



CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 145 • NUMBER 053 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

—

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken

CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

•(1000)
[English]

ELIMINATING ENTITLEMENTS FOR PRISONERS ACT

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-31, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act.

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

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union concerning its participation in the 121st IPU Assembly and related meetings in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 19 to 21, 2009.

* * *

PETITIONS

MINING INDUSTRY

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by a number of residents from London, Ontario, and a number of residents from Regina, Saskatchewan, with respect to the issues of Canadian mining companies.

The petitioners wish to draw to the attention of the Government of Canada that the alleged abuses of human rights and degradation of the environment by Canadian mining companies are a violation of the principles of fundamental justice. The petitioners feel it is the duty of Parliament to hold Canadian companies responsible for their activities when operating in foreign jurisdictions.

The petitioners ask the Government of Canada to create effective laws with respect to corporate social responsibility and to consent to the expeditious passage of Bill C-300.

•(1005)

CANADIAN FORCES

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by some members from my riding and also folks from Kelowna and Vancouver.

The petitioners state that currently Canada's commitments have overstretched the capacity of the Canadian armed forces' human resources and created pressure to recruit additional personnel. Children and youth still in school are generally not of a maturity to understand fully the implications of a decision to join the military and they lack sufficient other supports to access post-secondary education. It makes joining the military seem enticing, and possibly the only way to access a desired education and training opportunities.

Therefore, the petitioners hereby request that Parliament call a halt to recruitment activities of the Canadian armed forces in schools.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mrs. Alice Wong (Richmond, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition regarding the implementation of recommendations made in the B.C. SPCA's report to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to introduce a petition signed by people throughout Saskatchewan in support of the First Nations University of Canada .

The petitioners wish to draw to the attention of the House that the viability of the First Nations University of Canada was threatened by the removal of provincial and federal funding, and that the reinstatement of provincial funds and up to \$3 million in federal funds to the proposed student-based support program would not ensure long-term sustainable funding of the First Nations University. Steps have been taken to improve the governance and accountability of the First Nations University and a memorandum of understanding has been signed by all parties. The founding mission of the university includes a commitment to enhance the quality of life and to preserve, protect and interpret the history, language, culture and artistic heritage of First Nations people.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners state that we must not lose the valuable resource and indigenous knowledge that has been created at the First Nations University. They add that above all, we must support the students at First Nations University who have demonstrated their dedication, commitment and overwhelming desire for the continuation of the institution.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to work with the students, staff and faculty to build a sustainable and viable future for the First Nations University of Canada by fully reinstating federal funding of at least \$7.2 million.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with signatures from 192 constituents in my riding of Dufferin—Caledon. They are opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia, and want suicide prevention programs to be strengthened.

They have asked that Parliament retain section 241 of the Criminal Code without changes in order that Parliament not sanction or allow the counselling, aiding or abetting of suicide whether by personal action or the Internet.

SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as you know, the NDP fought successfully to stop the incredibly misguided attempt by the government to implement the security and prosperity partnership.

I have other petitions that have come in signed by hundreds of residents of southern Ontario, northern Manitoba, the Thompson area, and the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. They say very clearly that they oppose the implementation of the security and prosperity partnership. They did not believe that there was a democratic mandate from the government and were concerned about the profound consequences of the SPP agenda on Canada's existence as a sovereign nation, and its ability to adopt autonomous and sustainable economic, social and environmental policies.

The petitioners have called upon the government to have full consultations and to submit the whole SPP process to the Parliament of Canada. As everyone knows, the NDP opposition in this corner successfully derailed the SPP process. These petitioners want to be heard by the Government of Canada.

PRISON FARMS

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today signed by dozens of Manitobans calling on the government to stop the closing of six Canadian prison farms.

All six prison farms, including Rockwood Institution in Manitoba, have been functioning farms for many decades providing food to prisons and to the community. The prison farm operations provide rehabilitation and training for prisoners through working with and caring for plants and animals. The work ethic, rehabilitation and benefit of waking up at six in the morning and working outdoors is a discipline that Canadians can appreciate.

On Sunday, June 6, 2010, Margaret Atwood will join citizens of all ages and political stripes on a march to the Correctional Service of Canada, Kingston headquarters, where they will be posting their

demands for saving and revitalizing Canada's six prison farms. There are 16 months of public events, letters, petitions, delegations and parliamentary motions that have nearly unanimous support across the country. Yet, the federal government is plowing ahead with its ill-considered plan to shut down the six prison farms.

Heritage dairy herds that provide milk for inmates in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick are slated for disposal. The first sale is scheduled for Kingston's Frontenac Institution the week of June 21. This will be the death of the farms.

Therefore, the petitioners call on the Government of Canada to stop the closure of the six Canadian prison farm operations across Canada, and produce a report on the work and rehabilitative benefit to prisoners of the farm operations and on how the program can be adapted to meet the agricultural needs of the 21st century.

* * *

• (1010)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 204, 205, 206 and 207.

[Text]

Question No. 204—**Mr. Brian Murphy:**

With respect to the National Do Not Call List (DNCL) that was created to reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls received by Canadians, as of March 4, 2010: (a) what is the total number of fines that have been imposed to date by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC); (b) what is the total value of fines that have been imposed to date; (c) what is the total number of fines that have been paid to date; (d) what is the total value of fines that have been paid to date; (e) why, as a general policy, does the CRTC not release to the public the names of companies violating the National DNCL if the fine is paid without being contested; (f) why are CRTC hearings on the National DNCL violations not open to the Canadian public or to the media; and (g) has the CRTC forwarded information on violations of the National DNCL to the RCMP for further investigation?

Hon. Tony Clement (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the National Do Not Call List, DNCL, that was created to reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls received by Canadians, as of March 4, 2010: in response to

a) The total number of administrative monetary penalties, AMPs, imposed is 11.

In response to b) The total value of AMPs that have been imposed is \$73 000.

In response to c) The total number of AMPs that have been paid to date is one partial payment.

In response to d) The total value of AMPs that have been paid is \$250.

Routine Proceedings

Collection action is pursued on all files where the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, CRTC, has imposed an AMP in relation to violation of the national DNCL rules and payment has not been made. The CRTC is utilizing all means of collection available for outstanding accounts. This includes, but is not limited to, actions such as referral of outstanding accounts to collection agencies or the Canada Revenue Agency, CRA, for refund set-off of funds otherwise payable by the CRA under the Income Tax Act, Excise Tax Act or Excise Act, under authority of subsection 164 (2) of the Income Tax Act or subsection 155(1) of the Financial Administration Act.

In response to e) Where the CRTC suspects that there has been a breach of the unsolicited telecommunications rules, the CRTC first attempts to work directly with the telemarketer to obtain compliance on a voluntary basis.

Where voluntary compliance efforts fail, the CRTC issues a notice of violation to the telemarketer, which sets out proposed penalties for violations of the Rules.

The CRTC generally does not publish the name of the telemarketer at the notice of violation stage as the telemarketer has not been given the chance to formally contest the allegations. If the telemarketer complies with the requirements of the notice of violation, their names are not published.

However, if the telemarketer contests the notice of violation and the CRTC determines that violations set out in the notice were committed by the telemarketer, the name of the telemarketer, the nature of the violations and the amount of the penalties are published.

Also, if the telemarketer fails to either contest the notice of violation or pay the penalties set out in the notice, the name of the telemarketer, the nature of the violations and the amount of the penalties are published.

In response to f) In general, the CRTC's proceedings on whether to impose AMPs are conducted entirely in writing and, as such, are not conducted by way of oral hearings. After considering any written representations made by a telemarketer in response to a notice of violation, the CRTC issues a decision on whether to impose any penalties on the telemarketer. The CRTC's decision is posted on its website and is available to the Canadian public and the media.

Where a telemarketer applies to the CRTC to review and rescind or vary a decision, the telemarketer's notice of violation and review and vary application are made available to the public on the CRTC's website. Any interested person may intervene by providing comments they consider appropriate.

In response to g) During an investigation, if the information uncovered suggests that the telemarketer might be engaged in criminal activities, the CRTC notifies agencies that are empowered to pursue such activities. This includes the Competition Bureau and PhoneBusters. PhoneBusters is the Canadian Anti-fraud Call Centre, managed on a tripartite basis by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Competition Bureau. To date, the CRTC has not forwarded information on

violation of the national DNCL to the RCMP for further investigation.

Note: The CRTC publishes on its website a monthly national DNCL status report. The report, commencing for the month of July 2009, contains monthly and cumulative information on a number of key variables, including number of telephone or fax numbers registered on the national DNCL; number of complaints; number of new, closed and active investigations; number of notices of violation issued; and number of AMPs issued.

The CRTC's national DNCL status report also contains a list of the CRTC's decisions regarding violations of the unsolicited telecommunications rules. The list identifies the companies that were found to be in violation and contains the URL link to each of the decisions. These decisions contain information on the circumstances of the case and the amount of the AMP levied.

Question No. 205—Mr. Brian Murphy:

With respect to the Privy Council Office: (a) what was the total amount spent by the Privy Council Office on public opinion polling and research in the 2008-2009 fiscal year; and (b) how much has been spent on public opinion polling and research between April 1, 2009 and March 1, 2010?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in response to part a) of the question, the Privy Council Office, PCO, spent \$408,426.97 on public opinion polling and research in the 2008-2009 fiscal year. In response to part b) of the question, PCO spent \$129,127.81 on public opinion polling and research between April 1, 2009 and March 1, 2010.

Question No. 206—Mr. Brian Murphy:

With respect to the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO): (a) how many employees worked in the PMO during the 2008-2009 fiscal year; and (b) how many employees were employed in the PMO as of March 1, 2010?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in response to part a) of the question, between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, according to substantive position, the total number of employees who worked in the Prime Minister's Office was 152. Note that this total includes employment periods of varying lengths.

In response to part b) of the question, as of March 1, 2010, there were 112 employees in the Prime Minister's Office.

Question No. 207—Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours:

Regarding the 20-week extension of Employment Insurance (EI) benefits that was announced as part of new EI measures for long-tenured workers, how many letters were sent from each of the Edmundston, Saint-Quentin, Campbellton and Dalhousie regional offices informing Canadians they were eligible for these measures?

Business of Supply

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is temporarily providing additional EI regular benefits to unemployed long-tenured workers who are having difficulty getting back into the workforce. Long-tenured workers are individuals who have worked and paid EI premiums for a significant period of time and have previously made limited use of EI regular benefits. This legislation provides from 5 to 20 weeks of additional benefits, depending on how long an eligible individual has been working and paying into EI. This measure builds on those introduced in Canada's economic action plan and will be phased out gradually as the economy improves. It will help approximately 190,000 Canadians over the course of its duration.

