as a synopsis, much less a spreadsheet, is less than useless?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Budget Officer asked for additional information. This government has approved some 7,000 infrastructure projects in every corner of the country. He asked for more specific information on those projects, and we were pleased to provide a substantial amount. We will be providing more to the Parliamentary Budgetary Officer in the future.

I can tell the House that we have run a very open and transparent infrastructure program. When announcements of projects are made, they are immediately put on the Web with their location and their dollar value in an unprecedented commitment to work with provinces and territories of every political stripe.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when people go to the Obama administration's Web site, www.recovery.gov, they can get all the information they want on all the projects they want. They can be sorted by state, project or amount spent, but not here. Canadians do not understand—and on this side of the House we cannot explain—this minister's childish attitude.

Why haphazardly send three boxes of documents instead of a database? Unless it is the old trick of burying everything under a mountain of data to hide the fact that there really is no information.

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our priority has been to work with the municipalities, to work with provinces and territories from coast to coast to give the federal green light to infrastructure projects so that they can get on with construction. They can hire architectural firms and engineering firms and create jobs. We have worked very hard to ensure those funds have been distributed.

I was pleased to be in committee yesterday when the member for Winnipeg Centre said, “I think a lot of NDP ridings actually fared fairly favourably from the spending, so I have no evidence that there is any hanky-panky going on in where the money went”.

We have put politics aside and we hope the member opposite will continue to do so.

● (1130)

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, why then are there school boy pranks with a parliamentary institution? There are 4,476 pages of untreated documents with every single page marked Protected A. What are the Conservatives trying to protect if not themselves? Are they trying to hide the fact that contrary to section 16.4 of the Federal Accountability Act, a large number of recipients have not complied with government policies and procedures, and effective systems of internal control do not exist as required? If they did, we would have an electronic version of these documents instead of three boxes full of nonsense.

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when an infrastructure investment is made with the provinces and territories or with municipalities, it is immediately put on the Web, with its location, a description of the project, and detailed financial information and what the contribution of each level of government is.

We have worked constructively with provincial NDP governments. In particular in the territories, we have worked with Conservative and Liberal governments.

What I think Canadians do not want to see is members of Parliament pulling cheap pranks outside the House of Commons.

* * *

*[Translation]***HEALTH**

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a disgrace that the Prime Minister did not take the H1N1 flu problem seriously in the spring, that he failed to ensure that the vaccine would be available on time, before the crisis, which was entirely

foreseeable, and that he failed to provide a serious vaccination plan to protect Canadian families.

What does he have to say to the thousands of Canadians who could not be vaccinated, despite many hours in long lineups?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the priority has been to ensure that we have a vaccine that is safe for Canadian families.

The priority has been that the vaccine be effective in combatting what is a significant public health issue. We have more than six million doses from coast to coast to coast which have already been released to our partners, the provinces and territories. Public health nurses in every corner of the province and country are working hard to ensure that they begin what is deemed to be the biggest mass inoculation in Canadian history.

We have put the politics aside and are working constructively with the provinces and territories. I think what Canadians expect is that all parties in the House will do the same.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians expect are serious and real answers.

The White family in Bedford have four small children under the age of three, including triplets. The mom is an elementary school teacher. They tried to get vaccinated but the lack of government planning made this impossible. After standing in line for three hours, they packed their hungry, tired, cold kids into the van and headed home without getting vaccinated.

Could the health minister tell Mr. and Mrs. White and parents like them how they are supposed to protect their kids from the risk of H1N1, and why the government has failed them?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are seeing the biggest mass immunization in Canadian history. We obviously need thousands of public health nurses, the provinces and territories, and the Chief Public Health Officer. We cannot inoculate every single person in a matter of two or three days. Public health nurses are working literally around the clock on the inoculations. Our government is working to ensure that the vaccine is safe, effective and available.

I am pleased to report to the House that there are more doses of vaccine available today per capita in Canada than there are in any other country in the world.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have known since spring that the crisis was coming. They simply did nothing and ignored it. Although the Minister of Health said yesterday that thousands of people have been vaccinated, she is forgetting that there are some 33 million Canadians still waiting for the vaccine. This week, a mother in my riding had to wait three and a half hours to get her children vaccinated. Unfortunately, that is only one example among so many others.

What is the minister's plan to ensure more rapid vaccinations, in order to eliminate the pointless anxiety being felt by families in such an appalling situation, which was created by the government?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has been working with international organizations to make sure we have an effective, safe vaccine for families in all regions of the country. In Canada today, six million doses have already been made available for Canadian families. That is more per capita than any other country in the world.

Our government will continue to work with the provinces and territories to achieve real results, but the work is not done. We must continue to work diligently with our doctors and nurses.

• (1135)

[English]

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my province, the St. George area has been virtually shut down due to H1N1. Schools have been closed and the earliest they are expected to open is the middle of next week. The principal of Fundy High School has said, "They don't understand why people can't get the shot right now and why we are not having a clinic until November 10".

Could the government tell these worried parents why they have to wait? Why do they have to wait so long?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, this is the largest mass inoculation campaign in Canadian history. There is more vaccine in the hands of public health nurses in provinces and territories in Canada than there is in any other country in the world.

Under the leadership of Dr. Butler-Jones, the government has worked to ensure that the vaccine is both safe and effective.

We will continue to work in co-operation with the provinces and territories to get the job done.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this government's lack of transparency is appalling. For example, when the Parliamentary Budget Officer attempted to obtain additional information about the government's economic plan, he was inundated with irrelevant documents. Similarly, when we asked for details about Senator Housakos' shenanigans, the minister gave

us long, irrelevant tirades on transparency and avoided answering our questions.

Here is a simple question. Will the government admit that Senator Housakos benefited from the contract to repair the Champlain Bridge being awarded to BPR?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to my Bloc colleague that if she has allegations to make she should submit them to the appropriate authorities and not to this House. Does she have details, specific allegations or facts that she could lay before the House? What we have seen is a partisan campaign. It is not a good thing for Canadians. Senator Housakos promptly asked for the ethics commissioner's opinion on this matter. We will wait for the independent opinion of the commissioner.

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister is hiding behind the so-called independence of the Bridge Corporation when he knows very well that it is stacked with the government's friends. Partisan appointments to the Bridge Corporation allow the government to control it.

When will this government give a straight answer to our questions regarding Senator Housakos' shenanigans, sanctioned by Quebec's political lieutenant?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we must be very clear. It was our government that took action to put an end to the influence of big spenders on federal political parties. It was our government that put an end to the influence of huge donations from corporations and unions. It was our government that carried out the greatest reform of the electoral system in the history of Canada. We are very proud of that. If the Bloc member has specific allegations, she must make them outside this House. In the meantime, we have not seen any of that in recent weeks.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Fédération des producteurs de bovins du Québec has said that the survival of the cull cattle slaughter industry depends on finding a resolution to the specific risk material issue. A study by the Canadian Meat Council revealed that it costs \$32 more per head of cattle to slaughter in Canada than in the United States, because of Canadian SRM regulations.

What does the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food intend to do about this competitive disadvantage that he created?

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is taking action for our farmers.

[English]

We are delivering real action for livestock producers. In fact, we have delivered on a promise in the budget. We are now taking applications for up to \$50 million in increased slaughter capacity. Also, I would like to identify that a slaughterhouse in the member's riding is benefiting from this program and is receiving a loan from the government.

Oral Questions

• (1140)

[Translation]

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Parliamentary Secretary needs a geography lesson. That is not my riding. Second, what I get out of his answer is that he could not care less about SRM, because that was my question. His answer had nothing at all to do with the SRM issue.

The Levinoff-Colbex slaughterhouse has been losing \$4 million to \$5 million a year for the past two years because of these SRM regulations, which the Americans refuse to enforce.

When will we see some financial assistance for producers and processors that would help them stand up to this unfair competition? That is my question.

[English]

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we are taking action for our beef producers. In fact, the Minister of Agriculture has been very busy, opening foreign markets to our beef producers. And as I mentioned, we are making financing available to slaughterhouses across the country. In fact, I have a quote here from the Manitoba NDP minister of agriculture who said:

As the chairman of the Manitoba Cattle Enhancement Council, I was pleased to see the recent federal budget included money for agriculture in general and for increasing slaughter capacity specifically.

* * *

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the Conservative government is the most divisive and spiteful in our history. What we have witnessed over the past few months are television, radio and print ads that promote the Conservative Party of Canada, costing Canadian taxpayers over \$60 million, and counting.

The Conservatives are deliberately blurring the line between the state and a political party. Their arrogant self-promotion offends Canadians, including bureaucrats, who have never seen this type of abuse.

When will the Conservatives stop this taxpayer-funded partisan campaign and stop abusing Canadian taxpayers for their own benefit?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has worked tremendously hard with our economic action plan. We are seeing an unprecedented global economic downturn. We are beginning to see some positive signs of an economic recovery. We have an important responsibility to report back to Canadians on our economic action plan.

He talks about the many tax benefits which they are eligible for. We have an opportunity to inform them of the status of our infrastructure investments in every corner of the province. We have an important responsibility to let them know that the government is responding to this unprecedented economic challenge and working for them.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister thinks that this a game. He thinks it is okay to abuse taxpayers' dollars and brush off questions of accountability with a smirk and a wave of the hand.

Who would have thought that when the Conservatives said they would invest in public transit, it meant plastering partisan propaganda on Toronto's GO trains?

Why does the Conservative Party believe it can do or say anything, and get away with it? When will it return the money it used to pay for its 2009 self-promotion tour?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the House what we have done. When I tour the country, I am working with the NDP Premier of Nova Scotia, Darrel Dexter. We are making important investments in his own hometown.

I was recently with the NDP Premier of Nova Scotia and we made an \$18 million investment in Halifax for a new library, something that has been fought for, for many, many years.

We are making significant investments that we announced with the NDP Government of Nova Scotia in Cape Breton Island. We are very proud of that. We are helping to build regional roads around rural Nova Scotia. We are very proud of that.

We have put politics aside. We are working with NDP, Liberal and Conservative governments, and we are getting the job done.

* * *

*[Translation]***ARTS AND CULTURE**

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every time the Conservatives cut cultural funding, they attack our quality of life and our identity. First, they cut programs supporting theatre, dance and opera. Now they are cutting funding for music. What will they cut next?

In contrast, this week, the Liberal Party committed to doubling funding for the Canada Council for the Arts. Two parties, two completely different visions. It is often said that ignorance breeds suspicion and rejection of that which is not understood.

Is ignorance the reason that they are once again attacking culture?

[English]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do members know what Canadian artists do not need? More Liberal doublespeak, that is what they do not need. What they need is a government that has demonstrated a commitment to arts and culture in this country, and that is what they have.

Once again the Liberal leader was in Montreal and announced billions of dollars of new spending again this week, billions tacked on to the billions he has spoken about before. Nobody believes it. It is just pandering.

Oral Questions

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I hear answers like that, I feel sorry for the Conservatives. I do. They just do not get it. Our culture is what makes us sing, dance, laugh and sometimes cry.

Try to imagine one day in our lives without culture, without books, without music, without poetry. Try to imagine that, just one day in our lives. It is impossible. It proves one point: culture needs more support, not more cuts. Why can the Conservatives not get it?

• (1145)

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am actually encouraged about one thing today. I am encouraged that the hon. member is back on his file after being missing for 148 days on the heritage file. I am glad he has rediscovered the heritage file. That is good.

Our government has been working hard, supporting Canadian artists since long before the economic action plan. The economic action plan specifically remembered arts and culture in this country, committing more money than any government has ever committed because we understood the challenges that artists would face in this country, and we stood behind them four-square.

I am proud of the result of this government's support of art and culture.

* * *

CANADIAN FORCES

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day our Canadian Forces are making the world a safer place to live. In the face of great personal danger and away from their friends, family and loved ones, these brave men and women are examples of all the good that Canadians are capable of. Our largest overseas deployment is serving in Afghanistan and this winter they will be celebrating the holidays without the comforts of home.

Would the Minister of State for Transport please tell the House what program is in place to help families stay connected with our troops during the holiday season?

Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is really amazing what our troops do overseas for us every day of the year and particularly during the holiday season. They leave the comforts of home and country to do this outstanding work for us.

It is a great pleasure for me to inform the House that Canada Post again will be allowing free parcel delivery for Canadian Forces overseas. This is the fourth year in a row. This is an amazing thing.

We should be proud of our troops and proud that an institution like Canada Post is able to do this. We certainly hope that Canadians from coast to coast will exercise the opportunity to support our troops.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians from coast to coast are slowly becoming comfortable with the importance of getting the H1N1 vaccine. While millions of

vaccines have been produced and are being distributed, obviously we are seeing major lineups and a lot of people concerned about not being able to get the vaccine. Clinics are being flooded and people are waiting.

This could very well be the largest immunization process in Canada, but does the government have a plan to facilitate and make the access to the vaccine a lot greater and a lot faster?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are working to ensure that the vaccine is both safe and effective for Canadians. We have six million doses out in every corner of the country. That is more per capita than any other country.

I thought one of our colleagues in the House said it very well this morning in the *Ottawa Sun* when he said:

This is a very large undertaking here. We've never tried anything quite this size on such a rapid timeline. I'm not sure that it would have been necessarily feasible to have got it out sooner.

That was our colleague, the member for Toronto—Danforth, the leader of the New Democratic Party.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Surely, however, we can keep going and do a lot more, Mr. Speaker.

We were too late in informing people about the vaccine and we were too slow in getting it out. Now we need the vaccine administered as quickly as possible. The need for action is no less urgent and the concern is not lessened.

Has the government explored every possible opportunity to make it accessible in a much quicker way?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will work with the Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Butler-Jones, and the provinces and territories on this. Again, her own leader said, "I'm not sure that it would have been necessarily feasible to have got it out sooner".

I would not want to not use this opportunity to say to the member for Churchill that on November 4 there will be an incredibly important vote in the House of Commons with respect to the long gun registry. I hope she will join those of us on this side of the House and stand with her constituents, and stop a wasteful expenditure of money, so we have more money to put into priorities that Canadians care about.

* * *

• (1150)

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mrs. Ève-Mary Thāi Thi Lac (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the director of Human Rights Watch has condemned the fact that the Conservatives' foreign policy seems to have lost its bearings. He emphasized the erosion of Canadian leadership on the international scene. In many ways, American policy has become more progressive than the Conservatives'.

Does the government realize that most Quebeckers agree with this assessment and that they no longer identify with the government's foreign policy?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure exactly what the question was, but I can assure this House that Canada is back on the international stage and Canadians know that this government brought Canada back.

[Translation]

Mrs. Ève-Mary Thāi Thi Lac (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleague opposite to listen to my second question.

The federal government's shameful handling of the case of Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen, proves that it has turned its back on its international responsibilities.

Recently released photos suggest that Omar Khadr is innocent, so why did the government willingly spend more than \$1.3 million on lawyers to keep him languishing in Guantanamo for years?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our position on Omar Khadr has not changed. Omar Khadr continues to face serious charges, including murder, attempted murder, conspiracy, and material support for terrorism and spying.

We continue to closely monitor the situation, including the work of the American committee formed by President Obama to study the fate of Guantanamo detainees, including Mr. Khadr.