There were 1,393 letters issued to claimants advising that they would receive between five and 20 weeks of additional regular benefits. This number is applicable to the four Service Canada Centres listed above with the postal code boundaries supplied by HRSD actuarial services. The breakdown is as follows: Edmundston—842; Campbellton—169; Dalhousie—254; Saint-Quentin—128.

These letters were not sent from each office as they were printed and sent by a private contract due to the volume of letters issued.

[English]

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—G8 AND G20 SUMMITS

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, while Canadians are justifiably proud of Canada's upcoming hosting of the G8 and G20 summits and determined to provide effective and efficient security for the visiting world leaders, they are outraged at the reckless partisan choices and financial mismanagement that have caused the security budget for the summits to skyrocket to over \$1 billion which is more than six times the original budget and more than was spent on security for the 2010 Winter Olympics which lasted for 17 days and therefore the House calls on the government to provide a detailed breakdown to Canadians of how the money earmarked for security is being spent and an explanation of how the security budget was permitted to spiral out of control.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move this motion before the House and to ask for its consideration.

Canada has a proud tradition of hosting the world. In fact, Canada has hosted the G8 summit four times since 1976. In 1981 we hosted it in Ottawa and Montebello; in 1995 it was in Halifax; in 1998 it was in Toronto; and in 2002 it was in Kananaskis. Each time Canada has hosted the world, we have done so in a very admirable fashion.

We have been able to do it while providing the security for world leaders and having a forum for the discussions of the day to help

move the great powers of the world together in common unison toward a common cause.

The G20 was first established in large part because of former Prime Minister Paul Martin's actions to say that we needed to bring more than just the eight largest nations, rather we needed to bring the 20 largest nations together. He chaired that process for the first two years of its development.

We well understand the imperative need for nations to get together and work collaboratively on common problems. We also, of course, understand the need for security. When we are having world leaders come to our soil, it is imperative that they are kept safe and the meetings are able to be held without any sort of incident.

The latest costs that have been thrust upon us are a whole other thing. When the estimates first came out, the supplementary estimates C for the Conservative government's March 2010 budget, \$179 million was earmarked for security for the G8 and G20 meetings.

In fact, in September 2009, which was before that, the Minister of Industry, the MP for Parry Sound—Muskoka, told the *Algoma News*:

There may be some augmentations to the existing (G8) budget but I would argue they should be minor. After all, one of the advantages of holding both in Muskoka would be the cost advantages.

Just one month later, one month after the industry minister said there were going to be these cost advantages of having it in one place, it could not be held there. So an initial move to put it in a cabinet minister's riding as a reward suddenly turned into a debacle.

Just one month later in October of last year, the government was scrambling to try to move the G8 and G20 meetings into two separate venues, now doubling the costs of security over that period of time.

The city of Toronto urged the federal government to reconsider its decision to move the location into the downtown core because it was going to create enormous disruptions. It is not like this is going to be bringing thousands of tourists in. In fact, it drives them out. I have had the opportunity to talk to many businesses that are very concerned about the fact that they are going to be losing a lot of revenue in the height of tourist season because of areas that are going to be cordoned off and shut down.

The other thing that was frustrating to the city of Toronto is that the government would not even consider another location inside of Toronto. It seems the imperative of having a photo-op with bank buildings in the background was worth more than a location that could have been more easily secured. Again, the costs go up and up.

We also learned that many of the improvements that were made in Huntsville, supposedly for the G8 summit, are going to serve no purpose. More than \$50 million of infrastructure and improvements to the town for summit facilities have little or nothing to do with the summit itself.

Business of Supply

Greg Weston recently wrote in *The Sun* that a local MP and industry minister cut the ribbon for a \$23 million community complex in Huntsville, officially renamed the Canada Summit Centre. It now houses an Olympic-size hockey arena, a pool, conference facilities, seniors centre, and preschool facilities, but none of the G8 meetings are going to be held there. Now the media is even being told that this facility is not going to be used for them. We have a facility that cost \$23 million, called the Summit Centre, that is not going to be used for a summit.

What is the tally for all of this? Well, not including all of the sort of pork-barrel spending that seems to have no actual relation to the summit that is happening in the industry minister's riding, the security costs alone are more than \$930 million. When we bandy that number about, it is important to consider that this is just security. That does not include all of the other ancillary items that go along with hosting a summit.

• (1015)

In fact, we have recently learned that the numbers will be higher. We have heard one number of \$1.1 billion. It could even be more than that. I think it is important to put that \$1.1 billion, which is an enormous amount of money, into some context. The government says that it is expensive to hold these things and that we need to understand that we are hosting the world and we need to ensure we provide security.

Let us look at what other jurisdictions have done. When Canada last hosted the G8 in Kananaskis, it cost six times less for security than this summit. That was in 2002, not exactly a long time ago. The G8 in Gleneagles, Scotland in 2005 cost \$110 million, which is roughly one-tenth of the cost.

In fact, the most expensive summit ever held prior to this, because this is a record setting summit here in a way that we would not want it to be, was the G8 summit in Japan in October 2008 at a price tag of \$381 million. In other words, this is about three times the most expensive summit that has ever been held anywhere at any time in the history of the planet. For 72 hours of meetings, the amount of \$1.1 billion is pretty outrageous.

If the rest of the world can do it for so little money, why on earth is it costing so much money in this example? I will put this in a better context. Per hour, this summit will cost \$12,916,666, almost \$13 million an hour. It is an outrageous amount of money.

If we look at why this occurred, at the end of the day, as I mentioned, it is just to shoehorn it into a cabinet ministers riding. This really could have been avoided. The government's line that somehow this is just the cost of doing business is erased by the fact that everyone else was able to do it so cheaper.

The Conservative government tried to stick this summit in a venue that could not handle it and it caused spill-over into two venues. It insisted on having a location with a good photo op instead of something that could be more easily secured and the net result is an egregiously large amount of money.

To put this money into context we need to look at what else that amount of money could buy. The amount of \$1.1 billion is a hard number to get one's mind around because it is such an egregiously large amount of money.

The Canada Border Services Agency spent \$477 million for all of our border safety and security in the entire country. It could have funded that for two years. One meeting of G8 meetings could have funded all of the operations in the Canada Border Services Agency for a year.

The entire budget of the RCMP is about \$4 billion, which means that this amount of money could have funded the entire budget of the RCMP for three months.

We are having a debate in the public safety and national security committee about the gun registry. The government is very upset about how much the gun registry costs. The RCMP tells us that it cost \$4 million a year to run the gun registry. That means that for one hour of G8 and G20 meetings we could fund the gun registry for three years.

The mover of the bill, who was speaking in committee, asked aggressively the chief of police for Toronto, who is the head of the Association of Canadian Chiefs of Police who was talking about how important the gun registry is, which he would rather have, \$4 million for officers or \$4 million for a gun registry. The chief said that it was not that simple. He could not say which one he would rather have, a police cruiser or a police officer. He said that he needed to have both, that he needed to have the tools and the officers. The member insisted on getting a direct answer.

Perhaps a better question for the chief would have been, "What would you rather have, more than a billion dollars for a summit for 72 hours of meetings, the most expensive meetings that have ever been held, or money that would actually go to hire police officers and give them the tools they need to do their job?"

• (1020)

We need to look at the Toronto Police Services budget in the municipality where this summit will be held which covers 5,567 police officers and 2,056 full-time civilians or part-time casual employees. This amount of money for these three days of meetings would pay for the entire police services budget of Toronto. The City of Toronto said that instead of hosting these meetings in the security nightmare of downtown Toronto, the money could be used to help pay for its transit city plan, one of its 15 kilometre lines. It would be a whole new subway line at a cost of \$950 million. The government could have funded a brand new transit line in Toronto instead of having three days of meetings in a location where they should not have been.

Calgary could have used the cash to pay for a long planned tunnel linking northeast communities and businesses to Calgary International Airport. The city says that the estimated cost is around \$900 million.

The federal government could have forgiven the student debt for 33,214 graduates in Atlantic Canada where the debt at graduation is \$28,000, or it could have given it for 71,538 graduates in Quebec where the average debt is around \$13,000 instead of for 72 hours of meetings.

Business of Supply

If none of that catches anyone's eye, ironically this amount of money could have paid for a year's supply of maple syrup for every man, woman and child in Canada. That is just to give an idea of just how much money this is. This is more money than was spent on the Olympics for security. We had tens of thousands of people from around world coming to Vancouver and gathering over multiple venues for sporting events all throughout the day for two weeks. The cost for that was less than the cost for the G8 and G20 summits in Huntsville and Toronto.

What I want to know is how the government can look into the eyes of the unemployed in this country and tell them that it does not have the money to help enhance benefits further or to help do things for breast cancer survivors who are asking that EI benefits be augmented to help those who have been suffering with cancer to get back on their feet. I do not know how it can look at people like that and say that it is sorry but that it does not have the money to help and yet it has \$1.1 billion to give to 72 hours of meetings.

How can it look at church groups, the YMCAs and YWCAs and the Boys and Girls clubs that have seen their funding slashed for crime prevention and for stopping people from going down dark paths. When I meet with members of those groups, they talk to me about how difficult it is to see their funding slashed and wonder how the government can look at them and say that it is sorry but that it has to cut their funding because it does not have the money that it used to have to give them.

We have the prison farm issue where inmates have the opportunity to work on a farm. It is one of the most effective programs that we have in our system for rehabilitating inmates. We have demonstrated, through animal husbandry and working with animals, how important that is to the rehabilitative process. The government is cutting that program despite the fact that correctional officials are saying that it is one of the most effective programs we have. The people who have been working there for more than 30 years say that in their experience they have not seen one example of violent recidivism from all the people who have worked through that program. The government is cutting it because it costs \$4 million. It is saying that it is sorry but that it just does not have the money to continue that effective program.

Again, about 20 minutes of the G20 and G8 meetings would have kept the prison farm system alive.

At the same time, the government has slashed from international aid and women's groups because it says that it just does not have the money. It is the same lines again and again.

When the Minister of Public Safety was on television, he was asked why he did not consider using the military, which would have been much cheaper. He said that he feared criticism by the Liberal Party. I had no idea we were so powerful that the only thing we had to do to develop government policy was to threaten to criticize the government and it would do what we say it should be doing. If I had any idea that it would be that simple to develop government policy, I obviously would do a lot more criticizing. What a preposterous notion, that the government will not make a decision because it fears being criticized.

●(1025)

I have an idea. Why does the government not go to the City of Toronto and the residents of Toronto and say that it blew this, that it mismanaged the situation terribly, that the costs are so out of control that it needs to look at other options and just admit that it needs help?

One of the options we need to look at it is the military. How would the City of Toronto and the residents of Toronto feel about using the military? That is a good starting point and it would be something that would be pretty hard for us to criticize if the government is so fearful of us criticizing it.

The government says that this is about security and that we cannot question it. Do members remember 9/11? When I have asked questions multiple times in this House during question period, 9/11 pops up. There have been 11 summits since 9/11 and all of them were infinitely less expensive than this. It is shameful to hide behind security, to raise that as a flag and say that it should not have to answer any questions and that accountability should disappear out the window the second we use the word security. The government does it again and again. It feels that by raising the spectre of security or public safety concerns it can get out of being accountable. That does not cut it.

The great irony of this is that these meetings, which will cost far more than any meetings ever held in history, are about austerity, about fiscal restraint. We are gathering the world together to talk about how to trim spending, how to cut back excess and how to stop going into debt so much and yet the government is spending \$1.1 billion for these meetings. It is unbelievable.

If the government wants to show austerity and show the world how to spend less money, a good place to start would be to not spend \$1 billion on 72 hours of meetings. Canada is running its largest deficit in its history, more than \$50 billion. We simply cannot afford a \$1 billion binge on meetings that are basically costing this much because the government wants to shove them in to a cabinet minister's riding.

I have written to the Auditor General and she has responded that she will investigate these costs. This motion today calls upon the government to do the responsible thing and explain how on earth this thing went so off the rails. I am sorry but it does not cut it to give us a \$400-plus million line item for the RCMP. That amounts to more than \$10,000 for every RCMP officer in the country. That is the most in the way of a breakdown that the government will give us.

This House and Canadians deserve to know exactly how this thing went so out of control. We do not need anything that will infringe upon security. We just need a 30,000 foot view of exactly where this money is going, what it is getting us and how on earth the government arrived at the figure of \$1 billion.

I urge all members of the House to support this motion, and I include Conservative members in that. The motion simply asks for transparency. It is simply asking the government to demonstrate some accountability instead of just preaching it. There is no reason all members cannot get behind the request to provide this information and make the vote on this motion unanimous. I would encourage the government, instead of just dropping these things at the last second, to include Canadians in the discussion process.

Business of Supply

The minister said that he knew from day one that the costs for these meetings would be \$1 billion but we only just found out. If the minister knew these costs all along, why on earth did he not ask questions from day one? The first time I heard the minister question these costs was about a week ago when he said that these things were expensive and that maybe we should look at them. That was not the time to look at them. The time to look at these costs was from day one, before the government shoved the meetings into a cabinet minister's riding, before it had to spread them across two venues and before it had to go red faced in front of the Canadian public and say that it had completely mismanaged this process.

• (1030)

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that the member has been running around with his hair on fire since last week but the bottom line is that the member supported the budgets that set this money aside. I am surprised that he would indicate today that he had no idea that this was in place. Other opposition members would know that the member has twice supported this government's federal budgets in this Parliament.

He clearly is not an expert on the G8 or G20 and clearly not an expert on security. However, somebody who is an expert on G8 costs is University of Toronto expert, John Kirton, who said:

The cost for each of the two Canada summits are more or less within range of what G8 and even G20 summits have been costing.

It's a very good investment. Most of the money has permanent benefits, well beyond the G8.

The hon. member would have to admit that he is no expert on this. However, that is what the experts had to say. Has he listened to any of them or is he just going to continue flapping around?

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member did not have an opportunity to look at the budget, but if he had, he would have seen that the supplementary estimates (C) for the Conservative government's March 2010 budget contained \$179 million that was earmarked for the G8 and G20 meetings.

I do not profess to stand here as the eminent expert on G8 and G20, but what I will say is that this is the most expensive summit, by 300%, that has ever been held anywhere on the planet, and here is what I, or any layperson, could conclude pretty quickly. If the rest of the world can do it for 300% less, or in some cases, many times less than even that, surely we could. Surely we could have done this for hundreds of millions of dollars less.

The reality is that this steals from priorities that Canadians care about.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his presentation today. We will be supporting the opposition motion.

The fact of the matter is that this is a big boondoggle and an embarrassment for the government. The question I have for the member is this: Why are we having these conferences in urban settings in the first place? Would it not make sense to have them in a secure military base, where the costs should be approaching zero and we would not be requiring military in the streets, which is a big concern of the government?

I would like to ask the member whether he has any idea what the cost would have been if we were to have staged this conference in a secure military base.

• (1035)

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, the member raises an excellent point. Given that the meetings were about austerity and fiscal restraint and about bringing together the world to talk about how to spend less, what a great opportunity to have them in a location, be it a military base or somewhere else, that would be no-frills, easy to secure, at an extremely low cost. Why not put it in Trenton or some other location that was very easy to secure, and say to world leaders, "Sorry, it is just not the time for martinis and caviar. We have to really have a streamlined summit here to show the world we are serious about austerity?"

That would have been the right thing to do, but here is the crazy thing. They did not even ask the city of Toronto. It is not like the city of Toronto said, "Please give us the G20". The city of Toronto said, "Do not put it in an urban environment. Please do not bring it here. It is going to cause massive disruption, an enormous amount of costs and lost revenue. Please do not put it here".

Yes, it was wrong to put it in an urban environment. Yes, it should have been somewhere else, but at the very least, they should have asked the city of Toronto its opinion.

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's speech was an eye opener in many respects, because a few of the numbers that he put out there were quite astonishing.

However, before I get to that, one of the comments across the way was certainly about the military in the city, and if I am wrapping my head around this correctly, they thought the Liberal opposition was a reason not to invite the military. That is one of the greatest examples of trying to slip their way out of a situation that is an absolute absurdity. Do they think the people are that stupid to believe that they have a point?

I was living in Toronto when they brought in the military during a snowstorm. I believe, if memory serves me correctly, it was a Liberal government. I did not see any problem with it. I do not think the federal government had a problem with it.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague a question. He said that it started out at \$179 million. How did we go from that to what he is talking about, into the billion-dollar range? Here we have it shoehorned into a minister's riding. If I had known about ridings, I would have asked for this thing to be on Fogo Island in my riding, for that matter.

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, it may have been cheaper on Fogo Island than this. If we were to spend \$1.1 billion, Fogo Island would never look the same after spending that kind of money.

It is a good question. How did these costs get to where they are? It is the crux of this motion.

The government has to come clean here. It cannot just invoke the word "security" and think there is no accountability. What it refuses to do is give us any kind of meaningful breakdown of what exactly these costs are.

Business of Supply

The member is quite right to point out the fact that the City of Toronto itself called in the military. What was different about that situation was that there was an engagement with the municipality around that decision. Every time I have ever talked to any councillor in the City of Toronto or we have had correspondence from the mayor's office, they say they have never been consulted and at the last second are told what is happening.

A different way of handling this would have been to go to the city and say, "We have mismanaged this terribly. We have really blown it. We are going to have costs that are just outrageous and Canadians are angry. Is it okay if we use the military? We know they came in once before to help you with the problem of snow. This time, Canadians are being snowed over by costs. Is it possible for us to use the military to get us out of this billion-dollar boondoggle that we have created?"

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Ajax—Pickering is a master of overstatement. He made the statement in his speech that there have been 11 summits since 9/11 and none of them have cost anywhere near what we are predicting for the G8 and G20 in Canada. That is absolutely incorrect. Most of the time we are comparing apples with oranges, but we do have the complete set of numbers in from Hokkaido for the G8. That was \$1.5 billion.

Why is the member politicizing the security of the leaders of the western world? This is ridiculous.

• (1040)

Mr. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, what is outrageous is that the government will not even acknowledge that it made an error here. Conservatives are continuing to stand up and justify \$1.1 billion for 72 hours. The reality is, and the facts show, that the most expensive G8 that was ever held was just over \$380 million, and that cost is infinitely less than the \$1.1 billion being spent here.

Here is what the hon. member does not get, and maybe he needs to talk to some more people to hear the anger that is out there. People do not accept this. They do not expect that \$1.1 billion will be used for 72 hours of meetings to have discussions about austerity. They do not get it, and I agree with them, that if we are going to have discussions about fiscal restraint, we do not kick them off with the biggest and most expensive meetings ever held. Even if somebody, somewhere, at some moment in history, found a way to blow as much money as the government did, that does not make it right.

We have the largest deficit in the history of this country. Canadians are saying there are extremely important priorities. Thousands of people are unemployed and need help. People are coming forward and saying that they cannot get by, that they cannot make ends meet. They are not looking at \$1.1 billion for 72 hours and saying it is okay. That is the part that the government does not get.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton—St. Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the opportunity to speak about the motion brought forward to us today by the hon. member for Ajax—Pickering.

I want to say at the outset that some of the statements we have just heard from that hon. member only serve to reinforce many of the

misconceptions about the security costs with regard to the upcoming G8 and G20 summits. They also serve to trivialize the very good work that all of us can and will accomplish with our international partners through these important conferences.

The truth is that this summer's meetings of G8 and G20 ministers represent a wonderful opportunity for Canada to shine on the world stage. They represent a chance for all of us as Canadians to show the world not only what we value and cherish as a society, but to have those values put front and centre on the international agenda.

As the Prime Minister recently noted with regard to the G8 and G20, it will be a tremendous opportunity to promote Canada's values and interests. Moreover, it will be a tremendous opportunity to advocate for open markets and trade opportunities, to assist on global action against global warming, and to champion values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, values that are cherished by all Canadians.

On the G20 front, Canada as chair has an equally great opportunity to work with our partners to ensure that we all honour the promises that were made at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh in order to ensure a complete economic recovery by developing credible plans to encourage long-term growth and prosperity.

The motion before us today, sponsored by the member for Ajax—Pickering, essentially suggests that Canada should abandon these opportunities and turn our backs on our international partners. We are not prepared to do that. It suggests that we should ignore the very pressing challenges all of us face and the chances that both summits present to work in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration to address those issues.

I say that because the opportunity to lead on the world stage comes with an obligation to ensure that we can accomplish what we want to do. It comes with an obligation to ensure that security concerns and issues do not become the prime focus of either summit. That is what our government is committing to achieve. That is what the motion before us today clearly ignores.

What we have before us today are unprecedented opportunities. Never before has Canada or any other country had the chance to chair and host back-to-back summits of global leaders. However, with that comes the need for unprecedented security operations, which will likely represent the largest deployment of security personnel for a major event in Canadian history. It will surpass the Vancouver Olympics on this front. It will surpass the Pope's visit to Toronto, the APEC summit in Vancouver in 1997, and even the very volatile Summit of the Americas in Quebec City.