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CROWN CORPORATIONS

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when a problem arises with a crown corporation, the government washes its hands of any responsibility. It tells us that crown corporations are at arm's length, they have nothing to do with the minister. But the Conservatives insist on sitting in on private meetings of crown corporations. They fired the chief nuclear regulator and rid themselves of the commissioners of elections, of information, of ethics.

When are they going to tell Canadians the truth, that there is no such thing as independence for crown corporations with this Conservative government?

Hon. Rob Merrifield (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Yes, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. colleague knows and everyone in the House knows, crown corporations serve their day-to-day functions at arm's length from the government.

If there is information that comes to the House for individuals, they have the full right, and I will set up any meetings that are needed for them, to do the functions of their job here in the House. I will do this not only for the hon. member but any of the opposition members at any time they would like.

Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue. The government picks and chooses the crown corporations it gets involved with. This raises further questions about the allegations linking Conservative Senator Housakos with the awarding of the bridge contracts.

If a crown corporation cannot so much as meet with a member of Parliament without a ministerial escort, how can we be expected to believe that it will award major contracts without Conservative meddling?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has an important responsibility. If she has any evidence, facts or anything whatsoever that she could bring forward to the House, I would encourage her to do so.

The fact that she stands in this place, maligns a member of the other chamber and presents no facts and no specific allegations, is not serving her constituents well in my judgment.

* * *

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, West Fraser Timber announced that it is closing the Eurocan mill in Kitimat, British Columbia. More than 500 people will lose their jobs and as many as 3,000 others in related industries will also be out of work in the Terrace and Kitimat region.

Despite the closure, West Fraser will still receive a \$30 million subsidy from the government for the very same mill that it is mothballing.

Could the minister explain why West Fraser is getting a subsidy at the same time that it is dealing a crippling blow to the workers and their families that put their blood, sweat and tears into this operation for more than 40 years?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government remains extremely concerned about the difficulties that are facing the forestry sector and, through our economic action plan, the government has supplied the forestry industry with a \$1 billion pulp and paper green transformational program. West Fraser qualified for more than \$88 million in those credits to be used at any mill in Canada.

I think the question that needs to be asked of the member, however, relates to Bill C-391 and what he will do next week when that bill comes to a vote in front of the House. Will he stand and represent his constituents for once in the House and get rid of the long run registry?

● (1155)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, apparently the government is unable to use the tool called Google to find out that I will be supporting the bill next week when it comes to a vote.

In this unprecedented crisis in the forestry industry, we were told that this very program, this subsidy, would keep our mills open and our forestry towns alive but the program is deeply flawed.

Could the minister explain why a program that was supposed to protect our mills is, instead, helping to shut them down? What answer can the government offer to the 3,000 families affected and the many tens of thousands of families that may face the same fate across this country?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just as he has been late to the long gun registry file, he has been late to this one as well.

This government has supported the forestry sector across this country for years. We put \$1 billion into the community adjustment fund and \$1 billion in to the community development fund. We spent \$170 million to help the forestry sector with innovation and marketing. I could go on and on because this government has stood behind our forestry sector, and we will continue to stand there.

I would ask him if he will speak to his colleagues and convince them that they should be supporting Bill C-391 as well and getting rid of the long gun registry. Will he do that with us?

* * *

OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, the 2010 Olympic torch relay will commence in Victoria, British Columbia, where the torch landed this morning, and will make its way across Canada and back to Vancouver on February 12 for the opening ceremony.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage please tell the House more about the next 106 days of Olympic excitement?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians will get to experience the excitement of the Olympic torch as it travels over 45,000 kilometres from coast to coast to coast. The flame will visit more than 1,000 communities while engaging the entire country in the process.

Twelve thousand Canadians will have the opportunity to carry the torch as they celebrate with their fellow Canadians along the route. This represents an extraordinary occasion to unify the entire country, generating tremendous pride in our nation while truly celebrating the spirit of the games.

Canadians fortunate enough to carry the Olympic torch are as wonderful and diverse as the country itself, including Stanley Cup champion, Sidney Crosby, from Nova Scotia and graphic designer, Michael Theobald from my own—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, levels of sulphate and salt in the Red River at the Manitoba-North Dakota border are higher than they should be. North Dakota plans to permanently ease the sulphate restrictions on the Devils Lake outlet and more than double the water the outlet pumps out of the lake into Canada.

Oral Questions

Does the Minister of Foreign Affairs consider these actions by the United States to be a violation of the Boundary Waters Treaty?

Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas), CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada continues to be concerned about discharges of Devils Lake water. The outlet should remain closed until the scope of the risk is more fully understood and corresponding effective measures are taken and put in place.

As the hon. member knows, the International Joint Commission is leading a multi-year survey of fish pathogens and parasites in Devils Lake and the broader basin to better understand the risks associated with the outlet operations. It is expected that the study will be completed and the report known by 2010.

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[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Quebec's minister of international relations said that he had contacted the Canadian foreign affairs minister, urging him to act in the case of Nathalie Morin, a Quebec woman being held against her will in Saudi Arabia by an abusive spouse.

Will the government listen to the Quebec minister, who has ascertained that Nathalie Morin's case is more than a private family conflict?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has clearly stated that it is his wish that this matter be settled, and our government is doing everything we can to facilitate this.

Our priority is to ensure the well-being of the children while Nathalie and her husband resolve their dispute. We will continue to work with the Saudi authorities to ensure that the children, who are Saudi citizens, are a priority in this dispute.

However, let me say that Canada has twice facilitated Nathalie's return to Canada and both times she returned voluntarily to Saudi Arabia against our advice.

* * *

● (1200)

FISHERIES

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a few months ago, the sockeye salmon run in the Fraser River in B.C. collapsed. Ninety per cent of the fish simply disappeared.

We saw, under a former Liberal government, the costs of ignoring the initial signs of a fishery collapse. That led to the near extinction of the Atlantic cod.

Routine Proceedings

We have seen zero action from the current government, no response to the NDP action plan, no increased funding for salmon enhancement and monitoring, no move to close containment, no emergency summit with the stakeholders, no rescue package and no binding public inquiry.

The silence of the minister is worse than the silence on the Fraser River.

Will the minister take real action now?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious situation with the sockeye salmon.

I wish he had noted as well, though, the record pink salmon returns this year and the chum return that is going on right now is also at record levels.

However, this is a serious situation that requires a serious response, something other than political grandstanding. The minister has been out there and has talked to all kinds of stakeholders. She is putting together her response. I think Canadians will be pleased by this and he should wait for that.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, drug trafficking and drug production are, without a doubt, the most significant source of illegal money for organized crime groups. Our Conservative government has introduced legislation that would ensure mandatory jail time for serious drug offences that involve organized crime, violence or preying upon youth.

This bill has been passed by the members of this House. Could the parliamentary secretary for public safety please provide us with an update on the status of Bill C-15?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kitchener Centre, who has a keen interest in this and has been very supportive.

Our government implored the Liberal leader to show leadership by instructing his Liberal senators to pass Bill C-15 before they recessed for the summer. His Liberal senators not only refused to pass the legislation but they prematurely adjourned debate and took a summer vacation. Now we hear rumblings that these same Liberal senators are doing the dirty work again by delaying our bill.

Drug producers and dealers who threaten the safety of our communities must face tougher penalties. Bill C-15 has been passed by members of this House. Let us get this passed in the Senate. Canadians deserve better.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during question period, I was responding to a question from my colleague for Richmond—Arthabaska and I was underlining the support that our federal

government was giving, the \$10 million for the Levinoff-Colbex slaughterhouse. I mentioned that it was in that member's riding. What I meant to say was that it was in his province.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

AUDITOR GENERAL

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the annual reports on the Access to Information and the Privacy Act of the Auditor General of Canada for the year 2008-09.

[Translation]

This document is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

* * *

● (1205)

[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 nine petitions.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to subsection 94(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 2009 annual report on immigration, and I do so on behalf of the minister.

* * *

GLOBAL CENTRE FOR PLURALISM

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, also on behalf of the minister, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Global Centre for Pluralism's 2007-08 annual report, the Global Centre for Pluralism's 2008-09 annual report and the summary of the Global Centre for Pluralism's corporate plan for 2009.

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**RESPONSE TO THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA
DECISION IN R V. SHOKER ACT**

Hon. Jay Hill (for the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-55, An Act to amend the Criminal Code.

Government Orders

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

* * *

PETITIONS

AIR PASSENGER BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my petition calls for the adoption of Canada's first air passenger bill of rights.

Bill C-310 would provide compensation to air passengers flying with all Canadian carriers, including charters, anywhere they fly. The bill includes measures on compensation for overbooked flights, cancelled flights and unreasonable tarmac delays. The bill deals with late and misplaced baggage. The bill requires all-inclusive pricing by airline companies in their advertising.

The legislation is inspired by the European Union law that has been in place for four years, and since Air Canada is already operating under European laws for its flights in Europe, why should an Air Canada customer receive better treatment in Europe than in Canada.

The bill would ensure that passengers are kept informed of flight changes, whether they are delays or cancellations. The new rules must be posted at the airport and the airlines must inform passengers of their rights and process to file for compensation.

This bill is not meant to punish the airlines. If the airlines follow the rules, they would not need to pay \$1 in compensation to passengers.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310 that would introduce Canada's first air passenger bill of rights.

CANADA POST

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from about 200 constituents calling upon the Government of Canada to maintain the moratorium on post office closures and to withdraw the legislation to legalize remailers.

The petition also calls upon the Government of Canada to instruct Canada Post to maintain, expand and improve postal services.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. John Duncan (Vancouver Island North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also have petition from over 400 of my constituents asking the Government of Canada to support a universal declaration on animal welfare because of scientific consensus and public acknowledgement that animals can feel pain and can suffer.

The petitioners want to see a prevention of animal cruelty and reduced animal suffering.

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QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 328 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 328—**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:**

What amounts were granted to small craft harbours in the Beauséjour riding from the year 2000 on, broken down by year and by project?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I began my speech just before oral question period. I will not repeat everything I said, but I will come back to the Bloc Québécois' position on Bill C-35, which seeks to lift the immunity of states that support terrorism and expose them to private civil actions.

As I was saying before question period, the Bloc Québécois would like to examine Bill C-35 in committee. We have many questions about the bill, which contains several points that bother us. Nevertheless, like the rest of my party, I believe that it would only be right to examine it in committee to learn all its ins and outs.

When my speech was interrupted, I was saying that, practically speaking, the recourse offered by the government through Bill C-35 could never lead to true justice and redress for victims. It should not be surprising that a terrorist state that is prosecuted would be very unlikely to pay. Furthermore, any goods it might have in Canada—not everyone has an embassy here or goods of any significant monetary value—would not even cover the costs awarded by the court.

As for suing terrorists themselves, I ask the government whether it really believes it is possible and realistic to sue a bin Laden or any other such terrorist, in the hope of obtaining redress and compensation. The answer is self-evident.

Will such a measure really have a deterrent effect on terrorists? It will now be possible in Canada to sue terrorists and the governments that support them, but I am not sure that this will prevent them from committing acts of terrorism.

Government Orders

The government will establish the list of countries that can be sued by victims. Victims of a country on the list will be able to obtain compensation under this bill, while victims of a country not on the list will not. As I said, I believe that this will be academic. The bill will create a double standard, because victims of countries that are not on the government's list will have no remedy. The government has created an injustice by making this distinction.

Moreover, the very idea of a list is questionable. Where do we draw the line? That is a question that the committee will have to consider.

And why limit lawsuits to terrorism? Not that terrorism is not truly reprehensible—of course it is—but we should also think about all those countries where there are war crimes and crimes against humanity. I am thinking of torture and genocide. Earlier, during questions and comments, an NDP member asked questions about countries where torture is practised.

Not long ago, a free trade agreement with Colombia was discussed here in the House. We know that torture is practised in that country and that journalists and opponents of the regime are kidnapped, tortured and assassinated. Not only should we not sign a free trade agreement with this sort of country, but we should add it to the list. We could make it possible for victims of these countries to sue them.

To add to the Bloc Québécois' reservations about this bill, it is possible that it may interfere, yet again, in Quebec's jurisdiction on civil law. Civil law is within the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces. Through this bill, the government is casting a very wide net and could interfere in our jurisdictions. Obviously, we will pay particular attention to that aspect in committee.

I do not know whether this has come up since we started discussing Bill C-35, but, according to my research, the only similar measure exists in the United States. It is an example of foreign legislation that is quite similar to the policy the government wants to implement.

●(1210)

The only country that has legislation related to Bill C-35, is the United States. They adopted their antiterrorism and effective death penalty act of 1996 and amended their foreign states immunities act in order to provide an exception like the one proposed in Bill C-35.

Has the effectiveness of the U.S. legislation been measured before implementing exactly the same type of legislation here in Canada? I doubt it, otherwise a different bill would have been introduced. I still have a few minutes to explain the type of problems the U.S. is experiencing with this legislation. The U.S. experience is not at all conclusive. In the United States, the legislation has been in place for more than a decade. Only listed countries can be sued, as would be the case here, with currently listed countries being Cuba, Iran, Syria, Sudan and North Korea. Iraq and Libya were originally listed but have since been delisted.

A common problem identified by the Congressional Research Service, or CRS, has been the refusal of defendants to recognize the jurisdiction of the American courts. As I mentioned earlier, we can very well sue an offending country, but that country will say that it does not recognize the courts under which it was sentenced; it will

refuse to pay and, obviously, to compensate the victims. So we end up caught in a process where, no matter what we do, the defendants will always be able to refuse to accept the sentence they receive. Defendants do not even appear, and default judgments are rendered, which the debtor countries then ignore and refuse to pay damages and interest.

Now, let us look at what happens when it comes to recovering damages and interest, if a country is successfully convicted. As I said, if the country does not appear and refuses to pay, we have ways to try to recover what is owed to the victims. This also causes a major problem given the limited assets of listed countries being held in the United States and the executive branch's resistance to allowing frozen assets to be used for this purpose. As Congress attempted to create avenues for recovery, the executive—the politicians—would resist such efforts over concerns about retaliatory measures, losing leverage over the countries concerned, and potentially violating international law on state immunity.

For example, the 1981 Algiers Accord that resulted in the release of American embassy staff who were held hostage by Iran—Canada played a very important role in this crisis—barred the hostages from initiating civil suits. However, Congress sought to provide a right of action to those hostages through various proposed laws, which the executive resisted, because of the international implications if such an accord were to be violated.

Changing circumstances in Iraq also created a difficult situation for the Bush administration. Under Saddam Hussein, Iraq was a listed state that could be sued. A number of such suits were successful and the plaintiffs sought recovery by seizing certain Iraqi assets. However, after the invasion of Iraq, according to the CRS, the American government no longer had an interest in allowing such assets to be taken, as they wanted them to be used for the benefit of the Iraqi people in rebuilding the country. In fact, we invade a country saying that we have come to save it, to help, and to get rid of the dictator. But at the same time, we say that court orders have been issued against it and that we will take what we can and give it to the victims. The situation there was already very explosive. The Iraqi people would probably have been even more outraged by the American intervention.