Business of Supply

This is what I would like to turn my attention to over the next few minutes. The cost of security is not money our government has arbitrarily decided to spend. This is a very important point. This is money that recognized security experts have told us we have to spend. The experts have been quite clear that hosting two major world summits could not be done on the cheap, as the motion before us today suggests it can.

These summits do not lend themselves to cutting corners when it comes to ensuring the safety and security of world leaders and their delegations as the motion before us today suggests they should. We have also been open and honest with Canadians as to what the costs would be. Those costs have been laid out clearly in supplementary estimates (A) and (C).

As well, the Minister of Public Safety has indicated that the Auditor General of Canada is more than welcome to review these expenditures once they are completed and that he will release a detailed breakdown of the cost after the summits are over.

For now, let me talk about the supplementary estimates. In March, our government tabled supplementary estimates (C), which included an initial allocation of \$179.4 million for the fiscal year 2009-10 related to pre-event policing and security operations for the upcoming summits.

There was no indication that this would represent the final costs associated with the security and policing. I think the member for Ajax—Pickering knows that and is being quite disingenuous about it.

We have been quite clear. This allocation represented an initial drawdown on funds for security planning and preparation at the two summits.

•(1045)

Since the Prime Minister announced on December 7, 2009 that Canada would host the G20 summit in Toronto, a large proportion of the planning budget was allocated to the 2010-11 fiscal year and was included in supplementary estimates (A), which the government tabled on May 25. The supplementary estimates (A) allocate \$653.9 million for policing and security at the two summits.

I want to be quite clear that this is not a case of escalating costs as the member for Ajax—Pickering would have us believe. It is a question of identifying the money required and getting it ready when it is in fact needed. That is the way the parliamentary budget system works.

The safety and security of Canadians, delegates and international visitors during the G8 and G20 summits are Canada's highest priorities. That is why we have consulted with experts in the field and have budgeted that the costs for policing and security at these events will be up to \$930 million on a medium threat level.

Let me read a quote from John Kirton, the director of the University of Toronto's G8 Research Group, who has attended every G8 meeting since 1988. Mr. Kirton recently noted in an interview in *BusinessWeek*, "The cost for each of the two Canada summits are more or less within the range of what G8 and even G20 summits have been costing."

One might ask about certain comparisons to the reported figure of \$30 million for the G8 security in London. Let me read the comments of Bill Blair, chief of the Toronto Police Service. Mr. Blair recently told the CBC that he found the \$30 million quote for the G8 in London to be "extraordinary" and that he was told this figure represented merely the overtime costs for police officers. What he was told was that it certainly did not in any way nearly represent the actual cost of providing security for the G8 that took place in that city.

One might ask about comparisons to the Vancouver Olympics. Let me quote Ward Elcock, co-ordinator for the 2010 Olympics and G8 security. Mr. Elcock recently told CBC that such comparisons cannot be made since the Olympics were not a security event, but instead were a sporting event for which we provided security.

The bottom line is that the experts agree that comparing security for the Olympics and G8 and G20 summits is like comparing apples to oranges. The two events are quite dissimilar.

Mr. Elcock said in another interview that the G8 and G20 summits are major meetings of global governance at the present time and in the context of the economic crisis not unimportant. He said that it means we are hosting 30-plus leaders of the most powerful countries in the world, many of whom travel with much higher levels of security, even within their own countries and we have an obligation to ensure that when they come to Canada to attend the G8 and G20 that they are secure.

To repeat, we have an obligation. That is what our government is committed to achieving and in the most open and transparent way possible. I would like, therefore, to outline for the House exactly where the allocations for security and policing for the G8 and G20 summits will be spent.

Security planning for the G8 and G20 summits, of course, is led by the RCMP through the integrated security unit in consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The supplementary estimates (A) allocate \$321 million to the RCMP so that it can perform this function in the most comprehensive, efficient and fiscally prudent way possible.

An additional \$262.6 million is allocated through supplementary estimates (A) to Public Safety Canada to reimburse provincial and municipal partners for eligible, justifiable and reasonable incremental security expenses that may incur. Reimbursements to our security partners will be based on audits that will be conducted following the summits.

I want to point out that in both cases, these allocations will not be used only to ensure we protect the safety and security of visiting heads of state and their delegations. Indeed, they are being used to protect the safety and security of all Canadians, including those who wish to engage in peaceful protests during those summits. Clearly, our government believes in freedom of expression.

Business of Supply

We believe that everyone has the right to be heard. That is why the community relations group within the G8 and G20 integrated security unit has been proactively reaching out to individuals and groups who may wish to protest in order to ensure their needs are accommodated and also to ensure that we can facilitate peaceful and lawful protests at both summits.

•(1050)

At the same time, the integrated security unit has been working to ensure the safety and security of residents around Huntsville and Toronto, as well as businesses and also their properties.

We have already seen senseless acts of vandalism connected to the summits. These are stark reminders that we need to remain vigilant and take action to keep our communities and streets safe for everyone. This is something our government has made a top priority since we were first elected in 2006.

Among other allocations, the supplementary estimates (A) allocate \$63.1 million to the Department of National Defence to provide unique military capabilities that will assist in ensuring the safety and security of the G8 and G20 summits.

There is an allocation of \$2.2 million to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to provide intelligence support related to threats to the national security of Canada, including the G8 and G20 summits.

As well, the supplementary estimates (A) allocate \$1 million to the Canada Border Services Agency for activities associated with the provision of incremental border services and critical program support for both the G8 and G20 summits. In particular, border services will focus on managing the entry of all accredited G8 and G20 participants and ensuring that these individuals are in possession of the required travel documents.

Since our government was first elected, one of our top priorities has been to ensure that the necessary resources are always in place for law enforcement officials and our security partners to do their jobs.

We have invested prudently and transparently in the RCMP so that it has the manpower, the training and the equipment necessary to help make our communities safer places to be enjoyed by all Canadians.

We have invested prudently and transparently in the Canadian armed forces so that Canada can play a leadership role overseas in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and work with our international partners to help foster peace and security around the world.

We have made investments to further improve security at our domestic airports so that Canadians can feel confident about air travel and safely travel should they choose to do so by air.

These are just some of the investments our government has made to ensure we protect the safety and security of all Canadians.

We are committed to investing in the same prudent and fiscally responsible way with regard to the G8 and G20 summits. We are not going to cut corners.

According to a recent Leger Marketing survey, 50% of Canadians are sure there will be protests and violence at the upcoming summits, but they also think that Canada is well equipped to handle such events and to show the world what good hosts we are. The reason they believe that is our government's track record which speaks for itself.

We have told Canadians from coast to coast to coast that their safety and security is one of our top priorities, and we have delivered on what we said we would do. We have told them we would take action to crack down on crime, and we have delivered. We have told them that we would take action to combat the threat of terrorism both at home and abroad, and we have delivered. Most of all, we have told Canadians that we would do all that in an open and transparent way, and once again we have delivered.

We have delivered when it comes to improving accountability in government. We have delivered when it comes to being open and forthright in outlining security expenditures for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics and Paralympics, as well as the upcoming G8 and G20 summits.

With those comments, I therefore cannot support the motion from the hon. member for Ajax—Pickering, which I believe ignores these facts. If the motion passed, it would have the effect of encouraging the government to ignore our obligations to our international partners, as well as to all Canadians who expect us to show leadership on the world stage. That is the not the Canadian way. We will not ignore those obligations. I encourage all hon. members to vote against this motion.

•(1055)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in a column in *The Globe and Mail* on May 28, Jeffrey Simpson said:

A corner of Muskoka is being turned into a militarized zone, downtown Toronto shut off, baseball games moved out of town, thousands of police and security agents mobilized, to say nothing of helicopters, planes and, for all we know, submarines in Lake Ontario.

He further said:

The whole thing is over the top and way too expensive for three days that bid fair to be a non-event in substance.

If we accept that an urban setting is not the proper place for this type of event and the fact that people are concerned about the military in the streets, why would the government not consider simply holding the whole event in a secure military base where the costs should be almost zero?

I want the government member to respond to that and tell us why that could not have been done.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with Jeffrey Simpson, choosing not to read *The Globe and Mail* on a regular basis, but I will quote Sheila Fraser on the costs. The hon. member might have heard of Ms. Fraser, the Auditor General of Canada. She said:

Obviously \$1 billion is a lot of money, but I think we have to recognize that security is expensive. There are a lot of people that are involved over a long period of time. We may think that the meetings only last for a few days, but all the preparations involve extensive planning, extensive coordination for months before that and I think we have to be really, really careful.

Business of Supply

Toronto was chosen. There has been some debate regarding whether the locations were appropriate. Hon. members cannot decide whether they want to hold them in an urban area or a rural area because they also criticized the government when one of the summits was proposed to be in rural Ontario. The reality is wherever these summits are located, there is going to be security. There is going to be expensive security. We owe that not only to Canadians who reside in those areas, but we owe that to the delegations and the world leaders who will be coming. We also owe that security to the people who will be engaged in lawful protests. They too need to be protected. We do not want to see any violent incidents or protests that get out of hand.

Mr. Mark Holland (Ajax—Pickering, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on September 25, 2009, the industry minister, the MP for Parry Sound, said, “There may be some minor augmentations to the existing G8 budget”, talking about adding the G20, “but I would argue they should be minor. After all, one of the advantages of holding both in Muskoka would be the cost advantages”.

The minister acknowledged at that point that by holding the summits in one common venue it would contain the costs and keep it much cheaper. Would the member not agree that the venue in a downtown urban environment is a security nightmare with underground tunnels and towers but it was specifically chosen for a good photo op with all the buildings? Would he not agree that holding it in another area in Toronto would have cost a lot less? Would he not agree with his cabinet minister's own assertion that this would have been much cheaper to do in one venue? Therefore, would he not agree that this would have made sense to get the venue right in the first place, choose a location that would have been much cheaper and easier to secure? Does he not question, as the Minister of Public Safety has done publicly, the size of these costs? Does he not think that for 72 hours \$1.2 billion is an outrageous amount of money?

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the premise that the locations were incorrectly chosen in the first place. However, I am not a security expert and certainly the hon. member for Ajax—Pickering is not a security expert. The reality is that security is a necessity at these summits. All the world leaders are going to be at the G8 and G20 summits. They require protection. The issue is whether or not the costs of these summits and providing security is in line with similar summits that have been hosted in other parts of the world.

As I said in my speech, John Kirton, director of the University of Toronto G8 Research Group, has attended every G8 since 1988. I will quote what he said again because I do not think the hon. member for Ajax—Pickering heard me the first time:

The costs for each of the two Canadian summits are more or less within the range of what G8 and even G20 summits have been costing. It is a very good investment. Most of the money has permanent benefits well beyond the G8.

• (1100)

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was on a panel last week with the member for Oxford who publicly stated that the government knew from the very beginning that the costs of this summit would be in the \$900 million range. Those are not my words; those are the words of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety. Yet the government put the figure of \$179 million in the estimates tabled on March 3.

If the government believes in transparency and accountability, and if it knew all along that the costs were \$900 million, why would the government have represented to Canadians just a little over 65 days ago that the costs would be \$179 million?

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, clearly the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway does not understand how the parliamentary budget system works and that is why he is in the fourth party and likely always will be.

In March, \$179 million was allocated as part of the overall security budget for the G8 and G20 summits. The recently tabled supplementary estimates (A) allocate a further \$654 million. As we have always stated, overall costs will be finalized following the completion of the summits. However, based on a medium level threat assessment we budgeted up to \$930 million for security. This is the normal budgetary process. Now \$179 million was allocated as part of the overall security budget. That was never intended to be the entire amount.

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is becoming very clear in this debate that there are people who are, in fact, security experts, who prefer to deal with factual information, and there are those, particularly the member for Ajax—Pickering, who think that they are security experts. Facts never get in the way of their telling their story.

I think the member for Edmonton—St. Albert has clearly articulated that when we are talking about this particular issue, to be factual, we should be talking about apples to apples rather than about apples to oranges. We should be using numbers that are realistic to use in comparisons.

I would like to ask the member for Edmonton—St. Albert if he is aware that—I just came in, and I do not know if this has come up—the cost of putting on the G8 recently, which I think was in Hokkaido, was somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1.5 billion, which is, in fact, much more than the total cost of the two events we are putting on in Canada. Do I have the correct number?

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Mr. Speaker, that is correct. The costs for one summit in Hokkaido, Japan were \$1.5 billion.

As I said in my main speech, and I quoted from integrated security unit chief Ward Elcock, the hon. member raised a good question. We cannot compare apples to oranges or to any other fruit.

The integrated security unit chief Ward Elcock said:

I think Canada is one of the rare countries that has actually been transparent about the security costs.

He also said:

If you could actually compare apples to apples, the costs are going to be fairly comparable.

When the opposition rails on and on about these costs being out of the ballpark of normal security costs for other summits, they are being disingenuous. As the hon. member pointed out, it was \$1.5 billion for Hokkaido, Japan.

Business of Supply

•(1105)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this motion, which criticizes the government for the anticipated \$1 billion price tag for security at the G8 meeting in Huntsville and the G20 meeting in Toronto.

The motion also calls for a detailed breakdown of how the money will be spent and an explanation of how spending was permitted to spiral out of control.

Naturally, the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of this motion. I want to make it clear that we are not against holding important meetings like the G8 and the G20, although we condemn the fact that some issues, such as development assistance, will not be on the agenda. We are not against holding these summits, but we do not understand how it can end up costing so much.

To be clear, a review of the government's budget documents reveals that the bill for three days of meetings ballooned from \$179 million to \$833 million. Worse still, the government has said that the final cost could climb to \$930 million for security alone. In addition, \$150 million is being spent on organizing the summits. These two summits taking place over the course of three days will cost \$1.8 billion.

We have good reason to wonder about this. When a government talks about austerity and the importance of saving money, then turns around and, without batting an eyelid, says that it has to spend \$1 billion on a three-day event, that is bound to raise some questions, particularly since this is the same government that spent thousands of dollars on plants and lamps. Who could forget that?

When we compare the cost of these two events to other similar events in Canada or abroad, or to major infrastructure projects, we have good reason to ask questions about an amount in excess of \$1 billion.

Here are a few examples. The security budget for the Vancouver Olympic Games, which lasted 17 days, was \$900 million. Millions of people and hundreds of athletes and teams were kept safe for 17 days. That was not a three-day event for a few heads of state and their entourages, regardless of how large. The cost of providing security for these two summits may well become the highest in all of Canada's history.

I have two other examples of security, such as the G20 in April 2009 in London, just one year ago. Prices have not gone up that much. London covers an area of 1,579 km², and has a population of over 7,684,700. Those figures were from 2007, so its population has likely gone up since then. Toronto covers an area of 629.91 km², and has a population of over 2,503,281. These figures are from 2006, so the population has certainly increased. So the two cities are comparable, even if London has a much larger population. The cost of the G20 over there, in 2009, was \$30 million, according to the most recent reports from London.

It cost \$30 million for the same number of heads of state and surely the same number of delegations, in a city that is bigger and has a larger population than Toronto. So why did the G20 cost \$30 million, when the one in Toronto will cost much more?

The G8 summit that was held in Gleneagles, Scotland, in 2005, cost \$110 million, and the G8 held in Japan, in 2008, cost \$381 million. The G8 summit that was held in Alberta in 2002 cost \$190 million. The G20 summit in Pittsburgh, in September 2009, cost \$20 million.

•(1110)

None of the summits I just mentioned cost more than \$400 million. We have to wonder.

I found another rather striking example. In 2008, the Government of Quebec announced that the 117 bridges in Quebec in poor shape were going to be made safe. Each bridge would be demolished, repaired, strengthened, rebuilt or replaced, depending on its condition. Out of the 117 bridges, 60 had to be demolished or replaced, and the other 57 repaired or strengthened. That is a lot of work. The cost to do all 117 bridges was only \$100 million, which is 11 times less than the cost of the upcoming G8 and the G20. We need this money in Quebec for the health care system and for equalization. We would rather have our money instead of having it spent on who knows what for the G8 and G20 in Toronto.

What these figures tell me is that it costs less to make bridges safe than to keep heads of state safe. We need bridges that are in good condition, because there has already been one catastrophe in Quebec. In Laval, a whole overpass collapsed and killed people. Bridges are important to us.

The government has the gall to tell us that it wants to abolish the gun registry. In its throne speech, it says it wants to remove long guns from the registry, because the long gun registry costs too much. The Conservatives told us this repeatedly in committee. They sent their supporters to tell us the long gun registry was too expensive. Yet it would cost only \$4 million to keep long guns in the registry. That is too expensive, but \$1.08 billion for the G8 and the G20 is not expensive. It is necessary.

The Conservatives feel that \$4 million is too much to spend on gun control. They are willing to let guns circulate freely. They even bemoan the fact that it does not occur to 14- to 18-year-olds today to buy a gun. Good God, what a scandal. Meanwhile, they are drafting bills to put young people in prison. They are all but putting guns in their hands. At least, they will be able to justify their bills and the prisons they are going to build. They even accuse single mothers of contributing to the decline in the number of hunters by not teaching their sons about hunting. They practically accuse them of causing car-deer collisions. It is so ridiculous that it is pathetic.

The Conservatives have the nerve to try to abolish the long gun registry to save a few dollars, yet a number of important people working in the field came to tell us how useful the registry is in police work, crime prevention and investigations. Moreover, a recent criminological study showed that the registry had saved 2,100 lives in seven years. The RCMP told us that more than 7,000 gun permits had been revoked in 2009 alone for public safety reasons.

Despite all the indications that the registry is important, the government tells us, through its MPs and the throne speech, that \$4 million is too much to spend on saving lives.

Business of Supply

•(1115)

But, \$1 billion or more would cover the cost of managing long guns for 250 years. With \$1 billion or more we could practically double the crime prevention budget in Canada for almost 20 years. It is a basic need that is not one of this government's priorities. With more than \$1 billion, we could invest in the fight against poverty. I could go on and on.

It is our duty as parliamentarians to ensure that the cost of these summits is justified and that the government answers our questions and those of the public, of taxpayers, of those who are footing the bill. Citizens have mandated us to ensure that this government properly manages public money and is accountable for how it is spent.

Let us ask the question. Was choosing Toronto a wise choice? I have heard all my colleagues speak about this and it has become increasingly clear that it was not all that wise. The government itself maintains that providing security for two consecutive summits, in two very different cities—one of them Toronto—has driven up the price tag. I have to admit that I do not understand. If I want to organize something, the first thing I do is to ask for an estimate of the cost. If it is too expensive, I look for another cheaper estimate. I opt for what is cheaper. That is proper management by anyone organizing an event. Why choose a city like Toronto if the estimated expenses in that location result in higher costs?

Let us ask ourselves another question. Why is it expensive in Toronto, but it did not cost that much in London? One day the Auditor General will be looking at this and all will become clear.

On May 18, to explain the significant discrepancies in cost compared to other organizing countries, the head of G20 and G8 security, Mr. Elcock, who was just appointed, suggested that the governments of these countries are not transparent about the real costs of these events with their citizens.

That is what the security chief seemed to be suggesting when he said, and I quote, "I think Canada is one of the rare countries that has actually been transparent about the security costs." Mr. Elcock also says that the high price of the security operation will be "comparable" to previous meetings held by members of the group. He said, "Our security practices are the same as other countries that attend the G8 and the G20 on a regular basis. And I would expect that, if you actually could find an apple-to-apple comparison, you would find that our security costs are actually pretty comparable."

If Mr. Elcock's comments reflect the reality on the ground where G8 and G20 meetings have been held, then taxpayers are entitled to wonder if things could be done differently because these costs are exorbitant and unacceptable. It is a valid question. There are people, groups, citizens who are saying that we could achieve real savings by holding these summits and forums via teleconference. It is an idea that should be considered, like any other. It would be less expensive, greener and, in addition, it would not disrupt tourism or the routine of the country organizing the summit. These are ideas that should be explored. Perhaps we should listen when people speak.

How can we explain to the public that the Government of Canada is willing to spend \$1.08 billion on two summits for heads of state and their delegations—there is a legitimate obligation to provide

security—when it is not even meeting its international aid or development obligations?

•(1120)

From now until 2011, Canada will invest 0.29% of its GDP, even though the United Nations established the target of 0.7% in 1970. Canada has yet to reach the target of 0.7% that it agreed to. Unfortunately, since the 1990s under the Liberal government, this envelope has not stopped shrinking, going from a little less than 0.5% in 1991-92 to 0.25% in 2000-01.

Are things any better under the Conservatives? Have we reached our target? No. We will be at 0.29% in 2011. I am talking about a target set in 1970, so you could say that things are not going so well. In 2006, the OECD ranked Canada 15th among 22 donor countries in terms of official development assistance based on their GDP, down from the sixth place ranking it had received nine years earlier. Unfortunately, there is a desperate need. Considering the global situation, one cannot help but feel worried.