Despite the legislation, the American government decided to take a step back and not seize these assets and send them to the United States. The United States decided to retroactively delist Iraq. Many plaintiffs were unable to recover the money granted them in judgments.

With limited seizable assets in Canada, victims will find themselves competing for the few, if any, assets available for recovery.

●(1215)

If there are multiple victims, which is often the case in terrorist attacks, the few assets belonging to the state that helped the terrorist group carry out the attack will have to be seized to recover a minimal amount of money from the forced liquidation of the assets by the courts.

Government Orders

Moreover, the Americans' concerns about retaliation, as described earlier, seem well founded. Cuba and Iran, for example, took similar action in response to American measures. There has been retaliation.

I would now like to discuss the inclusion of terrorism and the exclusion of torture and other crimes. One of the most common criticisms of the bill is that it includes terrorism offences but ignores torture. Lawyers and commentators, such as the Canadian Centre for International Justice, find that there is no justification or rational basis to allow suits for one but not the other.

Why would torture carried out directly by a state and recognized internationally as an action not covered by state immunity not be covered, while terrorism, typically carried out by small cells that are impossible to catch, is? How are we supposed to take bin Laden to court and get a ruling against him for compensation when we still do not know where he is? How can anyone think that this kind of bill can resolve that situation when it does not even address torture and other abuses, such as genocide?

The United States' legislation lifts immunity for an act of torture, extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, hostage taking, or the provision of material support or resources, thus including both terrorist acts and torture. Some countries in Europe are also lifting immunity for torture, such as Italy, which has permitted suits against Germany for its actions during World War II. Private members' bills addressing torture, but not terrorism, are currently before the House of Lords and the House of Commons in the United Kingdom.

I would like to talk about diplomatic relations. We will also encounter problems in that regard, which must be discussed with important witnesses in committee. Various diplomatic challenges may be created by this bill, according to commentators. One newspaper article described the proposed legislation as a "diplomatic minefield". Listing countries may be problematic for Canada's foreign relations. Similarly, the proposed role of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Foreign Affairs—the two ministers who could add countries to the list of those that can be sued—in enforcing judgments through such actions as identifying and locating assets for seizure, may negatively affect diplomatic efforts. For example, Afghanistan and Pakistan are commonly seen as "incubators" of terrorism, but their listing could be problematic from a diplomatic perspective as the Canadian government seeks to support the governments of those countries. Others question whether courts are equipped to deal with the foreign policy and international relations, considerations that will inevitably be attached to such cases.

I also found articles in Quebec newspapers, for example, in *Le Devoir* and *Le Soleil*, which refer to this bill's grand illusion. It is a fine illusion. Jean-Marc Salvé, the editorial writer for *Le Soleil*, wrote that the bill will have almost no effect, for what could it possibly offer? Clearly, he says, the threat of a future claim for damages is not going to stop a terrorist from committing a crime. So no one should look for any kind of advantage from that perspective. There are other examples like this one.

I invite the members of this House to refer the bill to committee so we may discuss it further.

• (1220)

[English]

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-35.

We have heard interventions from the government, the Liberal Party and the Bloc. There seems to be consensus on some of the concerns that many of us have when it comes to Bill C-35, which I will get to.

There is a consensus also on the need to deal with the issue and the objective that the government has laid out and that we need to do something to address the grievances of victims due to terrorism. The question is not whether we should deal with that objective. It is how we deal with that objective.

The principle behind the bill is important. I think all parties want to find ways of addressing the concerns of victims, of what is political violence often.

New Democrats have always taken a strong stand against perpetrators of terror, torture and human rights abuses. For that reason, we will support sending the bill to committee for further study, and I will explain some of the rationale behind that.

At this point, we are not convinced the bill will achieve its stated purpose of preventing, and was mentioned by the Minister of State of Foreign Affairs for Americas when he tabled the bill, and deterring terrorism.

What will the proposed bill do? Bill C-35 has three primary components. First, it creates a cause of action that allows victims of terrorism to sue individuals, organizations and terrorist entities in Canadian courts for loss or damage suffered as a result of terrorist acts as defined in the Criminal Code. Second, it amends the State Immunity Act to remove state immunity for states on the list of countries established by cabinet and that have supported or currently support terrorism. Finally, it allows victims to sue foreign states that are on the list.

The bill takes significant steps, but we need to take a measured look at it. That is why it is important for it to be examined at committee.

I will enumerate some of our concerns.

First, will the amending of the State Immunity Act cause retaliation against Canadians and within that what are the risks?

Second, why is the government limiting the cause of action to a certain list of states, not leaving the matter open to courts decisions? That was echoed by my colleagues on this side of the House.

Third, is there merit in extending the cause of action created by the bill to victims of other forms of state violations of human rights such as torture and if not in this bill, what are the plans of the government to deal with that?

I do not have to enumerate the numbers of cases of Canadians who have suffered torture through other state actors. We believe that should be dealt with immediately.

Government Orders

Let us begin with the first point. There are serious concerns with the concept of amending the State Immunity Act. Would it open the door to frivolous suits launched in questionable jurisdictions that would adversely impact Canadians? It is simply a question and one that needs to be answered. Within diplomatic circles, this has been questioned.

I will reference Fen Hampson, the director of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs Carleton University, in Ottawa, which is one of the most pre-eminent schools of diplomacy. In reference to the bill, when asked, "Does it interfere with possible foreign policy goals?", he said:

Absolutely...Securing the release of a journalist or someone else who has been thrown into jail, something like this can complicate relations. It doesn't ease them.... In effect, you are putting your diplomacy in a straight jacket.

Another commentary on the bill has said a similar thing. René Pronovost, an international law expert at McGill University in Montreal, echoed Mr. Hampson when he said, "The bill invites retaliation by other governments".

We need to take these comments and points of view seriously. We cannot just brush them aside.

• (1225)

It is important to note, when we look at the world, particularly after 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall, that we live in a much more multilateral, multi-polar world. Therefore, our good intentions at home should not limit our abilities for seeking resolutions to problems abroad. That is why these comments have been made.

In the area of unintended consequences, a bill that we pass, which might suit our needs domestically for very good reasons and for lofty goals, could actually harm us when we look at dealing with other actors, multilaterally. We should be sure that whatever do at home with the intention of deterring terrorism actually helps us deter terrorism.

I think it is strange that the only exception to state immunity as it exists now, and the government is certainly aware of this, is in financial cases. There are provisions. It is important the committee and Parliament be seized with a study and debate on whether we should end immunity against violence in its different forms. Notwithstanding the scope of the bill and the opportunities to go further, this is a time to open up that issue.

In other words, when it comes to the act itself, where there are state immunity exceptions in financial cases and the government proposes we change it to address terrorism, it would also be an opportunity, if we are unable to amend and extend this bill, to at least open up some opportunities for debate and proposition to follow up with other exemptions from state immunity. I am certain many of us would like to see that for those who are victims of torture. We can do this in committee. We can look at the problems in the bill. It is a discussion to which that I look forward.

The second concern I have is the list. I made a point of it in my intervention when I was questioning the minister of state. We heard from the Liberal intervenor on this, which is a concern shared by the Bloc as well. With the contemplation of this list, the bill would create a cause for court action, and the Criminal Code defines what the action is. Why would the cause of action as contemplated in the bill

and amending the state immunity provisions only be subject to certain states and not others? This is core to the concerns the NDP has with the bill.

We have heard from others in the debate today that with the government confining the court actions to a list of countries, it is undermining the intent and objectives we all want. When we put that tool in the hands of the executive, the cabinet, to deal with it exclusively, we run into what I call a faulty flaw in legislation, a faulty flaw that strangely undermines the whole idea of what we want to deal with. Legislation is put forward and contemplated to deal with problems. One must look at the full scope of what the legislation does and not in isolation.

When a list is put together, one has to be very careful as to who it will affect. By design, there is a group of countries that are not being included. The government says that we should not worry, that it has a review on a bi-annual basis. Things happen quickly in this multi-polar world. This does not allow for a quick response. The government says that if there is an emergency, it can change that. The point is not only who is on the list, it is the fact that the list exists.

• (1230)

We have heard from those who have had experience with this in the United States. They have said that this is a problem. They have advised us not to go down that path. I find it strange that we would take on the worst aspect of that policy framework from the U.S., after it has been tried, critiqued and suggestions made not to do it, and put it in our legislation.

When I asked the Minister of State for his feedback on that, he believed this was the way to go. He did not provide a rationale and he certainly did not provide a response to the question put forward that if this did not work in the states, why do it here.

It is really important therefore that we are non-supportive of politicizing our courts or giving cabinet the authority to say which cases the courts must take on and which ones they must refuse. The government is doing that with the list. If the actions of one state are cause for legal action, the equivalent actions of another state should be cause for similar action. There should be no preferential treatment for any state if we are to be genuine about it. It is up to the legal system, really, to look at the merits of every case and decide whether action can be taken. It is a really important tenet of our system, that the courts are able to do this. As my colleagues from other parties have stated, and the member for Mount Royal said it best, the list is a tool of politicization, which undermines the stated goal of the bill.

Finally, if through the studies at committee it became clear that the approach in the bill did not deter state violence in the form of terrorism, then we wish to examine whether similar action should be expanded to include other forms of illegal state violence, such as torture or gross violations of human rights. If we were able to open that up, we would hope that, if not in this bill, the government would come forward with opportunities to have legislation that would amend the State Immunity Act to deal with those areas.

Government Orders

We just celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Canadian Centre for International Justice has said on numerous occasions that the declaration was an amazing achievement and that we should all be proud of the Canadian content of that declaration. However, there is an ongoing need for a greater commitment to the prevention of mass atrocities such as genocide and crimes against humanity, torture and war crimes. We need to have a goal in the 21st century that the enormous advances in international justice will be ones that prove to be strong deterrents to the commission of such atrocities and contribute to the prevention of conflict more broadly.

The ICC is at the forefront of this system. It is the first permanent criminal court able to try individuals for serious violations of international law. It has its challenges, no question, but Canada was a party to the treaty establishing that court, and we have agreed to try alleged war crimes and human rights abusers in Canada. We just had evidence of that recently in Montreal.

Torture treatment experts estimate that 25% to 30% of refugees and immigrants living in countries like Canada have experienced torture with war trauma. The Government of Canada figures suggest that there are hundreds of alleged war criminals and human rights abusers currently in Canada, and often survivors of atrocities express their desire to seek justice served for the harm they have suffered. Justice can play an important role, no question, in the healing process, helping to address some of the emotional and psychological challenges faced by survivors.

With regard to the stated purpose of the bill, we agree with exploring the option at the committee level and deciding whether it should apply to victims of terrorism as well as other forms of state violation of human rights and international law. If we are to accept the amendments to the State Immunity Act and we want to do the whole thing, we need to open it up to other facets.

• (1235)

We should ensure that foreign government officials and their agents implicated in torture and other atrocities are tried in Canadian courts. Canada's State Immunity Act has created a barrier to such cases in Canada, leading to a statement of the UN committee against torture that this is an improper interpretation of obligations under the torture convention. Cases in civil courts are an important complement to a strong criminal law system, providing an alternative forum for cases, and allowing for the possibility of compensation and other forms of redress.

We support the initiatives that would redress the harm done to victims and would deter the future state sponsorship of violations of human rights, but we are not convinced that the bill in its present form is really the way to go or that all the unintended implications that I have mentioned have been thought through thoroughly.

We have serious concerns about cabinet's interference with justice in the form of creating a list of states which would face court action in Canada to the exclusion of other states.

We also wish to explore whether or not these measures would deter other forms of illegal state violence and violations of human rights, and if not in this bill, as I said, that is fine if that is the committee's conclusion in dealing with the area of torture. If it is not

included in this bill, then we would like to see some commitment by this Parliament to legislation that would amend the State Immunity Act to deal with that. It is far too important to wait another year or two.

Notwithstanding these concerns about the bill, and given our commitment to giving victims of human rights violations an opportunity to seek justice and to make sure that justice is done, we will join with others and support sending this bill to committee where we will take a look at it and hear from others.

The government does not really understand the unintended consequences when it comes to our diplomacy abroad. We need to hear from experts, from people in the field. We need to hear from those in the United States who have pleaded with us to stay away from the list in this bill.

I started off my comments by saying that I think there is a shared objective here and that is to deal with those who have been victimized by terrorism. Everyone agrees that is something to address and redress. If we do not do it properly, then certain members of Parliament will have a difficult time supporting it, and I would align myself with them. If we do not get it right, we could be in the unfortunate position of having brought forward a law that undermines the actual objective we are trying to achieve.

• (1240)

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member spoke about having a provision for bringing a course of action against states and noted this may cause countries to retaliate against Canada. Would the member tell us which countries he thinks could or would retaliate against Canada?

Mr. Paul Dewar: That is the whole problem, Mr. Speaker. It is not about creating concerns about countries that do or do not exist on a list. It is the whole idea of the list. The member can conjure up in his own mind the kind of retaliatory action. I am not identifying countries; I am identifying problems in policy.

I am not alone in this. The jurisdiction south of the border that has had concerns about this has said this is a problem and that we do not want to go there. Canadian experts from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs here in Ottawa have said that this is not the way to go because it could affect our diplomatic affairs and undermine our objectives in diplomacy and multilateral relations in a multipolar world.

This is not about which country and what response. This is about the policy itself undermining the objectives that we are all trying to achieve.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, certainly it seems that in the United States it has been a big problem. Once again I have suggested the government look at experiences that actually work or instances where certain types of legislation can be proven to work. Once again the government has embarked on legislation here where we have evidence that it has not worked that well in the United States.

Government Orders

In the United States' experience, similar legislation has been in place for a decade. Only listed countries can be sued, which currently are Cuba, Iran, Syria, Sudan and North Korea. Iraq and Libya were originally on the list but they were taken off.

The common problem being found has been a refusal of defendants to recognize the jurisdiction of the American courts. As such, the defendants do not appear and default judgments are rendered which the debtor countries then ignore and refuse to pay. They go through this process and at the end of the day, they come out empty-handed. That is not what we want to do here.

We want to get legislation that works in the first place. My colleague and a member of the Liberal caucus got to the point this morning when they said that we do not need a list of countries. As a matter of fact, a list is the wrong way to go. An injustice is an injustice no matter what country perpetrates it and people should have the right to sue on the basis of the injustice, regardless of the country.

I would ask the member to elaborate a little more on that experience in the United States.

• (1245)

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for pointing out in some detail the concerns of the list. I still have concerns about what the consequences of the list would be, but more profoundly, I have grave concerns about the intent of this bill as it was put together by the government.

The Conservatives have the full capacity of government to study legislation, to make sure the legislation works. For instance, there are constitutional questions that can be raised with this bill in terms of jurisdiction, and the responsibilities and roles of the executive branch, the courts, et cetera. I find it strange that the government would bring forward a bill with lofty objectives, and I think 100% of the House agrees with the objectives, in such a manner that it is restrictive and could actually undermine the objectives. The evidence is south of the border. They basically have said, "Do not go there. Do not put the list together because you will corner yourselves".