While I could provide several examples, I will instead give my colleagues just one important example: maternal health. Since I see I have only three minutes left, I will try to be brief.

For example, when we look at the millennium development goal of maternal and child health in developing countries, the numbers are appalling. Too many women are still living in poverty and do not have access to basic health care.

Here are some statistics. Every day, 1,600 women and more than 10,000 newborns die from truly preventable complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Again, 1,600 women and 10,000 newborns die every day in pregnancy or childbirth and these deaths could have been prevented. These statistics are truly outrageous.

Almost 99% of the maternal deaths and 90% of the neonatal deaths occur in developing countries.

A child born in a developing country is 13 times more likely to die in the first five years of life than a child born in an industrialized country.

In East Asia, in Latin America—not very far from here—and in the Caribbean, the infant mortality rate is four times higher than in industrialized countries.

It is estimated that malnutrition is the cause of one third of infant deaths in developing countries.

In 2005, 500,000 women died in pregnancy or childbirth or within six months of giving birth.

It is estimated that 14 million adolescent girls become pregnant every year and 90% of them live in developing countries.

Children born to an adolescent mother have a much greater risk of death in the first five years of life.

Business of Supply

It is scandalous to see numbers like this and to see how little is being invested in official development assistance while billions of dollars are being spent on so-called security for summits to chat about how things are going elsewhere. How can we spend more than \$1 billion on these three-day summits when we are not fulfilling our obligations?

We support this motion because we feel that the government has a duty to tell everyone what it is doing with our money. I am quite pleased as we all are, to know that the Auditor General is looking into this.

• (1125)

It is a good thing that Parliament looks at the administration of these events. Taxpayers have the right to know.

[*English*]

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact is there are two locations, which clearly will have an impact on the cost. As well, people in the area of Muskoka have gone to huge expense to build a huge arena and various other facilities. What impact has that had on this budget?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. We must ask questions about the management of the whole thing, and not just about the infrastructure that was built. My colleague mentioned that some infrastructure was built, but it will be useless in the end, because the summit will not be held there. So why was it built? We must ask questions, because that is wasteful.

When a country hosts heads of states at a summit, the primary goal is to discuss important topics and to resolve issues. That is the primary goal; it is not about photo-ops in Toronto with the skyscrapers, as my colleague said, or about building infrastructure that will not be used.

Since these two summits are being held within a few days of each other, why were they not held in the same place, in a city that would not be too disturbed by the extremely high security? My colleague mentioned that tourism would be affected, among other things. I think that is unacceptable. We must certainly find a way to hold these summits in a secure place, but perhaps in a location that is less populated and not in the middle of the city. Why not hold them at the same time and in the same place? These are the G8 and G20. So at least 8 of the 20 countries will already be there.

[*English*]

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has asked questions of why not do this or why not do that and has made some suggestions. I am certainly not a securities expert nor, probably, is anyone in the House, including the member. However, there are some very good security experts in the country from whom this government takes advice.

We have taken the advice that the locations chosen, as any location in the country, will bring some security problems that have to be addressed. They have made some estimates on what those costs would be. They have advised the government on security measures to keep our participants safe. They have given us all of this information. These costs are based on sound experience from experts in the security field.

It is great to speculate about things, but when the member speculates without taking the time to get the facts, then I think she does herself a huge disservice.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I understand that my colleague is not a security expert. I do not think that is what this is about. What we are saying is that we are taxpayers. If I wanted to hire security services for my office tomorrow, I would not necessarily hire the first contractor who gives me an estimate. I would call upon several experts who would give me their prices for certain aspects. Then another agency would tell me another price. Since I am the one paying, I would make the decision. Why did they choose services that are so much more expensive?

I do not believe that their decision was based only on the advice they received. I could be wrong, but I think the Auditor General will tell us if there were other, less expensive services available to the government.

We will not speculate, but we have every right to ask the question. Why will security for those two summits cost \$1.08 billion when we probably could have paid less? It has cost much less in other places.

• (1130)

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member from the Bloc for describing the balance of the things that might have been done with some of this money.

We hear commentary back and forth across the House about whether one needs to be an expert or not. I suggest that members of Parliament, with the advice they get, are called upon to study many different issues. No one has to be an experienced person for any given one of them, especially when we look at the numbers for previous summits that have been one-third or one-half of what this one is proposed to be.

I submit that the government had choices to make in the budget. It made the choice to be so far out with this amount of money that it is almost unbelievable. There are so many other things it could have made choices on, such as putting \$1 billion or \$700 million toward seniors living in poverty, increasing the GIS and other things that have been proposed in the House.

It comes down to those choices, and I thank the member for proposing some of the alternatives.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. That is exactly what I am trying to say. We might not be experts, but we receive proposals. A responsible government asks for several proposals before making a decision. If I understand correctly, the government was advised not to choose Toronto. It could have been held somewhere else. They could have saved money by having it all in one location, for instance.

Business of Supply

This money could have been used for so many other things, such as the guaranteed income supplement, which is crucial. People are still calling for an increase to that supplement, something our seniors are entitled to. The government prefers to spend \$1.08 billion on the G8 and G20 summits, instead of giving that money to seniors, to development, to the fight against poverty, or giving Quebec what it deserves in terms of equalization. We need that money for our health care system. I am not convinced that the government made a good decision, but I cannot be sure, since we have not yet seen the books. I think—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The hon. member for Chambly—Borduas.

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by congratulating my colleague from Ahuntsic on her excellent speech.

In society today, there are two sorts of people who are hyper-protected, with no debate as to the cost: criminals and the wealthy. When we think about it for a minute, it makes perfect sense. We do not need experts to explain it to us.

People who are in one of these two categories tend to be a bit paranoid, either because they are afraid because they have committed a crime or because they hold an office that has led them to behave badly, as in the Conservative government's case.

I would like my colleague to talk about political choices and all the cuts that have been made to women's rights and all the debates we have had on that issue, as well as about how readily the government invested huge sums of money in this protection.

Does my colleague believe the G8 and G20 could have been held here in this hyper-protected chamber?

•(1135)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I would ask the hon. member for Ahuntsic to give a short answer.

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. He makes a very interesting suggestion. We received the President of Mexico here, and everything went very well. There are a number of rooms in Parliament where the summits could have been held.

The government made choices. It chose to hold the summits in Toronto at a cost of \$1.08 billion. It is not true that the experts and the government's advisors are to blame. The head of state may ask for advice, but it is up to him to make the decision.

He chose to cut women's programs and not increase official development assistance. He is choosing to build prisons instead of investing money in crime prevention. He is also choosing to eliminate the gun registry. Those are all deliberate choices.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to advance the position of the New Democratic Party on the motion before the House today. In essence the motion can be boiled down to this. Is it necessary, is it essential, is it good government and is it good management of taxpayer dollars to spend over \$1 billion for security for 72 hours of meetings in June to host the G8 and G20 summits?

There are a few things on which all members of the House and maybe all Canadians can agree. One is that Canadians are, as the motion says, "justifiably proud" of Canada's participation in the G8 and G20 groups. We are also proud of the fact that Canada is hosting these meetings.

I think Canadians also agree, as the motion states, that Canada is committed to "effective and efficient security for the visiting world leaders" and all of the associated delegations and Canadians themselves who will attend these meetings, whether as part of the meetings or to protest these meetings. We want to ensure that all are safe.

The question before the House is whether it is necessary, prudent and justified in today's economic climate to spend \$1 billion to accomplish those objectives. I respectfully suggest the answer to that is no.

On March 3, the Conservative government tabled in the House supplementary estimates C, with the main estimates. I point out that this was not in the main estimates. It was in the supplementary estimates C, which are prepared after the main estimates. These estimates contained projected total security spending for the G8 and G20 summits at \$179 million.

On May 25, a little over two and a half months later, the Conservative government tabled supplementary estimates A, and these contained \$654 million in additional security costs for the G8 and G20 summits, bringing the total cost to \$833 million.

The next day, on May 26, in the House in answer to a question I asked the Minister of Public Safety, the government admitted that the costs would be \$930 million. Since then, reports have come out suggesting that the total cost could well exceed \$1 billion. I want to talk a bit about that.

I asked a question of the member for Oxford, who sits on the public safety committee with me. I asked why the government estimated the costs at \$179 million when that cost came out to conceivably six times that amount. He said that the government knew all along that the cost for security would be \$900 million or thereabouts. He said that from the very beginning of the planning for the G8 and G20 summits months ago, the government knew the costs of security. We all know that summits do not get planned in weeks. They get planned over a period of months.

When I asked why that cost would not have been put in supplementary estimates C when they were tabled in the House on March 3, I received no answer, other than rhetoric, other than invective or ad hominem arguments that attacked the speaker or insulted the argument. Nobody answered the question about why the government did not put the \$900 million in the budget documents on March 3 if it knew it would be that amount. Why did the government not know the cost for security?

We have a case where the government is indicted either way. Either it knew that the costs would be close to \$1 billion and it purposely put in \$179 million to try to hide the true cost for security for the summits from Canadians, or it did not know that and instead, through mismanagement, watched the cost for security increase by five times in a period of two months. Either way it is an improper and an unacceptable way to handle Canadian taxpayer dollars.

Business of Supply

I want to compare the cost of these summits to the cost of previous summits. I agree we cannot necessarily have a complete comparison to other summits, because this is a G8 and G20 combined summit. We are comparing these costs to only G8 or G20 summits. That is a fair point to keep in mind. To give us a general idea of the ballpark figures that are used in meetings like this, it is helpful for us to look at them.

The 2009 G8 summit in Italy cost \$359 million. The 2009 G20 meeting in London cost \$30 million, although there has been some suggestion that figure may be artificially low. The 2008 G8 gathering in Japan cost \$381 million. The 2005 G8 summit in Scotland cost \$110 million. If we average all these figures, we will get a rough picture that security for a world-class meeting involving leaders of at least the G8 and sometimes the G20 is approximately \$220 million to \$240 million. That is about the average.

It is also instructive to look at the cost for security for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, which was hosted in the city in which my riding is located.

Right now the security costs for 72 hours of meetings in June exceed the entire security costs for the Vancouver Olympics, which includes 17 days of Olympics themselves, an additional two weeks of Paralympics after that and several months of preparation for delegations and athletes to arrive in Vancouver before the start of the 17 days to be acclimatized and set in the athletes village, et cetera. The Olympics involved tens of thousands of people, two venues, including Vancouver and Whistler, and many surrounding municipalities like Richmond, Vancouver, West Vancouver and Whistler. The Olympics were held in a very challenging geographical location. The sea, the mountains and Vancouver, with its close proximity to the U.S. border, all had to be secured.

Let us think about that. Would Canadians not be justified in asking why the cost of security for three days of meetings with 20 world leaders and their entourages would exceed that? Something is wrong. One does not have to be an economist, or a security expert or the Parliamentary Budget Officer to know that something is horribly amiss with the way the security budget has been handled for the G8 and G20 meetings.

I am going to break this down a bit. Let us look at the \$930 million, if that is indeed what it is right now: \$450 million has been allocated to the RCMP; \$262 million has been allocated to the public safety department; and \$63 million has been allocated for national defence. I will stop there because I have one question. What are the \$262 million for with respect to the public safety department?

The public safety department is made up of five components. It is made up of Correctional Service Canada, the prison system. It is not getting any money out of this. It is made up of the National Parole Board. It is not getting any money out of this. It is made up of the RCMP. Clearly, that is not what the \$262 million is for because \$450 million has already been allocated to the RCMP. The department is also made up of the Canada Border Services Agency. I cannot see it getting any money out of this. That leaves CSIS. It is hard to believe that for the purpose of G8 and G20 meetings there would be any cause to allocate \$262 million to CSIS. Maybe there is because the government does like to violate the civil liberties of Canadians. It does like to fund undercover officers who provoke protestors, like

they did in Quebec a few years ago. We never know what is up with the Conservative government, but we do know there is something wrong with these figures.

It would not surprise me because the public safety minister stood up on behalf of the government and said that they did not want to cost the costs of its crime bills. The government wants to bring forward 18 crime bills, but it does not want to tell Canadians the cost of any one of them.

When faced with the prospect of dealing with the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who was going to estimate the costs for us if the government was not going to come clean with Canadians, the minister stood and said that the cost for cancelling the two-for-one credit for pre-sentencing custody bill was \$90 million. The next day that minister said that it was \$2 billion.

I hear silence in this room right now. Why? Because there is no answer to that. How could a minister of the crown say one day that the cost of a bill is \$90 million and then the next day say that it is \$2 billion? I do not hear any witty remarks coming from that side right now. What causes a 2000% increase in 24 hours? Is it incompetence or is it deception? It is not competence.

There are some problems with this \$1 billion budget. Like most Canadians, I think there is no way we could possibly envision how the government could possibly spend \$1 billion for security for three days of meetings.

Jeffrey Simpson in the *Globe and Mail* said:

Spending \$1-billion to play host to two summits is preposterous, a case of bureaucracy gone wild, or planning gone crazy, of fear sinking itself into every official's and security person's heart....This siege mentality has now been used in preparing for the G8 and G20, with everyone fearing some major terrorist attack against the leaders, or against one of them. A corner of Muskoka is being turned into a militarized zone, downtown Toronto shut off, baseball games moved out of town, thousands of police and security agents mobilized, to say nothing of helicopters, planes and, for all we know, submarines in Lake Ontario....The whole thing is over the top and way too expensive for three days that bid fair to be a non-event in substance.

A New Democrat did not say that. That was said by a respected columnist, who I do not think characterizes politics as left-wing.

This is a case of bad budgeting.

I want to talk about the lack of transparency and accountability. The government is starting to lay down what could only be described fairly as a record of avoiding transparency and hiding from accountability. It was only with the threat of an election fought on the question of government arrogance and disdain for Parliament that the opposition was able to force the government to make a deal to provide secure access to the Afghan detainee documents. It still refuses to disclose the true cost of its legislative agenda on crime despite what I said earlier in my speech.

Business of Supply

Time and time again the Conservative government has shown disrespect for Parliament and our democratic process. It prorogued Parliament twice to avoid democratic accountability. The Conservatives continue to stack the Senate with their unelected friends and ministers despite promising Canadians they would never do that. They are attempting to manipulate a vote on several bills to try to drive a wedge between politicians on all sorts of issues.

I want to talk a bit about what we could have bought for \$930 million: 159,000 Canadians could have received EI for the average period before finding employment; 189,000 undergraduate students across the country could have received full funding of their tuition for a year; 1,270 new hybrid buses could have been purchased for public transit systems in Canada; 167,000 Canadians' health care costs could have been covered for a full year; 59,000 seniors could have received their guaranteed income supplement; or 158,000 seniors could have received their old age security. The estimated cost to lift every senior in our country out of poverty would be \$700 million and \$300 million would be left over. That is a question of priorities.

● (1200)

I want to talk a bit about the irony of tightening belts. The government has said that it expected every Canadian to tighten their belts. It has said that every person in the chamber was expected to tighten their belts. It asked the civil servants to forgo wage increases because they had to do their bit to tighten their belts. How about the government leading by example and tightening its belt by taking some prudent measures to lower security costs for the G8, G20 meetings?

We have heard wonderful suggestions that have come from the non-experts in the House, which the government keeps thinking is relevant, such as why do we not hold one meeting at one location instead of two? Why double the security costs in a time of restraint? Why not have one area? The G8 leaders are part of the G20. Why not have the meeting at a place like a military base, which is already secure? The optics are not good. Maybe it is not something we would want to do ideally, but in a time of economic restraint, maybe that would be a wise, prudent move to keep the costs low.

Why did the government try to get this summit put into a cabinet minister's riding in Muskoka as a way to bolster his profile in the region? I will say this here because the facts bear it out. The Conservatives have abused taxpayer dollars by putting money into their own ridings time and time again. I expected that from the Liberal government, which was corrupt and rotten to the core when it was suitably booted out of office. However, the Conservative government came into office promising something different, and it should be reminded of that and be ashamed of it.

The infrastructure funds that government members put into their own ridings is shameful. The way they exploited the Conservative logo on cheques was shameful. Trying to put a G8 or G20 meeting in one of their ridings for partisan purposes is equally shameful because they are not playing with their money. They are playing with Canadian taxpayer dollars. For a party that claims to stand up for Canadian taxpayers, that claims to talk about fiscal probity and responsibility, this is a shameful record that shows its hypocrisy.

Robert Fox, the executive director of Oxfam Canada, says:

It is painful to think a billion dollars is being spent on the security for a three-day event when we are capping commitments to international aid for the next several years because we can't find the money. It just speaks to our priorities and the fact that when we choose to, we can mobilize resources and when there is a lack of political will, we fall short.

Again, the government tightens belts by expecting NGOs to not get any increases or not get funding for international aid, but when it comes to spending money for security, the Conservatives say that there is really no limit on what they can spend on security because they have to keep people secure. Yes, they can, but there is a limit. There is no need to spend \$1 billion to do so.

The day after the minister admitted that it was a fivefold increase in security, I wrote the Parliamentary Budget Officer. We asked him to get involved in looking at this. I am proud to say that he has accepted this request. We also wrote the Auditor General and asked her to look into this as well. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has said:

We will investigate with the purpose of issuing a report for parliamentarians and Canadians...we will need co-operation from the government on information and this will need to be done in a timely manner.

I sincerely hope every member of the House, including members of the government, ensure that this information is furnished to the Parliamentary Budget Officer so Canadians can hold the government accountable

The bottom line is we have to provide security for the G8, G20 leaders. That is not in question. The question is the government's commitment to lead by example and to be a prudent manager of the Canadian taxpayer dollars. We also expect the government to be transparent and accountable.

I call on every member of the House, if they truly believe in those concepts, to join together and vote in favour of the motion, which calls on the government to do nothing but acknowledge those concepts and principles.

When governments spend money, we look into the soul of the government to determine what are the priorities of that government. When children are hungry in our country, when seniors are living in poverty, when people all across this world and in the Third World need our assistance and we tell them no, that they have to tighten their belts, then I expect the government to do the same thing and tighten its belt on expenditures that are frivolous and unnecessary.

In addition, I want to talk about what I consider to be one of the prime responsibilities of parliamentarians. We were all elected in the House. We have all worked very hard to get here. We all do our best, on all sides of the House, to represent our constituents. One of the jobs of parliamentarians is to hold the government accountable by observing its spending and holding it to account. That is what we are doing in the House today. When there is an outrageous amount furnished, like \$1 billion, it is our job to get to the bottom of it. It is our job to ensure that money is accounted for and it is not a waste of taxpayer dollars. People work damned hard every day for their wages and they expect and deserve for us to spend that money wisely. I urge all members to support this motion.

Business of Supply

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in following the speech by the member for Vancouver Kingsway. We both have ridings in British Columbia and we are very proud of the Olympic legacy that was created this year.

I can remember the NDP provincial counterpart in British Columbia saying exactly the same kinds of things about the security costs associated with the Olympics and the lead-up to the Olympics. Now, after the success of the Olympics, the federal NDP is saying what a great thing the Olympics were and comparing the security costs as being quite reasonable.

This is the first time ever that we have had back-to-back summits. These summits are an international showcase for Canada. They will leverage tourism and other things. We are doing work already to ensure that happens.

If I go back to the start of the member's speech, he talked about whether these were necessary, prudent and justified expenditures. They certainly are. It is not unusual to have the estimates come in tranche, in other words, supplementary estimates A and C. That is quite appropriate. The member also talked about Public Safety Canada and those expenditures. I agree with the member, they were none of the things he suggested. They are to reimburse provincial and municipal security partners.

Why is the member politicizing this issue all over again to the detriment of our international opportunity to do good things?

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me the opportunity to talk further about the Olympics, because it is very instructive.

One would think that just having hosted an international gathering of the highest calibre and the highest level of security in February in Canada, when we have already purchased equipment, already trained thousands of personnel, it would give us efficiencies. If we were then holding another international meeting that required specialized high level security of exactly the same magnitude only four or five months later, that the costs of securing the second event would be lower. Canadians do think that.

One would think that the costs for securing the G8, G20 held in June would be lower than other international G8, G20 summits, where they had to create security protocol and buy equipment for the first time. That is another very critical question.

I might point out that the Olympic security costs represented another example of bad fiscal planning by right-wing governments, namely the Conservative government and the Liberal government of Gordon Campbell in British Columbia. They low-balled the security costs in the \$170 million-range and again saw the costs escalate to \$1 billion. That is bad accounting, bad management, bad planning and bad priorities by right-wing governments in our country. That is what it tells Canadians.

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what does the hon. member think about the way Toronto is being treated as far as the impact the summit will have on local businesses and the fact that the government is not putting out any of its dollars for assistance to compensate the local businesses for any damage to their properties?