In terms of natural, fair justice, if we are going to limit citizens as to where they can bring forward their grievances, then we are not being fully democratic in the application of law. When we get to choose from a list of countries, what happens when citizens have been affected by countries that are not on the list? What will happen with that? What challenges will go to our Supreme Court?

We should think of the resources as well. When these things are done, they come with costs with respect to time and money. At the end of the day, if we put forward legislation that ends up having no efficacy and no redress yet uses a lot of resources, we will undermine the whole principle.

As my colleague and I said, it is an experience the Americans have had in the United States, not just for one, two or three years, but for a decade, and they have said to stay away from that part, and do not list because it will undermine our objectives.

I say to the government to listen carefully to everyone. We will see that at committee. The government should not be stubborn about this. This is too important. If the government is stubborn and

ideological about it, then I do not think this bill will pass and the whole idea, concept and principle will be put aside, which would be a shame.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Mr. Speaker, to continue on with this line of questioning, we ended by saying that it looks as though the best we could get is default judgments in the United States which the debtor countries ignore and refuse to pay, so where does that leave the victim? The next problem is recovery. They say that recovery is the problem given the limited assets of listed countries being held in the U.S. and the executive branch's resistance to allow frozen assets to be used for that purpose. Even if we are trying to hunt down the assets, we are not going to be getting the help of the government in this regard. The executive would resist such efforts over concerns about retaliatory measures, losing leverage over the countries concerned and potentially violating international law on state immunity. They go on to talk about the Algiers court as an example.

This is very complicated. In addition, countries such as Cuba and Iran have simply retaliated by bringing in their own equivalent measures introduced in their own countries.

I would ask the member if he would like to comment further on that aspect.

• (1250)

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, the point my colleague is making is that this is not a one dimensional process. When we involve other actors by design, we bring in other possibilities and responses. As an executive in cabinet writing a list comes with some expense. We could say that is no problem, that we are principled and we are going to ensure that we follow our principles. However, what is the objective? If the objective is to address and redress victims of terrorism and by listing countries we actually cut off the victims' ability to have that redress, then we need to acknowledge that. I think that is what has been experienced in the United States and we would be wise to learn that lesson.

When we look at international law, at what is happening with the ICC and we look at the ability for grievances to be dealt with in a multilateral world, a lot of emphasis should be put on not listing countries for purposes that we see here by cabinet. If we really want to get at grievances at an international level and have our government play there and push international justice, then we need to strengthen support for institutions like the ICC. We need to ensure that we not only deal with terrorism and torture and other crimes against humanity, but that we are also in the business of preventing them. I could give longer than a two-hour speech on that subject, but I will not do that. Many would like to see some support for prevention of these things before they happen and we have not seen enough of that from the government, quite frankly.

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the constituents of Fleetwood—Port Kells to address Bill C-35. It is a pleasure to have this opportunity at second reading to speak about how this government is delivering on its commitment to protect the safety and security of Canadians, both at home and abroad, from terrorist activities, while giving those who do fall victim to heinous acts of terrorism an ability to fight back.

Government Orders

Over the last few years, we have all been witness to the horrible carnage that terrorism can, and does, leave in its wake. We have witnessed the broken lives, the broken communities, and the constant state of fear and panic which innocent bystanders, as well as victims and their families, are forced to endure.

Canada is not immune from this threat. Hundreds of Canadians died in the bombing of Air-India flight 182, the worst terrorist attack in Canadian history and the largest in North America prior to September 11, 2001. Canada has been singled out for possible future attacks by organizations such as al-Qaeda.

We have also seen the successful prosecution of homegrown terrorists before they had a chance to carry out their plans.

We, therefore, cannot afford to bury our heads in the sand and pretend that our country has no stake in the global fight to put terrorists out of business. We need to continue to take firm and decisive action. That is the primary reason behind Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act.

Today, we know that terrorist groups seldom act alone. The scale and sophistication of terrorist operations in recent years often required vast amounts of financial and organizational support. That support can come from other entities, and even other states. Indeed, many observers have often described the relationship between terrorist groups and certain governments as one of a state operating within a state.

The present reality is that money is the lifeblood of terrorism. One of the most effective ways to deter terrorism and put terrorists out of business is, therefore, to hit them where it can hurt the most: their pocketbooks.

The bill before us today, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act, would do just that, by allowing victims of terrorism to sue perpetrators and supporters of terrorism, including those states that support terrorism while respecting the important international relations we have.

Specifically, Bill C-35 would allow victims of terrorism to seek redress for any loss or damage that occurred as a result of terrorist acts committed anywhere in the world on or after January 1, 1985, and in cases where they can demonstrate a real and substantial connection between the action and Canada. The target of these suits would be perpetrators of terrorist acts, as well as their supporters, including certain states known to support terrorism.

In the case of the latter, Bill C-35 proposes to lift state immunity under certain conditions so that governments that do support terrorism would no longer be able to hide behind the cloak of international rules and agreements between civilized and law-abiding countries.

The amendments before us today would allow the governor in council to designate those states to which state immunity would no longer apply, provided there are reasonable grounds to believe that they support terrorism.

The bottom line is that states and organizations that bankroll terrorists seek to operate in the shadows. In most cases, they do not want their actions held up to the eyes of the world so that everyone can see who they are.

Creating a cause of action so that they can be held to account through the courts would do just that, while also giving victims the opportunity to seek justice, something that they have sought for some time and what this government is now delivering on.

Bill C-35 would do more than just create a cause of action for victims and terrorists in civil courts.

• (1255)

It also proposes to give the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance the discretion to assist, within their mandates and to the extent reasonably practical, in identifying and locating in Canada the property of a foreign state against which a judgment has been rendered, provided it is in Canada's best interests to do so. The Government of Canada is committed to helping victims and this is what these provisions will allow it to do.

They will allow us to help ensure that justice is served in ways that do not jeopardize our standing in the international community. They will help ensure that states that support terrorism face the consequences of their actions in real and tangible ways while also ensuring that cultural property, such as museum collections in Canada, is not suspect to seizure. This bill is balanced, effective and fair.

Several years have now passed since that terrible day in 2001 when Canadians and people from around the world became aware of just how much they were at risk and how committed terrorists were to causing untold and indiscriminate carnage. Since then, together with our allies, Canada has stood up to say that we are not going to be afraid. We are not going to back down from terrorists or give in to fear.

We are going to meet the threats they pose head on and take the necessary steps to protect this country, protect our fellow citizens, and help ensure that terrorists do not succeed in reigniting havoc among our friends, neighbours and allies overseas.

That is the commitment that all of us as Canadians made in 2001. It is the commitment that all of us as Canadians still believe in upholding today. The bill presently before us gives this country another important tool in our efforts to both deter terrorism and help ensure that victims get the justice they so rightly deserve.

I, therefore, urge all hon. members to give speedy passage to Bill C-35 and stand united in sending a message to those who would threaten our homes, our families and even our lives. Together, we will stop them and win the fight against terrorism.

• (1300)

Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the hon. member could explain to the House how a victim of terrorism would proceed to sue perpetrators or supporters of terrorism under Bill C-35.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Speaker, under this bill, any victim of terrorism could file an action in Canada to seek redress for loss or damage resulting from a terrorist act committed by a terrorist entity listed under the Criminal Code or other persons or organizations that carried out a terrorist attack.

Government Orders

Such suits could also be brought against individuals, entities or listed states that provided support to an entity listed pursuant to the Criminal Code. The Criminal Code would then determine whether it can hear the case by determining whether there is a real and substantial connection between the action and Canada.

If a favourable judgment is issued to a plaintiff, the defendant, including a listed state, would have an obligation to comply with the Criminal Code's decision or its assets and property could be seized. In matters where a listed state could be found liable, the plaintiff could request assistance from the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the Minister of Finance to identify and locate that state's assets under Canadian jurisdiction.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering what my colleague's opinions are about the apparent omission of any charges of torture, that may be perpetrated by another state, in this piece of legislation. We recognize that in the field of antiterrorism, one of the components that is used is torture, and sometimes state-sanctioned torture, in other parts of the world.

In allowing the Canadian government to pursue these types of cases in court, there are two things. One is the piece about torture, which seems to be glaringly absent. I am curious as to why she thinks that is and why she thinks that the government, in constructing this entire piece of legislation, made no mention of the International Court of Justice in the Hague. It is set up to do many of the things that she mentioned were important to her in her speech.

There is no component of a court that actually already exists to pursue some of the very cases that our government seems so interested in. Will she not endorse the work done in the Hague and other places that try to keep the international rule of law in mind when countries are facing each other in conflict?

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should applaud what our government is doing. The Government of Canada is committed to fighting terrorism and to holding the perpetrators and supporters of terrorism accountable for their actions.

With this bill we are showing leadership against terrorism and we are providing the means for victims to seek justice against the individuals, organizations and foreign states that support terrorism.

This proposed legislation is one of several initiatives undertaken to recognize the victims of terrorism. We have also established June 23 as a National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism. The date was chosen to honour the victims of Air India flight 182, the worst terrorist attack in Canadian history and the largest in North America prior to September 11, 2001.

The Government of Canada also established a full public judicial inquiry into the bombing of flight 182 in order to investigate unresolved questions. The families of the victims of the Air India bombing have been calling for a public inquiry since the day of this disaster, but for over a decade the previous Liberal government turned a deaf ear to requests for an inquiry into this tragedy. It took a Conservative government to do the right thing and call an inquiry.

The Government of Canada is determined to take decisive steps to protect Canadians from the threat of terrorism. By tabling this

legislation, the Government of Canada is sending a very clear message that perpetrators of terrorism and their supporters will be held accountable for their actions.

• (1305)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I am a little confused and I would like my hon. colleague to stop reading the paper and answer a simple question.

I asked her a question about torture. This has been an incredibly important part of the debate surrounding terrorism. I asked her why torture was not included and all she could do was read her PMO prepared notes. I also asked her a question about the International Criminal Court and if her government supports such efforts while the United States has turned its back on it. I asked two simple questions and she went off to some other place.

Simply and calmly stated for the member, I ask her to put the paper aside and tell me what she thinks. Why was torture not included in this piece of legislation, obviously a component that is connected to international terrorism? This is not a complex question. This is a straightforward, simple question. I do not need PMO script. I need her thoughts on this.

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member to please get behind this bill, support it, give it a speedy passage, and stand united in sending a message to those who would threaten our homes, our families and even our lives. This is very important. It is not only important for my constituents but for his constituents as well.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where the Conservative government has tried to reward the Colombian administration, the government of Colombia, by giving it privileged trading access to Canada and yet the Colombian government has ties to paramilitary organizations.

As the member well knows, the story broke just a few weeks ago that on Colombian government property Colombian paramilitary members were being recruited to support the Honduran coup leaders. The result of the paramilitary transfer from Colombia to Honduras was the death of a number of individuals in Honduras. The Honduran coup overthrew a legitimate democratic government. The Colombian paramilitaries, tied to the Colombian government, are involved.

In her opinion, is that the kind of thing that this bill should tackle, the abuse of government property to ensure that paramilitary thugs can be transferred from Colombia to Honduras to overthrow a democratic government? And does she not believe, if that is the case, that the government should withdraw its shameful privileged trading relationship with President Uribe?

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the member that Bill C-35 will specifically allow victims of terrorism to seek redress for any loss or damages that occur as a result of terrorist attacks committed anywhere in the world on or after January 1, 1985 in cases where they can demonstrate a real and substantial connection between their cause and Canada.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the member did not respond to the question.

Government Orders

I know Conservatives have difficulty going beyond their PMO notes which they are issued every morning, but they should be representing their constituents and should be able to speak from the heart.

So I will ask the member again. We have Colombian paramilitary thugs that apparently receive the full support of the Conservative government, seeing as the Conservatives want to enact a privileged trading relationship with the regime that is tied to these paramilitary thugs. These paramilitary thugs were involved in the killings of innocent people in Honduras, people who were protesting the coup, the overthrow of legitimate government. Does the member believe that is the kind of action that the Conservative government should be condemning?

Does the member believe that the Conservative government should be speaking out against these kinds of human rights abuses?

• (1310)

Mrs. Nina Grewal: Mr. Speaker, again I would like to give the hon. member the very same answer that I gave earlier.

Specifically, Bill C-35 will allow victims of terrorism to seek redress of any loss or damages that have occurred or occur as a result of terrorist attacks committed anywhere in the world on or after January 1, 1985.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will speak very briefly in the debate. I appreciate the opportunity to do so.

The subject matter of the bill before us is important. It reflects important developments in our political and legal life that deserve to be debated and better understood and certainly discussed widely in committee after second reading. I look forward to that discussion.

I want to echo the comments made by my friend, the hon. member for Ottawa Centre with respect to the importance of having a real discussion about some of the issues that have been raised with respect to the legislation.

I appreciated particularly the comments made by the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells. She made some important statements about the significance within Canada of our recognizing the impact that terrorism has had in Canada.

I had the privilege of being asked by the former government to review the circumstances underlying the bombing of Flight 182 and recommended a further inquiry. I had a chance to spend some time in her community as well as in a number of other constituencies across the country, meeting with members of the communities that had been touched and so devastated by that act of terrorist bombing.

As I said in my report, which called for a further inquiry and called for a recognition of June 23 as a date on which Canada should recognize the loss of life not only in the Air India bombing but also resulting from acts of terrorism around the world that have touched Canadians, in many respects we have failed as a country to take account of what took place on that tragic day. We have also failed to come to terms with the impact that this kind of terrorism has had on us and has had on a number of other countries around the world.

Since 1985 we have seen how tragic these issues are and how deeply they are shared by communities, peoples, cities and countries. It is precisely because governments have not always been able, for a

variety of reasons, to respond effectively to the impact that these terrible bombings, these terrible attacks, these terrible events have on people that I was a very strong supporter of the Senate private member's bill that dealt with the question that is now before the House.

Because I was not a member of the House at the time it was being considered, I had a chance to appear before the Senate committee and give my support to the principles in the Senate bill.

The bill that is before us represents a step forward in the sense that it recognizes that there is a right that pertains to an individual to pursue a civil claim against a group and against a government that is sustaining that group which has in fact caused the loss of life or caused the impact or the damages of a terrorist act.

Terrorist acts are of course criminal. We know that. We also know that states and their ministries are very jealous of their own particular jurisdiction. I think it is fair to say that up until the present time, with very few exceptions, the issue of terrorism has been seen as an exclusively political issue that can be managed and dealt with only by states, by armies and by lawyers working for national governments and that citizens themselves, whose rights have been impacted and affected and whose lives in many cases have been devastated by the impact of a terrorist act, are effectively marginalized.

• (1315)

The bill represents a partial step forward. On one hand it recognizes that citizens have rights, but on the other hand, and my colleague from Mount Royal has already discussed this but I just wanted to add my thoughts to it, it creates this notion of a political list which would be crafted essentially by departments of foreign affairs and departments of justice. Effectively it takes away with one hand what it gives with the other.

I am very familiar with the kind of legal and political advice governments would be getting with respect to this, and I think we all understand why the government has decided to adopt the civil remedy portions of the private member's bill but to insist on the notion of a political list. I think that decision is mistaken, because its net effect will be to not give in substance the rights that people are being given in theory.

Second, regarding the comments made by several members on the other side about why this provision is in the bill, in my view it will have the opposite effect. Precisely because it will politicize the whole process, it will make the achievement of justice that much more difficult.

I want to turn my attention briefly to the comments made by other members with respect to the question of torture. I know my colleague from Mount Royal is going to be producing a private member's bill, which he has discussed with all of us on our side, aimed at applying clearer civil remedies with respect to torture and removing state immunity in that regard, something we see as an entirely positive and healthy extension of a rule of law and the rights of citizens. It has traditionally been in our national interest as a country to extend the rule of law as far as we can and to make sure that the notion of human rights is made real not only in international courts but in our own courts.

Government Orders

I hope the committee discussion will give us a chance to discuss whether there is a way of amending this legislation to meet those criteria or whether we should simply do so in a parallel process with a separate piece of legislation. I am certainly very open to a discussion with colleagues from all sides of the House with respect to this question. I cannot imagine a member of the House not believing that someone who is a victim of torture should have civil rights and civil remedies or that any government should be able to hide behind state immunity when it comes to the use of torture any more than they should be able to hide behind state immunity with respect to the sponsorship of terrorist organizations.

[Translation]

We are in agreement with the principles of the bill introduced by the government, but we still see a problem in the politicization of the proposed list of states that could be sued. We hope to be able to convince the government in a consensual manner of the importance of finding other solutions in order to reach a conclusion. I hope that will be the case.

As far as torture is concerned, we share the point of view that the concept of immunity for a state should not be used to give immunity to states that use torture against their citizens or Canadian citizens. We want to live in a world that respects human rights and we want human rights to be real.

I think that is how we will reach the best conclusions.

• (1320)

[English]

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I actually do not find any disagreement in the comments of the member for Toronto Centre with my concerns about the bill.

Does he believe that if the concerns with the bill he has enumerated are not changed, it will really be possible to support the bill? I am talking about the list. There are some other things that need to be addressed, but I am of the opinion that the list has to go, and that is obviously at the front and centre of the concerns many have mentioned. However, if we cannot change it, is he of the opinion, as I am, that this is something that we probably could not support unless amendments were made to take that out of the bill?

Hon. Bob Rae: Mr. Speaker, after 30-plus years in politics, I have never heard a hypothetical question answered successfully, so I do not intend to start now. I would say to the hon. member that I have much more confidence, perhaps, than he does in his question with respect to our ability to persuade the government, perhaps even through something as simple as the force of numbers, that amendments are necessary.

It is my sense, too, from discussions with a number of groups that have been very actively involved, the survivors of 9/11 and the families of the victims of Air India, that there is a powerful sense that we want to ensure we get our legislation right in Canada.

I do want to say to members that I appreciate the leadership the government has shown in at least bringing the legislation forward. I am sorry, however, that it was not done in the way it was proposed by my colleague from Mount Royal, who has been a real leader on this issue, not only in this chamber but, indeed, internationally.

However, I do think we can pass legislation that will set a standard, not only for Canada but for the rest of the world.

As we learn to take terrorism far more seriously as a country, we also need to learn to understand that the real impact of these acts of violence is felt by real people whose rights should not be eliminated for political reasons.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill C-35, An Act to deter terrorism, and to amend the State Immunity Act.

As members of the House know, the bill was introduced on June 2 by the Minister of Public Safety. The bill would create a cause of action that would allow victims of terrorism to sue individuals, organizations and terrorist entities for loss or damage suffered as a result of acts or omissions punishable under part II.1 of the Criminal Code, which is the part of the code that deals with terrorism offences that have been committed by individuals, organizations or entities.

The bill would also allow victims of terrorism to sue foreign states that have supported terrorists who have committed such acts in certain circumstances. The victim's loss or damage can have occurred inside or outside Canada but must have occurred on or after January 1, 1985. If the loss or damage occurred outside Canada, there must be a real and substantial connection to this country.

Bill C-35 would also amend the State Immunity Act to create a new exception to state immunity, the general rule that prevents states from being sued in Canada's domestic courts.

However, the new exception serves to remove state immunity only when the state in question has been placed on a list established by cabinet on the basis that there is reasonable grounds to believe that it has supported or currently supports terrorism.

As we heard this morning through most of the debate, a lot of the dissension surrounds the whole question of whether or not it is proper to have this list included.

We know, through experience, that the Americans have had similar legislation in effect for at least 10 years. Critics of that legislation point to the fact that it is the list that causes the problems and makes the bill difficult to deal with.

On the basis of the conversations I have heard this morning, the excellent comments from at least two and maybe more Liberal speakers, it seems to me that at the end of the day there could develop a consensus on this bill surrounding this particular list. It seems to me that if we were to remove the list, then it would remove the impediments to supporting the bill at committee stage.

Another important component that we would look at adding at committee stage is the issue of torture.

The new exemption serves to remove cabinet immunity only when the state in question has been placed on the list established by cabinet and there must be reasonable grounds to believe that the state has supported or currently supports terrorism.

Bill C-35 is similar to a number of private member bills and Senate public bills that have been introduced in Parliament since 2005. The primary difference between the previous bills and Bill C-35 is that the other bills sought to include the cause of action in the Criminal Code, whereas Bill C-35 would create a free-standing civil cause of action.

In terms of the background and context of the bill, one of the most significant features of Bill C-35 is the fact that it would give victims of terrorist acts the ability to sue in Canada's domestic courts foreign states that support terrorism. Most states do not recognize sponsoring or supporting terrorism as the exception to the general state immunity principle. Customary international law historically gave states, their agents and instrumentalities complete immunity from being sued in the domestic courts of other states. This principle arose out of another international law, the sovereign equality of states.

• (1325)

I do know that we are getting a little bit short on time today and that I will have more time to continue with the debate on this bill when we resume, but I do want to specifically deal with the whole issue of the bill as it exists in the United States.

Once again, I really feel that the government should be looking at best practices. It should go anywhere in the world to find examples of where best practices exist. Where there is a piece of legislation that has shown to be effective and we can isolate and determine the reasons for it being effective, then we should simply use that case to improve our own.

As I indicated, in the United States, similar legislation has been in place for more than a decade and only listed countries can be sued, which is what this bill contemplates, with currently listed countries being Cuba, Iran, Syria, Sudan and North Korea. Iraq and Libya were originally listed but have since been delisted.

The common problem identified by the Congressional Research Service, and this can be documented, has been the refusal of defendants to recognize the jurisdiction of the American courts. Well, there is no surprise there. As such, the defendants do not appear and default judgments are rendered, which the debtor countries then ignore and refuse to pay.

So there is feel-good legislation where people in good faith launch lawsuits thinking they will get results but only get a default judgment against the rogue state that is on the list which then ignores the judgment or refuses to pay. They go on to say that even if people do get the judgment and the country refuses to pay, they cannot recover money anyway because there are very limited assets of the listed countries being held in the United States, and Canada would have far less percentage of assets to be looked at. Regardless of the limitation of assets—

• (1330)

The Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but as he knows the time for debate on government orders today has come to an end. I assure him that he will have 12.5 minutes left in the time remaining for his remarks when this matter comes before the House the next time.

Private Member's Business

[*Translation*]

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S BUSINESS

[*English*]

SUPPORT MEASURES FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC) moved:

That the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities be instructed to examine current federal support measures that are available to adoptive parents and their adopted children, recognizing and respecting provincial and territorial jurisdictions in this regard and, following completion of its study, report back to the House with its findings.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak on my motion regarding the subject of federal supports for adoptive parents.

My Motion No. 386 recommends the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities examine current federal support measures available for adoptive parents, while recognizing and respecting provincial and territorial jurisdiction. Such a study would be beneficial in helping us evaluate current public policy, while shedding more light on issues faced by adoptive parents.

Some hon. members may be surprised to discover that I was adopted as an infant into the care of a wonderful family, and that I count an esteemed senator and Hockey Hall of Fame forward as a relative through my biological mother.

It may come as a further surprise that my wife, Sarah, and I have desired for several years now to add to our five beautiful biological children and adopt a child as well. It is this journey that has connected us to many other Canadians who are seeking to adopt, or who have adopted, and the myriad challenges they face along the way.

I will come back to this later in my comments, but first, let us establish a clear foundation.

The family is the basic building block of society. Everything starts with the family. It is where we raise, nurture and protect our children. It is where we teach them about who they are, where they come from and why they are here. So much of our society's future depends upon ensuring Canadian families receive the proper respect and support they need to ensure their children succeed, learn, grow and take their place in society.

Let us agree that there is equal value for parenting, whether one is a biological or adoptive parent. Let us also agree that there is equal value for children, whether biological or adopted. And let this fundamental accord ultimately find full expression in the policy choices of government.

Private Member's Business

Currently there are several support measures available to adoptive parents. EI parental benefits are available for working parents. Our Conservative government passed Bill C-14, granting permanent resident status or Canadian citizenship to adopted children, making that process quicker and easier. Adoptive parents are also eligible for a range of supports that our government provides to families with children, including the adoption tax credit, which helps defray the cost of adoption at tax time.

Adoptive parents also receive the universal child care benefit of \$100 per child under six and the child tax credit of \$2,000 per child under 18, measures enacted by this government. As well, they are eligible for the Canada child benefit and the national child benefit supplement for families with low and middle income levels.

By way of example, and as the most visible support available to adoptive parents, let me speak more fully about the EI program and its special benefits, which include parental benefits.

The EI program currently includes four types of special benefits to support working Canadians when they experience an interruption in earnings owing to childbirth, parenting, illness or the provision of care or support to a gravely ill family member.

The EI program has provided maternity benefits to a maximum of 15 weeks since 1971. These weeks are specifically for birth mothers to recover while they are physically unable to work due to pregnancy or childbirth. Maternity benefits can start up to eight weeks prior to the expected date of birth, and allow biological mothers to recuperate after childbirth and care for their newborn infants during their first weeks after the birth.

The EI program helps both biological and adoptive parents balance work and family responsibilities by providing support for them to stay home with their newly born or adopted child. These are parental benefits and they are payable to a maximum of 35 weeks. Adoptive parents may receive these benefits from the date the child is placed with the new family, and the 35 weeks of parental benefits can be used by either the mother or father, or shared between them.

There are some elements under maternity and parental EI benefits designed to make the program flexible and supportive. For example, if parental benefits are being shared by both parents, only one waiting period needs to be served. If a child has to be hospitalized, parents can choose to claim parental benefits immediately or when the child comes home from the hospital.

Additional benefits are also available to assist low-income families with children through the family supplement, which can increase the basic benefit rate from 55% to a maximum of 80% for claimants with low net family incomes.

● (1335)

A further element of flexibility is parents may collect maternity and parental benefits while out of the country by advising Service Canada of their absence from Canada before leaving.

The EI program also allows parents to work while on claim. Effective as of December last year, our government increased the amount that could be earned while working part-time and receiving EI benefits. Some families require that.

Last, I will not to go into possible maternity benefits for self-employed Canadians except to say that a government bill will ultimately capture that part of the debate.

Biological and adoptive parents share many things. Bringing a baby home is exciting, exhilarating and exhausting. There is a shared concern about having the abilities and the time needed to lay a solid foundation for a healthy relationship with their children. Both biological and adoptive parents need recuperation for emotional, physical and psychological effects of receiving children.

While maternity benefits recognize this for biological parents, currently there is no additional benefit for adoptive parents. There are some real and often little or unknown challenges facing adoptive parents, which birth parents do not face and which need to be considered in the light of public policy.

First, adoption means parents have to prove they are acceptable in order to receive a child and the process is gruelling. The same is not true of biological parents. As one adoptive mother shared with me, "We were meeting with the social worker and watching our family, marriage, children and history get picked apart and analyzed. We spent four months under an intense microscope. They questioned our motives, our communication, our parenting and our marriage. We usually left these meetings feelings wrung out and completely bare".

The same mother understood the need for ensuring the fitness and commitment of potential parents for adopting a child but, nevertheless, what it underscore is this process is draining and something biological parents do not have to face.

Second, the time before receiving the child can be very different for biological and adoptive parents. Not only is the screening process I spoke of emotionally taxing, but the process of adoption has fees and costs, not to mention the abundant lost work time, and that is income that is not replaced.

Adoptive parents almost always wait longer to receive their child than biological parents. Gestation is usually not longer than nine and a half months. While quick adoptions are available for those seeking a child with special needs, beyond that adoptive parents wait and wait.

Adoptive parents are at a disadvantage to biological parents in the attachment process before receiving a child. Attachment starts for biological parents during the pregnancy. Mom begins to feel and experience fetal development and movement in her own body. Dad can begin to experience and relate to the developing baby in utero, as well. With the marvels of modern ultrasound, biological moms and dads can see their baby long before birth.

Private Member's Business

Adoptive parents, on the other hand, cannot begin the process of attachment until their child is placed with them. Though, in some cases, like private adoptions, where the mother is known to prospective adoptive parents, the process of attachment can begin earlier. However, there is little freedom to fully enter into attachment for either parents-to-be or a child with remaining ties to the biological mother and the prospect that after child placement, the biological mother can revoke her decision to put the child up for adoption. In most cases, however, the child is unknown to the hopeful parents until the time of placement.

Third, adoptive parents usually have little notice when it is time to receive their child. For biological parents, and as a father of five, with a wife who as a doula or a birth coach has attended some 200 live births, I have a little knowledge about this, normal pregnancy offers many clues to the arrival of baby in the lead-up to birth. As such, maternity benefits can be planned for. For adoptive parents, pre-placement is a wait, then a frantically, or almost chaotically at times, hurry up. Such a situation leaves little or no opportunity to prepare for placement by arranging proper leave from work. In other words, transition is far from seamless for adoptive parents.

● (1340)

Fourth, birth always involves a baby. Adoption does not. The older the adopted child, often the tougher is the transition for parent and child. Older children who are adopted can experience developmental delays or health issues that can complicate the process of attachment to adoptive parents.

Because older children come with a history, either with the biological mother or through foster care, they can often be dealing with issues of loss, trauma, neglect or multiple caregivers. Moreover, barriers to successful parent-child attachment perpetuate the child's inability to form trusting and reliable relationships in life.

Consider Jennifer L. and the transitional difficulties that she, her husband, Jason, their three biological children and her then two-year-old adopted son, who had a history of neglect from his biological mother, experienced. She stated:

"No one will ever convince me that children have less awareness than adults. Sometimes...they're more keenly aware of what is happening. That was true for our little boy. He knew [his biological mother] was leaving him forever and reacted like she was. I've never heard a cry like that one that came out of his little body that day, not before, nor since. He shook with loss, sobbed with loss, fully understood loss and a part of his heart was broken. That's what it sounded like. Five years later we still face it every once in a while: a broken heart more ready to lash out at love than to receive it and more able to test than trust".

Once our parental rights were established, two weeks after "leaving day" we thought he'd be able to experience a smooth transition into our family. We spent a year thinking that every day. And every day his actions begged that we reject him...If we hugged, he bit. If we praised, he ripped. He banged his head into walls and threw himself off stairs. He rolled screaming from one end of the room to the other for hours and hours - sometimes the entire time he was awake. And we loved and we cried and we despaired and we held on harder. We were told he had an attachment disorder. No one needed to tell us - we lived it. When I considered the attachment I

had with my biological children I remembered the time spent holding them as infants, rocking, and cradling them. So we wrapped him in a snugly and we held him. And he screamed. And we held him longer.

The stress was overwhelming. The bar for adoption had been set so high we felt as though we had barely been approved as parents. Would they now take him away? We were failing. Our children were stressed. They all had eagerly anticipated this little brother. And he had rejected them completely. As a family we decided to make lists of what we were thankful for in him so we could yell them out in the midst of his yelling. He had an amazing giggle. He loved to help. He made us laugh. And when he disconnected from us these kept us holding on".

Jennifer's experience is not uncommon for parents who adopt children that are older than infants.

We rightly recognize the value of biological motherhood and time together for biological parents and children as a worthwhile investment, but what about adoptive parents? They need their unique circumstances understood by those with a mandate to legislate, to know that their desire to parent is met with policies that support their choice to adopt.

It has been said "It takes a village to raise a child". With thousands of children in foster care across Canada and children orphaned around the world through famine, natural disaster, civil unrest and wars, those among us able and willing to adopt are key to the well-being of these children and to the building of vibrant families and communities. A grateful society must do all it can to assist them in their parenthood journey.

I call on the House to support this motion to have the HUMA committee study the supports available to adoptive parents. Let it call witnesses to explore the challenges of adoptive parents. Let it examine both domestic and international adoptions. Let it compare what supports are offered in other jurisdictions like Quebec and B.C. Can we find a consensus around two or three issues that, no matter our partisan stripe, we can all support?

● (1345)

Maybe after hearing testimony, committee members will agree with me that it is time for a flexible EI adoption transition leave of comparable length to maternity benefits. Colleagues, I have a vision of a Canada big enough and loving enough to affirm the value of all children. Join with me and vote yes on Motion No. 386.

Private Member's Business

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I offer my congratulations to my colleague from Essex for bringing this forward. It obviously comes from deep inside him and from his experience in life as both a child and a parent. I think this emotion is well worth looking at to see what we can do to help adoptive parents. I have a few comments on that, that I will make shortly.

He mentioned specifically at the end of his comments one measure that we might look at. Are there a couple of specific ideas that he thinks might come out of this study that he would provide to the committee? Would he give the human resources committee a heads up on one or two things that it might look at when it does its deliberations?

Mr. Jeff Watson: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague across the way for his collegiality. He has been very generous in terms of his time spent with me and in his understanding of where I am coming from on this particular issue.

I do have a couple of ideas. I do not want to overly inform. Obviously, I respect that committees are masters of their own destiny. However, there are a couple of things that I think stand out in the research around the experiences of adoptive parents.

First, the process of adoption is very costly. Second, there is a need for time to be spent; part of it is transitional. There is some of the chaos that we talked about, the difficult circumstances when entering into adoption, as well as the additional time necessary for the bonding and the attachment between an adoptive parent and the adopted child.

We need to take those two factors into consideration and agree to start with the principle that there is equal value for parenting, whether it is adoptive or biological. It is of equal value for the children, whether it is biological or adopted. I mentioned this idea of transitional leave through the EI program. It would help with some of that.

We may want to look at a measure that would tackle some of the costs. I know that we already have an income tax credit. Perhaps we could look at augmenting that tax credit to offset some of the additional costs. Those are a couple of ideas, but I think that there are also groups out there that will come before the committee and provide some very instructive ideas.

I am sincerely hoping that we will also generate a report that will be practical and implementable, not all over the place. I look forward to the work of the committee and my colleague opposite in leading the opposition's efforts over there.

• (1350)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that as we listened to my colleague from Essex's very informative speech, we could all reflect on our own childhoods and perhaps we were even thinking about our children and grandchildren.

The member for Essex did point out the very high success rate in terms of adoptive parent-child relationships, but he was also very clear in pointing out many of the obstacles. I think it is more than appropriate that this issue be referred to the HUMA committee.

We have talked about the tax credit that is available a number of times during this interchange. I wonder if the member could clarify what the current regime is in terms of the tax credit available for adoptive parents.

Mr. Jeff Watson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his support in seconding the bill and for the support he has provided to me in this debate.

The current tax credit is \$10,000. Of course, that is a non-refundable credit, so it is not for the full \$10,000 in terms of the effective value of it. However, I think it takes a significant step forward toward addressing some of the cost. The committee may want to take a good look at whether or not that should be augmented.

There is still a fairly expensive process involved here and the committee could be able to weigh that out in its deliberations. Maybe it will come to the agreement that this is something that could be augmented. Maybe it could be doubled. I am not sure. We have to get a sense of how many adoptions we are talking about, what the fiscal impact could be, and whether that reaches far enough to help offset some of the cost at tax time for those going through the adoption process.

Again, I look forward to the study being undertaken and the witnesses that will come forward. I want to hear some more of the testimony. I have my own thoughts on it, but I would love to hear what comes out from Canadians from sea to sea as they begin to unpack this issue in front of Parliament.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me congratulate my colleague, the hon. member for Essex, for bringing this motion forward. It is obviously a motion that comes about from personal experience.

Adoption is an issue that affects so many Canadians in so many ways. No adoptions are easy. None of them are cheap. None of them are a short process. All of them take commitment and dedication.

In my own family, like many Canadians, I can look to people who have gone through the adoption process. My brother Patrick and his wife Constance adopted their second child from China. My sister Jane and her partner adopted two girls in Ontario, one of whom I am the proud godfather of.

Members of the House will probably all know about our colleague, the member for London North Centre and his adopted children, Abuk, Achen and Ater. It is one of the more remarkable stories of how he adopted those children in the course of the work that he did in many ways to make the world better. That one is an incredible story of love, commitment and perseverance, but it is also a story of combating long odds, the coordination of Canadian immigration with the provincial government and everything else, and is indicative of the dedication it takes to adopt children and provide a loving home.

We know issues of child trafficking have to be taken care of. We know that in the case of my colleague's process that there were certain things that needed to be done, but we need to salute the tenacity and the perseverance of people who do so much for others and for themselves, and to provide a loving family to receive love as well as to give it.

In the case of my sister and her partner who adopted girls in Ontario, they were the result of difficult births and they have given these children a wonderful upbringing.

In the case of my brother Patrick and his adoption of Ann from China, it was a typical foreign adoption. It took a long time. There was a lot of waiting, hoping and praying. When the time came, even after all that waiting, it came kind of suddenly. It is a complete commitment and a complete change of life going through the adoption process.

I had the chance a few weeks to meet a girl in my riding who is 20 years old, who was adopted at the age of five, who is Down syndrome non-verbal. Alisha requires the help of many people. It is a blessing to her family to have adopted Alisha, but when we look at the financial strain that they have not only when she was a child but throughout of her life because of her condition, that is a remarkable story as well.

Whenever individuals adopt children, it usually requires a huge amount of commitment, whether it is travel overseas or whether it is the process they go through here. In spite of much waiting, quite often when people are in the line to adopt a child, they suddenly get the call and they have to pick up and go. It is life changing in every sense of the word.

For local adoption, it is the same thing. There is a long and cumbersome process. Couples go through stages where their competence and their financial ability to raise a child are questioned and examined.

Before my wife and I were blessed with our own children, we had considered looking at the adoption route. We saw how long it was going to take in Nova Scotia. Then, as I say, we were blessed to have our own children.

There are attachment issues for people who adopt children, and significant emotional and spiritual investments of people who adopt children. In the case of my brother Patrick, he went to China to adopt his second child. He and his wife had their first child Sophie here in Canada. Because Sophie had a minor medical condition that they did not think could be dealt with in China my brother Patrick, the father, actually went to China with my other brother Barney to adopt a child and bring that child back. Two Canadian men adopting a child in China raised a few eyebrows. In fact, on that long flight back she became quite attached to Barney. When they came here, her mother then had to go through that process again which has all worked out very well.

Quite often we hear stories of people who go through this long process at great expense and it does not turn out as they wish. We have the case of Imagine, the organization that we all heard about, that went bankrupt when people were in line to receive children.

• (1355)

I want to again refer to my colleague from London North Centre, who posted on a blog or a website a reaction he had after he met with some of these people. I will quote it because he would never do so himself. It states:

I just came from a meeting with numerous families who have been in the process of adopting overseas children through the Imagine agency that recently filed for bankruptcy. They gathered in reflection and pain and confusion as to what to do next.

Private Member's Business

Some have \$30,000 invested in the process and they are hurting. My wife and I were asked to attend because of our own adoption of three children from Sudan and we respectfully accepted the invitation. Following an hour of venting their frustrations and developing plans of action, they asked that I address them as an MP.

Walking to the front, I felt humbled and just a little incapable. What could you say to a group of determined and dedicated families such as these? Yet as I turned to speak to them I saw faces full of longing. They were at sea, slightly lost, with a sense they might be experiencing the end of a dream. Emotion ran through me as I comprehended that they were looking to government to make it happen, to bring about a successful resolution to the difficulties. What followed was a heart-to-heart, like few times I've experienced in politics...

One can only imagine what it is like for people who have invested so much of their adult life to bring a child to Canada to give it the love and support that it needs. It is a difficult situation.

As we know, adoption in Canada is a provincial issue. Many provinces have their own policies and legislation, and it varies considerably. In almost every province there are private agencies that are licensed to assess applicants, to act as a go-between, between the birth parents and the adoptive parents.

It is difficult to know the data on waiting lists. It is hard to put a number on this issue. Provinces do not generally keep that. They will give a general ballpark of how long it takes to go through the adoption process. A report in Alberta indicated that the average wait is somewhere between six and thirty months, and in other provinces it is higher than that.

What support is available to adoptive parents now? My colleague from Essex indicated some of them. That is at the heart of the motion, what is available now? Some benefits are the same for birth or adoptive parents. Some of our social infrastructure recognizes the challenges of adoptive families. My colleague is asking that the human resources committee evaluate that, look at provincial jurisdictions, look at what services are available and look at what services are not available. Some provinces are going ahead. Some provinces have made some impact. In 2009 the Ontario Panel on Infertility and Adoption produced a report, and I will quote from that report. This is in Ontario:

Ontarians build their families in different ways. Many—including heterosexual couples, same-sex couples, and single people—use adoption and assisted reproduction services. But barriers like cost, lack of information, system weaknesses, location, work constraints and stigma, prevent many Ontarians from accessing these services and keep many children waiting to be adopted.

I would commend this report to members for their consideration. In the recommendations, it refers to some specific things that the province of Ontario recommends. A couple of those touch on the federal government, for the federal government to have a look to see how it could work with provinces to look at this situation.

It says in the report that one out of every six couples in Ontario have issues of infertility, and we can all speak to that. We all know people in our communities, in our families, who have trouble having children and look to the adoption process.

This is a big issue. It is in many ways a complex issue. It is an issue of importance to many Canadian families. It is an issue that touches on a whole level of jurisdictions, involves a lot of agencies and involves many people.

Private Member's Business

I can certainly see that the human resources committee has a lot of work ahead of it. We have our report on poverty study that we need to get finished. However, I support my colleague in his intent that we have a look at all the myriad of infrastructure that exists around supporting adoptive families to see if it is enough, to see if we can help and to see if we can continue to make Canada the best place on earth to raise all families.

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Josée Beaudin (Saint-Lambert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the motion before us proposes that the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, of which I am a member, examine current federal support measures that are available to adoptive parents and their adopted children.

I want to begin by saying that the Bloc Québécois is in favour of having the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development, and the Status of Persons with Disabilities examine this important issue. Adoption is an extremely complex process, from an administrative but also and especially an emotional and psychoaffective standpoint, for both the adopted child and the parents.

In fact, adoption is nothing like it was in the 1970s, for example. Today, in Quebec at least, adopted children come from outside as well as inside Quebec, which means that in about 50% of cases, adoption is also a process of cultural adaptation as well as a source of much family upheaval, as my colleague said. Both the parents and the children can find themselves in situations that are very hard to manage. In other words, they need support.

I am glad to see that the motion seems to recognize that Quebec and the provinces have jurisdiction over adoption. Moreover, Quebec already has very clear, well-established policies on post-adoption services, which I will describe later. In 1999, the Department of Health and Social Services formed a committee to study post-adoption services, which made 11 recommendations in its report.

The committee developed some general guidelines that echoed throughout these 11 post-adoption support recommendations. There were six, and I will mention them briefly: focus on preparation, a step that is often forgotten; work from the premise that that adoption is never easy, either for the parents or the children; “normal” support is better than “marginalizing” support. One of the major challenges for parents and children is finding a way to form family ties that are as normal as possible. So that starts with the support they receive. It is also important to identify and focus specifically on certain key moments: waiting to be matched, the matching itself, the arrival of the child, the child going to school, the adolescent's search for identity, and so on. The support must also be as proactive as possible, meaning that insofar as possible it should be provided in a positive light, rather than as a means of addressing shortcomings. Lastly, it is important to use and improve the existing network of services, instead of developing marginal parallel networks. This means using the existing resources and knowledge, in order to normalize the support, as I mentioned earlier, but also to provide comprehensive multidisciplinary support.

That is why the department of health and social services gave the local community service centres, or the CLSCs, and the youth centres, the mandate of providing post-adoption support in a number of different forms, namely medical, psychological and psychosocial.

Beyond this direct assistance, the Government of Quebec also provides financial assistance to adoptive parents by way of parental leave identical to the leave biological parents receive, which, unfortunately is not the case for Canadians who currently do not have access to maternity leave benefits under the employment insurance system.

The Quebec government also gives a refundable tax credit equivalent to 50% of the adoption fees up to a maximum of \$10,000 per child.

In other words, Quebec has developed, with great success I might add, adoption policies that focus on the well-being of the child. That means that any adoption has to give primary consideration to the needs, interests and rights of the child. What is more, the Government of Quebec is following the provisions of the Hague Convention of May 29, 1993, on the protection of children and cooperation in respect of inter-country adoption, by reporting to the countries of origin on the progress of the adopted child in his or her new environment, according to the criteria set out by the child's country of origin.

In summary, I completely agree with the need for comprehensive and structured supports so that parents and children can go through the adoption process with the least amount of turmoil possible. I cannot stress enough—and I am very pleased that this is stated in the motion—the need to respect the fact that adoption is an area under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces and that federal interference in an area where Quebec has clearly developed its own practices is out of the question.

The passage of Bill C-14 in June 2007 eliminated the unacceptable distinction made between Canadian children born abroad and children adopted, while respecting Quebec jurisdictions.

• (1405)

We believe that the federal government's role in adoption is minimal and is limited to two things: offering income tax credits and, for the rest of Canada, administering parental and maternity benefits.

In general, the Bloc Québécois supports the principle underlying this motion, which states that it would be a good idea to study ways the federal government can improve its support for adoptive parents and adopted children.

From our point of view, the federal government's role should be to ensure that adoptive parents and adopted children receive the same benefits from the federal government as biological parents and their children.

According to an Adoption Council of Canada document:

For adoptions to succeed, families must have access to key post-adoption supports —adoption competent therapists, mental health specialists, and doctors; attachment and trauma experts; and parent-to-parent mentors....

In Canada, most adoptive parents lack access to such useful services.

In my speech, I have made it clear that this does not apply to Quebec cases at all. However, I want to emphasize that such inadequacies do not justify federal interference in this area, which comes under Quebec jurisdiction.

[English]

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in support of Motion No. 386, a motion calling for the human resources committee to study the support measures available to adoptive parents and their children.

I, like many of my colleagues, have been touched by people who have dealt with the issue of adopting children. It is something that as parents and family members we all hold in trust. My grandmother, who I never had the pleasure of meeting because she passed away before I was born, told my mother, when she was raising us, that “children are not yours as property; they're yours to be entrusted”. It is important for us to note that when we become parents, be it through adoption or biologically, our children are human beings who have been entrusted to us for care and we should do everything we can to support them.

I am glad to see this motion. I would like to see it gain some strength and see some policies that we could adopt and pursue. I would have preferred the government to have provided us with some improvements to the system so that adoptive parents could see real results from this Parliament to support them.

However, this motion is a first step and, of course, we in the NDP will support it with the hope of getting more concrete improvements to the system as we go forward.

Constituents of mine have approached me regarding the unfair maternity leave provisions provided to adoptive parents. Susan Yungblut, on behalf of a group of adoptive parents, approached me on this issue and she outlined the problems with the EI benefits.

Currently, 35 weeks of EI benefits for parental leave are accessible to both birth and adoptive parents, and the member from Essex outlined that. The problem, however, is that the 15 weeks designated to the maternity benefit plan are not available to those who become parents through adoption rather than through birth. For Susan, as for many others, this is an issue of equity, and I share her concern.

Adoptive families pay into the EI fund at equivalent rates to birth families. Due to differential treatment in federal legislation, many Canadian employers provide differential salary top up benefits to birth and adoptive parents. However, birth parents and adoptive parents share the same emotional, social and psychological challenges when a child comes into their home. They are entrusted with the care and nurturing of that child that is so important in the early years, regardless of whether that child is a biological child or an adopted child.

The financial costs of adoption, as we heard, are significant, and the lack of an adoption benefit from both government and employers puts adoption out of reach for many families.

Private Member's Business

I did follow-up my meeting with Ms. Yungblut with a letter to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development on this subject and asked whether the government would consider the creation of an EI benefit plan for adoptive families that would be financially equivalent to that which is offered to biological parents in the EI maternity benefit plan.

Unfortunately, the response I received was not quite favourable. The minister argued that the difference in treating biological versus adoptive mothers is embedded in the psychological demands of pregnancy and childbirth. Many of the adoptive mothers I talked to experienced the psychological demands of pregnancy and had similar needs. The letter was contrary to that experience of many adoptive parents.

According to the minister's point of view, for now, many biological mothers have experienced the psychological demands of pregnancy and also had the tragic experience and possibility of losing a child.

Surely, the emotional suffering of such an experience should be taken into account as we discuss these matters, and there should be acknowledgement. However, no prejudice should be placed upon one group of mothers over another when it comes to that particular leave component in the EI maternity benefit.

● (1410)

Today in the House, we have heard about issues that require action. I would hope a very simple one, this inequity within the maternity benefit system, will be examined at committee and action will be taken on it so there will be equity. I believe this is a positive step. What we have heard today from all members is that there is a willingness to find ways to support adoptive parents.

Personally, having an adopted sister and family members who are presently in the process of adopting, I am keenly aware of the importance of ensuring that adopted children have a sense of belonging, that they feel no different from any of the other members of the family or society. This is particularly acute when children are leaving the family to enter schools. There are things that can be done to bring teachers to understand the uniqueness of adopted children and to make sure when they go through school that their issues are understood so that there is no prejudice, perceived or otherwise, as these children are brought up through the school system.

When it comes to adopted children, we have made a lot of headway, but when we look at the issues in front of people as they look to become adoptive parents and the issues they have after they adopt, there is clearly a lot more to be done. I am glad to support the motion. I look forward to the concrete solutions that come out of the committee and look forward to the government pursuing some of the solutions. From this side of the House there will be support, not only for the motion, but for anything we can do to support adoptive parents, and also of course the children who are entrusted to them.

Private Member's Business

● (1415)

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to contribute to the discussion on Motion No. 386, as introduced by my colleague, the member Essex. I commend him for his interest in this matter. We should always be interested in ways in which our government and our society are dealing with families, whether it be through law programs or tax treatment.

As we know, most aspects of adoption come under provincial jurisdiction, and my colleague's motion recognizes this fully. Our purpose here is not to intrude into areas of provincial competence, jurisdiction or responsibility. However, even given the province's jurisdiction over adoption, the federal government does have a number of support measures available to adoptive parents, and it is those supports that we propose to examine and evaluate in the study proposed by the motion. I look forward to the motion coming before the committee for study and I am sure we will examine it from the various perspectives, many of which have already been raised today.

I would like to discuss some of the supports that we already provide. Our Conservative government introduced and saw passed Bill C-14 two and a half years ago, which grants permanent resident status or Canadian citizenship to adopted children. I was part and parcel of the process when I was parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. What that bill does is make the process much quicker and easier. This measure was widely praised and it is an example of a job well done by our Conservative government.

Adoptive parents are also eligible for a range of supports that our government provides to families with children, including the adoption tax credit, which helps defray the costs of adoption at tax time.

An important consideration is the costs, both in terms of time and money, associated with adoption. I think we can return to this item and its broader considerations later in my remarks and in the study this motion provides itself.

Adoptive parents also receive the universal child care benefit, which was introduced by this government for each child under the age of six years.

Adoptive parents receive the Canada child tax benefit and the national child benefit supplement for families at low and middle income levels and the child tax credit for parents of all children under the age of 18 years.

I can say that both those programs have had significant financial assistance for low and middle income families.

As I said, working adoptive parents are able to access, in great numbers, the most visible and well-known of these supports, which are parental benefits through the EI system.

Women's access to EI benefits, such as maternity and parental benefits, is very high. Ninety-seven per cent of women working full time have enough hours of work to qualify for special benefits. This is the same level of access as for men. Among women working part time, 62% have enough hours to qualify for special benefits.

So those are some of the specific benefits offered by the federal government.

I will say a bit more about them shortly but, before I do, I again want to emphasize that we believe the family is the basic building block of our society. Everything starts with the family. I have said on many occasions that as the family goes, so goes the nation. Helping families has been a key priority for this government since 2006.

In all of our actions to support families, this government has been guided by the principles of choice and opportunity. We believe that Canadian parents can be trusted to do what is best for their children. Our role is not to dictate their choices but to give them the resources that they need and let them make the decision. This is very fundamental to the programs that we have undertaken.

As a parent myself, I certainly appreciate the wisdom of our government in its approach.

One of the first things we did in 2006 was to begin getting child care funding into the hands of Canadian parents. The centrepiece of our universal child care plan is the universal child care benefit. This benefit, of course, was introduced by the Minister of Human Resources and has proven to be very popular with parents from coast to coast to coast.

The benefit of \$100 a month is paid to parents for all children under six years of age. Parents can choose the child care option that best suits their needs, whether that is care from a parent at home, help from family, friends or neighbours, or some more formal child care arrangement.

Of course, the universal child care benefit may also be used to purchase other things equally as important to children and their well-being, such as early learning materials.

We are adamant that parents maintain this freedom over their households and the raising of their children.

As I and many of my colleagues have said, parents know best how to run their homes and how best to raise their children.

Continuing on the track of how parents could use the UCCB, as it is sometimes referred to, they may even wish to deposit all or part of that benefit in a registered education savings plan, which can prolong and enhance the value of the benefit many times over in the long term.

● (1420)

Through the UCCB, our government is providing about \$2.5 billion each year to families and is helping about two million young children. We are also helping parents cover the cost of child care through the child care expense deduction. For the average family, the universal child care benefit, together with the child care expense deduction, offsets well over one-third of the cost of non-parental child care if that is the direction the parents wish or chose to go.

We know that many Canadian parents worry about finding good professional care for their children. The demand for child care services simply exceeds the supply. That is why the universal child care plan also provides for the creation of child care spaces.

Private Member's Business

Since 2007, the Government of Canada has transferred \$250 million per year to the provinces and territories for this purpose. Tens of thousands of new spaces have been created across the country. The provinces are also using these funds to improve the quality and affordability of their child care services.

In 2007, our government also introduced a 25% investment tax credit for businesses that create new child care spaces for their employees.

It is important to remind the House that this funding is in addition to the extension of existing funding for agreements with the provinces and territories for early childhood development and early learning as well as child care. This funding totals \$1.13 billion this year and will grow to \$1.3 billion by 2013-14 under the renewed Canada social transfer.

Few things matter more than ensuring our children can get the best results for a best possible start in life. This means doing everything we can to reduce poverty and improve access to education so that every child has the opportunity for a full and rewarding life.

With the working income tax benefit, we are helping low- and modest-income Canadian families make it over the welfare wall by making work more profitable. The tax-free savings account introduced by our government in 2007 is a groundbreaking measure that allows Canadian families to shelter some of their hard-earned income. It is a powerful incentive for Canadians to save to buy their first house or to invest in their children's education.

In 2007, we also announced the child tax credit which provides families with tax savings of over \$300 per year for each child under the age of 18 years. I am happy to confirm that the child tax credit has taken about 180,000 low-income Canadians off the tax rolls. We are providing \$9.5 billion a year to families with children through the Canada child tax benefit, including over \$3.7 billion to low-income families with children through the national child benefit supplement.

In hearings before the HUMA committee, many witnesses have indicated how beneficial these two programs are to low- and middle-income families. In Canada's economic action plan we raised the income level at which these two benefits start, providing additional support for low-income families.

We need to ensure that the coming generation can compete in the new global economy. That is why we are providing new opportunities for post-secondary education. We have improved the registered education savings plan, RESP as it is commonly known, to help parents save for their children's post-secondary education. We have eliminated the limit on annual RESP contributions and increased the lifetime limit.

Also as a result of changes made through Canada's economic action plan, more low- and middle-income families are now eligible for the national child benefit supplement, which in turn allows them to qualify for the Canada learning bond.

We also want to offer more choice and opportunity to aboriginal families. Working in collaboration with aboriginal communities and the provincial and territorial governments, we support child care, kindergarten and aboriginal headstart, as well as social and health promotion programs for aboriginal people.

In addition, under agreements with the provinces of Ontario and Alberta, we provide funding for on-reserve child care services comparable to services offered by those provinces to families living off-reserve.

Our government also works in cooperation with the provinces and territories through federal initiatives, such as the community action program for children and the Canada prenatal nutrition program.

These initiatives provide long-term funding to community groups for programs that address the health and development of children and families who are judged to be especially vulnerable.

If time permits, let me summarize what the government is doing for families with children.

● (1425)

As I have said, we are providing \$5.9 billion in this fiscal year alone in support of early childhood development and child care through measures to the provinces and territories, direct support to families and tax relief for families. Let me recap. That is \$1.13 billion to the provinces and territories to support early childhood development and child care, which will increase to almost \$1.3 billion by 2013-14.

I would encourage all members of this House to engage proactively in the process when this motion comes before the committee. There are many angles and aspects to this motion that can be reviewed and pursued. The committee itself will look forward to the representations made by the various members of this House and the witnesses that appear before the committee.

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I realize that I am the one who is stopping everybody from getting out of here today, but I can assure them I will be using all my time, so everyone can just relax and sit tight.

I am honoured to speak to this motion. I enjoyed hearing my colleague from Essex talk about adoption. I appreciate the comments from the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour and his response to adoption, and the comments as well from the Bloc and the NDP members.

Adoption is a very serious and important issue. In my past life, before I became a member of Parliament, I was on the board of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. As a matter of fact, I was one of the founding board members in this country. The Dave Thomas Foundation in the U.S. has done great work about awareness and trying to get people to understand the process, what goes on, how difficult it is to let people know children are out there and able to be adopted.

Private Member's Business

As my friend from Essex mentioned, the sad truth is it is a very complicated process. There are a lot of obstacles along the way. It is unfortunate that in this day and age some people find it much easier to go across the world to adopt children. While this is a great thing, the challenge is there are still thousands and thousands of children here in Canada who need to be adopted.

I fully support the essence of what the member is doing. I support the motion. The member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour talked about an important study that we are working on regarding poverty. I would venture to say that when we pass this motion, and I am assuming and hoping that all members will support this motion, we should spend an equal amount of time on a study about adoption because of how important I fundamentally believe this is, not only for our nation but for all those kids out there who really need a safe and secure family home in which to live.

Once again I thank the member for bringing this important issue forward. In previous Parliaments, the member for Prince George—Peace River, our government House leader, has talked about initiatives regarding adoption. As a country, there is so much more we could do for these kids and families, and that is why I support this motion.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this motion and how the federal government can best serve and support parents who adopt children. As I have said before, I applaud the member for Essex for seeking to help us gain a better understanding of families who have been brought together through adoption.

As any parent knows, the arrival of a child into a family is a joyous occasion marked by moments of fatigue and stress, all the more so for first-time parents. Biological parents encounter many natural and certainly trying circumstances and preparatory hurdles with which they must deal. As for parents who adopt a child, there are altogether different but no less challenging processes and issues

to consider. The comparison of these issues among groups of parents would be a worthy area of study for our human resources committee.

A good question for us all here could be: How can we make things easier for parents and make our methods more effective?

I support the motion before us today which instructs the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, the committee I chair, to examine current federal support measures available to adoptive parents and their adoptive children, because it may help us to understand this and other questions.

Such a study could provide an in-depth review of issues encountered by adoptive parents when they bring home their newly adopted child, issues such as how much time is needed to integrate the child into the family and what the parents must go through prior to adoption. Through this kind of analysis, the study could uncover evidence that points the way forward and shines a light on existing policies, including making suggestions related to the current support provided through the employment insurance program's special benefits.

● (1430)

The Speaker: Order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but as he no doubt knows, the time for consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper. However, the hon. member will have five and a half minutes remaining in the time allotted for his remarks when the matter is next before the House.

[*Translation*]

It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until next Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. PETER MILLIKEN

MR. RODGER CUZNER

MS. LIBBY DAVIES

MR. JACQUES GOURDE

MR. MICHEL GUIMOND

HON. JAY HILL

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MR. JOE PRESTON

MR. MARCEL PROULX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia.....	British Columbia	CPC
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill.....	Alberta	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm.....	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé.....	Québec	BQ
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Arthur, André.....	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Québec	Ind.
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill.....	Manitoba	NDP
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	Québec	BQ
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior.....	British Columbia	NDP
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean.....	Québec	BQ
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon	Yukon	Lib.
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.....	Ottawa West—Nepean.....	Ontario	CPC
Beaudin, Josée.....	Saint-Lambert	Québec	BQ
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André.....	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's.....	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon.....	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Ontario	Lib.
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories....	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake.....	Manitoba	CPC
Bigras, Bernard.....	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie....	Québec	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	BQ
Blaney, Steven.....	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limouilou	Québec	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	BQ
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brisson, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	Québec	BQ
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	British Columbia	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	Québec	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	Québec	BQ
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	BQ
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi— Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	BQ
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Demers, Nicole	Laval	Québec	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	Québec	BQ
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	Lib.
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	BQ
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	Québec	BQ
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Québec	BQ
Fast, Ed	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	BQ
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Québec	BQ
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	Québec	BQ
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	BQ
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette— Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	BQ
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock— Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin— Kapuskasing	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce— Lachine	Québec	Lib.
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge— Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Ontario	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau— Mirabel	Québec	BQ
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont	Alberta	CPC
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	BQ
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	BQ
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	BQ
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	BQ
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	BQ
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	Ontario	NDP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	Lib.
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Ontario	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Ontario	Lib.
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nadeau, Richard.....	Gatineau	Québec	BQ
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre.....	Manitoba	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.....	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliphant, Robert.....	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Ouellet, Christian.....	Brome—Missisquoi.....	Québec	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Paillé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	Québec	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	Québec	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	Lib.
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat.....	Alberta	CPC
Pearson, Glen.....	London North Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint- Charles.....	Québec	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet— Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	Québec	BQ
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment.....	Calgary Centre-North.....	Alberta	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ..	Ontario	CPC
Proulx, Marcel.....	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	Lib.
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John.....	Thunder Bay—Rainy River....	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc.....	Alberta	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East.....	Ontario	Lib.
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert.....	Alberta	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff.....	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Richards, Blake.....	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	Lib.
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis— Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shipley, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	BQ
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	BQ
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Ontario	Lib.
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valeriote, Francis	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	Québec	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	Québec	BQ
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	NDP
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Ontario	Lib.
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Québec	Lib.
VACANCY	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	
VACANCY	Hochelaga	Québec	
VACANCY	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	
VACANCY	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib. - Liberal; CPC - Conservative; BQ - Bloc Quebecois; NDP - New Democratic Party; Ind. - Independent

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Fortieth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Labour	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Casson, Rick	Lethbridge	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Laurie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Jean, Brian, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Transport)	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Prentice, Hon. Jim, Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Tim	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (35)		
Abbott, Hon. Jim, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cadman, Dona	Surrey North	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Cummins, John	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Day, Hon. Stockwell, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Dhaliwal, Sukh	Newton—North Delta	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Dosanjh, Hon. Ujjal	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Ed.	Abbotsford	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Hill, Hon. Jay, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunn, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Sport)	Saanich—Gulf Islands	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
Martin, Hon. Keith	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	Lib.
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Savoie, Denise, The Acting Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	North Vancouver	CPC
Siksay, Bill	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Hon. Chuck, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wong, Alice, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Richmond	CPC
VACANCY	New Westminster—Coquitlam	
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Maloway, Jim	Elmwood—Transcona	NDP
Mark, Inky	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Neville, Hon. Anita	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, President of the Treasury Board	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
Wasylycia-Leis, Judy	Winnipeg North	NDP
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
D'Amours, Jean-Claude	Madawaska—Restigouche	Lib.
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Rob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Fundy Royal	CPC
Murphy, Brian	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	Lib.
O'Neill-Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Thompson, Hon. Greg, Minister of Veterans Affairs	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Coady, Siobhan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Lib.
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Russell, Todd	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (10)		
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Savage, Michael	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
VACANCY	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Bains, Hon. Navdeep	Mississauga—Brampton South	Lib.
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bevilacqua, Hon. Maurizio	Vaughan	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Calandra, Paul	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, Minister of Industry	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Crombie, Bonnie	Mississauga—Streetsville	Lib.
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Dhalla, Ruby	Brampton—Springdale	Lib.
Dryden, Hon. Ken	York Centre	Lib.
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Guarnieri, Hon. Albina	Mississauga East—Cooksville	Lib.
Guergis, Hon. Helena, Minister of State (Status of Women)	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Hall Findlay, Martha	Willowdale	Lib.
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Holland, Mark	Ajax—Pickering	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP
Ignatieff, Michael, Leader of the Opposition	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Lib.
Kania, Andrew	Brampton West	Lib.
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kennedy, Gerard	Parkdale—High Park	Lib.
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas)	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Layton, Hon. Jack	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Lee, Derek	Scarborough—Rouge River	Lib.
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
MacKenzie, Dave, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Oxford	CPC
Malhi, Hon. Gurbax	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Lib.
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Martin, Tony	Sault Ste. Marie	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
McTeague, Hon. Dan	Pickering—Scarborough East	Lib.
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Milliken, Hon. Peter, Speaker of the House of Commons	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Minna, Hon. Maria	Beaches—East York	Lib.
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliphant, Robert	Don Valley West	Lib.
Pearson, Glen	London North Centre	Lib.
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Natural Resources	Halton	CPC
Ratansi, Yasmin	Don Valley East	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg	Kenora	CPC
Rota, Anthony	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Lib.
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Silva, Mario	Davenport	Lib.
Simson, Michelle	Scarborough Southwest	Lib.
Stanton, Bruce	Simcoe North	CPC
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Tonks, Alan	York South—Weston	Lib.
Valeriotte, Francis	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Minister of Public Safety	York—Simcoe	CPC
Volpe, Hon. Joseph	Eglinton—Lawrence	Lib.
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Wilfert, Hon. Bryon	Richmond Hill	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Wrzesnewskyj, Borys	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Murphy, Hon. Shawn	Charlottetown	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (73)		
André, Guy	Berthier—Maskinongé	BQ
Arthur, André	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	Ind.
Asselin, Gérard	Manicouagan	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Beaudin, Josée	Saint-Lambert	BQ
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Bernier, Hon. Maxime	Beauce	CPC
Bigras, Bernard	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	BQ
Blackburn, Hon. Jean-Pierre, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Jonquière—Alma	CPC
Blais, Raynald	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	BQ
Blaney, Steven	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Bonsant, France	Compton—Stanstead	BQ
Bouchard, Robert	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	BQ
Boucher, Sylvie, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	Beauport—Limoilou	CPC
Bourgeois, Diane	Terrebonne—Blainville	BQ
Brunelle, Paule	Trois-Rivières	BQ
Cannon, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Pontiac	CPC
Cardin, Serge	Sherbrooke	BQ
Carrier, Robert	Alfred-Pellan	BQ
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
DeBellefeuille, Claude	Beauharnois—Salaberry	BQ
Demers, Nicole	Laval	BQ
Deschamps, Johanne	Laurentides—Labelle	BQ
Desnoyers, Luc	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dorion, Jean	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dufour, Nicolas	Repentigny	BQ
Faille, Meili	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	BQ
Folco, Raymonde	Laval—Les Îles	Lib.
Freeman, Carole	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	BQ
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Gaudet, Roger	Montcalm	BQ
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and to the Minister of National Revenue	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Guay, Monique	Rivière-du-Nord	BQ
Guimond, Claude	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	BQ
Jennings, Hon. Marlene	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Lib.
Laforest, Jean-Yves	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	BQ
Laframboise, Mario	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	La Pointe-de-l'Île	BQ
Lavallée, Carole	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	BQ
Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec)	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
Lemay, Marc	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	BQ
Lessard, Yves	Chambly—Borduas	BQ
Lévesque, Yvon	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	BQ
Malo, Luc	Verchères—Les Patriotes	BQ
Ménard, Serge	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	BQ
Mendes, Alexandra	Brossard—La Prairie	Lib.
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nadeau, Richard	Gatineau	BQ
Ouellet, Christian	Brome—Missisquoi	BQ
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Pailé, Pascal-Pierre	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Paquette, Pierre	Joliette	BQ
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Bernard	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Lib.
Petit, Daniel, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	CPC
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Drummond	BQ
Proulx, Marcel	Hull—Aylmer	Lib.
Rodriguez, Pablo	Honoré-Mercier	Lib.
Roy, Jean-Yves	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
St-Cyr, Thierry	Jeanne-Le Ber	BQ
Thi Lac, Ève-Mary Thai	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	BQ
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Verner, Hon. Josée, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister for La Francophonie	Louis-Saint-Laurent	CPC
Vincent, Robert	Shefford	BQ
Zarac, Lise	LaSalle—Émard	Lib.
VACANCY	Hochelaga	
VACANCY	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph, Wascana.....	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board.....	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Andrew, The Deputy Speaker	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin.....	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Bagnell, Hon. Larry	Yukon.....	Lib.

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of October 30, 2009 — 2nd Session, 40th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Bruce Stanton	Vice-Chairs:	Jean Crowder Todd Russell	
Larry Bagnell Mauril Bélanger Rob Clarke	Earl Dreeshen John Duncan	Marc Lemay Yvon Lévesque	LaVar Payne Greg Rickford	(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott	Rick Casson	Gerald Keddy	James Rajotte
Harold Albrecht	Michael Chong	Greg Kerr	Brent Rathgeber
Mike Allen	Nathan Cullen	Ed Komarnicki	Scott Reid
Dean Allison	John Cummins	Daryl Kramp	Blake Richards
Rob Anders	Patricia Davidson	Mike Lake	Lee Richardson
David Anderson	Bob Dechert	Guy Lauzon	Andrew Saxton
Charlie Angus	Dean Del Mastro	Pierre Lemieux	Gary Schellenberger
Niki Ashton	Jean Dorion	Megan Leslie	Bev Shipley
Gérard Asselin	Ken Dryden	Ben Lobb	Devinder Shory
Carolyn Bennett	Kirsty Duncan	Tom Lukiwski	Joy Smith
Leon Benoit	Rick Dykstra	James Lunney	Kevin Sorenson
Maxime Bernier	Ed Fast	Dave MacKenzie	Brian Storseth
Dennis Bevington	Carole Freeman	Inky Mark	David Sweet
James Bezan	Royal Galipeau	Pat Martin	David Tilson
Steven Blaney	Cheryl Gallant	Tony Martin	Brad Trost
Kelly Block	Shelly Glover	Colin Mayes	Justin Trudeau
Sylvie Boucher	Peter Goldring	Phil McColeman	Merv Tweed
Ray Boughen	Jacques Gourde	Cathy McLeod	Tim Uppal
Peter Braid	Nina Grewal	Ted Menzies	Dave Van Kesteren
Garry Breitkreuz	Richard Harris	Larry Miller	Maurice Vellacott
Gordon Brown	Laurie Hawn	Rob Moore	Mike Wallace
Lois Brown	Russ Hiebert	Anita Neville	Mark Warawa
Patrick Brown	Randy Hoback	Rick Norlock	Chris Warkentin
Rod Bruinooge	Candice Hoepfner	Tilly O'Neill-Gordon	Jeff Watson
Dona Cadman	Ed Holder	Deepak Obhrai	John Weston
Paul Calandra	Carol Hughes	Daniel Petit	Rodney Weston
Blaine Calkins	Bruce Hyer	Pierre Poilievre	Alice Wong
Ron Cannan	Brian Jean	Joe Preston	Stephen Woodworth
Colin Carrie	Randy Kamp	John Rafferty	Terence Young

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chair: Larry Miller

Vice-Chairs: André Bellavance
Mark Eyking

Alex Atamanenko
France Bonsant
Wayne Easter

Randy Hoback
Pierre Lemieux

Blake Richards
Bev Shipley

Brian Storseth
Francis Valeriote

(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott
Harold Albrecht
Malcolm Allen
Mike Allen
Dean Allison
Rob Anders
David Anderson
Charlie Angus
Niki Ashton
Carolyn Bennett
Leon Benoit
Maxime Bernier
James Bezan
Steven Blaney
Kelly Block
Sylvie Boucher
Ray Boughen
Peter Braid
Garry Breitkreuz
Gordon Brown
Lois Brown
Patrick Brown
Rod Bruinooge
Paule Brunelle
Dona Cadman
Paul Calandra
Blaine Calkins
Ron Cannan
Serge Cardin
Colin Carrie

Rick Casson
Michael Chong
Rob Clarke
Joe Comartin
Nathan Cullen
John Cummins
Patricia Davidson
Bob Dechert
Dean Del Mastro
Jean Dorion
Ujjal Dosanjh
Earl Dreeshen
John Duncan
Rick Dykstra
Ed Fast
Royal Galipeau
Cheryl Gallant
Shelly Glover
Yvon Godin
Peter Goldring
Jacques Gourde
Claude Gravelle
Nina Grewal
Claude Guimond
Richard Harris
Laurie Hawn
Russ Hiebert
Candice Hoepfner
Ed Holder

Carol Hughes
Bruce Hyer
Brian Jean
Randy Kamp
Gerald Keddy
Greg Kerr
Ed Komarnicki
Daryl Kramp
Mike Lake
Guy Lauzon
Ben Lobb
Tom Lukiwski
James Lunney
Dave MacKenzie
Inky Mark
Pat Martin
Tony Martin
Colin Mayes
Phil McColeman
Cathy McLeod
Ted Menzies
Rob Moore
Anita Neville
Rick Norlock
Tilly O'Neill-Gordon
Deepak Obhrai
LaVar Payne
Daniel Petit
Pierre Poilievre

Joe Preston
James Rajotte
Brent Rathgeber
Scott Reid
Lee Richardson
Greg Rickford
Andrew Saxton
Gary Schellenberger
Devinder Shory
Joy Smith
Kevin Sorenson
Bruce Stanton
Peter Stoffer
David Sweet
David Tilson
Brad Trost
Merv Tweed
Tim Uppal
Dave Van Kesteren
Maurice Vellacott
Mike Wallace
Mark Warawa
Chris Warkentin
Jeff Watson
John Weston
Rodney Weston
Alice Wong
Stephen Woodworth
Terence Young

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOOD SAFETY

Chair:

Vice-Chair:

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Chair: Gary Schellenberger

Vice-Chairs:

Carole Lavallée
Pablo Rodriguez

Charlie Angus
Rod Bruinooge
Dean Del Mastro

Ruby Dhalla
Jacques Gourde

Nina Grewal
Roger Pomerleau

Scott Simms
Tim Uppal

(12)

Associate Members

Jim Abbott
Harold Albrecht
Malcolm Allen
Dean Allison
Rob Anders
David Anderson
Niki Ashton
Alex Atamanenko
Leon Benoit
Maxime Bernier
James Bezan
Steven Blaney
Kelly Block
Robert Bouchard
Sylvie Boucher
Ray Boughen
Peter Braid
Garry Breitzkreuz
Gordon Brown
Lois Brown
Patrick Brown
Dona Cadman
Paul Calandra
Blaine Calkins
Ron Cannan
Colin Carrie
Rick Casson
Michael Chong
David Christopherson
Rob Clarke
Bonnie Crombie
Jean Crowder
Nathan Cullen

John Cummins
Patricia Davidson
Don Davies
Libby Davies
Bob Dechert
Jean Dorion
Earl Dreeshen
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Ray Boughen	Cheryl Gallant	Ted Menzies	Merv Tweed
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Lois Brown	Nina Grewal	Rick Norlock	Mike Wallace
Patrick Brown	Richard Harris	Tilly O'Neill-Gordon	Mark Warawa
Rod Bruinooge	Laurie Hawn	Deepak Obhrai	Chris Warkentin
Dona Cadman	Russ Hiebert	Pierre Paquette	Jeff Watson
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Colin Carrie	Ed Holder	Louis Plamondon	Alice Wong
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