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I know the member does a wonderful job representing her constituents in Ontario. It is a great question, because small businesses, right in a critical part of the tourist season in Toronto, will be harmed by this event.

The government talks about spinoff benefits of the G8, G20. That will not happen in Toronto. It reminds me of businesses along Cambie Street in Vancouver, which were virtually crippled by the construction of the RAV Line to the airport and received no compensation.

While we were busy satisfying the interests of the government and others, we watched the interests of businesses and small businesses being trampled. That shows the self-centredness of the government, where the Prime Minister is more interested in his international stature and getting photo ops with world leaders than he is about the real interests of taxpayers, business owners and communities of real Canadians, including, in this case, in Toronto. It will not be a good thing for them.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the security will involve 19,000 police officers, security guards, soldiers, intelligence analysts, aerial surveillance and motorcades of up to 50 vehicles. Expansive three metre high security fences surround the Metro Toronto Convention Centre and the Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville, and involve airport-style security checks within wide perimeters, not to mention the effect on local business. We could have solved this problem by simply having this conference in a secure military base and we would not need any military presence on the streets of Toronto.

The issue of the \$1 billion is huge when the government has a \$56 billion deficit. It is closing the six prison farms in the country, which would cost only \$4 million to keep going and which have a rehabilitative effect on prisoners.

Does the member have some observations about what could have been done with the \$1 billion?

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I talked about the priorities and what other things we could be spending this money on, such as keeping the prison farms open, or setting up sexual assault centres, or have a victims ombudsman, as suggested twice to the government, which would cost under \$5 million a year. Children who are the victims of sexual abuse could have a place in every major urban centre in the country to go to. That was turned down by the government.

Here are the questions Canadians want answered. Why is this costing so much? Why are we holding two meetings in 72 hours in two locations? Why are we not using a much easier to secure location? Why are there no post-Olympic sufficiencies being seen in these numbers? Why the deceptive estimates?

Business of Supply

New Democrats will continue to work very hard to get to the bottom of these questions, so we can get those answers to Canadians and let them judge whether the Conservative government has been prudent with their tax dollars and whether they think it is justified to spend \$1 billion for three days worth of meetings in June.

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see you in the chair again today. I am happy to be able to add my comments on our opposition day motion today and to voice my concerns about the whole issue of the G8 and the G20.

I have been in the House for more than a decade. It sounds like an awfully long time, yet it does not feel quite that long. In that period of time I have taken part in a variety of debates on nearly every topic of public interest, including crime prevention, the environment, health care, day care, early learning, and of course, something that is very important to me, the cities agenda.

I have worked hard to make certain that the views of the people of York West are front and centre on the national stage.

I believe that the debate in which we are participating today strikes at the very heart of what elected officials must be mindful of as they make their daily decisions on behalf of Canadians. The issue is one of financial accountability, something that I believe is at the core for all of us in elected office throughout Canada, regardless of the level.

I am guided by the understanding that government has no money of its own. Whatever flows into the treasury must first flow out of the hands and the households of Canadians and their families.

While today's debate, on the surface, is about the soaring and unprecedented security costs associated with the upcoming G8 and G20 summits, in real terms, this debate is about the supremacy of Parliament when it comes to ensuring that the people's money is spent in an appropriate manner. I say it again: It is the people's money.

By extension, it is also about making certain that the government understands that the public purse is not a bottomless pit to be used without regard for the consequences. That means serious regard.

Before the rhetoric on the other side gets silly, let me be clear about what I am saying. I am not against the fact that Canada is hosting the G8 and G20. I think we are all very proud of that. In fact, I think any opportunity to showcase Canada to the world is a positive thing. Canada has a great deal to offer by way of our international leadership and that so-called soft power that should be flexed at every opportunity to promote peace and understanding.

After all, because of the fiscal responsibility and determination demonstrated by the Chrétien and Martin regimes during the nineties, Canada's fiscal situation is enviable around the world. I say enviable with one caveat, which is the fact that the current government has abandoned all pretense of fiscal restraint. In just three short years, it has taken Canada from a record of 10 consecutive surpluses, record surpluses, to the largest deficit in the history of this great nation of ours.

In the nineties, as a result of the out of control spending by the Conservatives, the Liberals were forced to deal with a \$42 billion deficit. Once the national books were balanced, with the help of Canadians all across this country of ours, then finance minister Paul

Martin declared that the government had cut up its credit cards and was no longer going to be living on borrowed money.

Using this analogy, instead of adopting that prudent Liberal approach to public finance, the Conservatives applied for several new credit cards, secured a line of credit, and took out a second and third mortgage on the house. Live for today seems to be the philosophy permeating the front benches across the way, regardless of their talk.

It is this turnabout that has prompted me to rise today to address the cost of security arrangements for the G8 and the G20. I believe and accept that the government needs to take steps to ensure the security of visiting world leaders. I even accept that certain infrastructure modifications are needed to accommodate two summits, not one. Was building massive arenas and making changes to the infrastructure of Muskoka an excuse to bolster the minister's riding? I would suspect that the people in Muskoka will have a lot to say about that when the next election comes, regardless of the benefit to them.

That is precisely why I was not overly concerned when I read supplementary C estimates connected to the most recent federal budget. Those estimates contained a call for \$179 million to accomplish these things. It was a lot of money, but it sounded reasonable, given the task.

• (1205)

When we talked about it and asked the questions, it was explained that the \$179 million would go to things like the RCMP and various other security-related agencies and initiatives. I accepted that number, as did many other people, and I trusted that the government would stick to its word. I should have known better. It turns out that this trust was horribly misplaced, yet again.

Last week, parliamentarians learned from the media that the government had overspent that budget by more than six times. We heard from the media, not from government directly, that spending on the summits had spiralled out of control. If the government had been on its game, as it relates to openness and transparency, would it not have advised Parliament directly that it had overspent the security budget by more than 600%? It is not a minor thing.

The total cost, so far, has now exceeded \$1.1 billion, and that is prior to the event happening. To put that into perspective, the cost so far of Canada's G8 and G20 security is more than 20 times the amount spent on the G20 summit in the U.K. The 2005 Gleneagles G8 summit in Scotland cost \$110 million, and the estimate for the 2008 G8 summit in Japan was \$381 million, which is a long way from our \$1.1 billion. That makes Canada the biggest spender on international summits ever. Who was the government trying to please?

Business of Supply

In my opinion, the ballooning and seemingly out-of-control costs are being caused by three things. First is that total government mismanagement and lack of strategic foresight has caused massive and unprecedented budgetary overruns. Second is that expenditures that do not necessarily relate to summit security are being slipped onto the tab in the name of security. Third is that the government is planning to impose an overblown security crackdown, the likes of which the world has never seen and which is very much unlike Canada.

While I would assert that none of these options are acceptable, one or a combination thereof must be the case. Unless, of course, the government would care to offer a believable explanation to the contrary, I am forced to believe that the government has wasted billions on various pork-barrel projects and has called it security. I am forced to believe that the government has abandoned any notion of public accountability in favour of the “get whatever you can” approach to public finance. I am forced to believe that the Conservatives have extended their long-standing disregard for Parliament to the rest of the Canadian population at large. That is what I am forced to think, but I would welcome any reasonable explanation the government might actually have today.

The government has been trying to test-balloon various possible excuses for its obviously caviar tastes, including asserting that questioning summit security costs is an unacceptable act, as if it is in the order of treason to question the expenses. It implies that those questioning its out-of-control spending are unpatriotic. My personal favourite is that it had to spend money, because if it did not, the Liberals would call it names. Wow, that says a lot about the government.

I would submit that this is not the way we should operate in the real world, nor is it the way we should operate the Government of Canada. I believe that most Canadians find this to be excessive and inappropriate at best, and suspicious and reprehensible at worst.

Imagine if one went to the grocery store with a budget of \$100 and came out having spent \$600. For most of us, there would be dire ramifications for our household budgets. For most Canadians working each day to make ends meet, this scenario would bring into question our ability to pay the other bills for the rest of the month. Sadly, the government did not scramble to correct its overspending. It did not take extraordinary steps to stem the blunder. No, the government just kept spending the people's money at a historic rate.

Again, could members imagine if we did this and acted this way in our own households? I would submit that overspending our budgets by more than six times and then borrowing to cover the shortfall can only be described as reckless and shortsighted. It is essentially paying one's Visa with one's MasterCard and then having the bill sent to one's grandchildren for payment.

● (1210)

My constituents know that world leaders must work cooperatively if we are to address the many international problems effectively. Given that, the people of my riding of York West can and will accept that the Government of Canada must do its part and pay its fair share to bring these leaders together on a regular basis.

However, what we cannot accept is waste, mismanagement, and possibly, even total incompetence. Canadians want to know that fiscal prudence is the underpinning of government policy. These so-called Conservatives are anything but fiscally conservative.

The motion before us today essentially does two things. It identifies that we find the cost overruns associated with the G8 and G20 summits excessive and unacceptable, and it demands that the government provide an accounting to Parliament of the money it has already spent. Put another way, because the government is clearly devoid of any ability to do any advanced planning, general accounting, or even basic math, MPs want to check the receipts to make sure that all is as it should be, which is part of our job.

My constituents and all the people of Canada want to know how this could have happened. Is someone's nest being feathered? Is the public purse being used for partisan advantage for specific members or ministers? Is the government being gouged? Has the cost of security increased so dramatically in such a short period of time? Did the government intentionally lowball the original estimate and in effect mislead the House in the budget?

These are questions that need to be answered, and for that we need the government to provide a detailed breakdown of how the money earmarked for security is being spent. I, for one, would also like to know how the security budget was permitted to spiral out of control, and I would like an explanation of how the bleeding can be stopped. I do not believe that this is an unreasonable request.

The government can label me unpatriotic, a bully, or ignorant of the nuances of international security as it likes, but I do not care. My job is to ask the questions and to hold the government accountable.

As I said earlier, I have been a member of the House for 10 years, including as a member of cabinet. I have worked as a public servant for a good portion of my life, and I have served a number of community and charitable causes. In each of these roles, whether on a volunteer or elected basis, financial accountability, openness, and transparency were watchwords of my conduct and were the expectations of everyone.

The government was elected on a platform of accountability but seemingly ignored those lofty promises the minute its limousine doors slammed shut. Its commitment to transparency has evaporated faster than the bubbles in the Dom Pérignon.

In its brief tenure as government of this land, it has sought total control of everything under its jurisdiction. It has bullied and fired public servants and officers of Parliament. It has dragged its feet on the release of public information and has been excessively tight-fisted with information, suggesting that Canadians have no right to publicly oversee the activities of their government.

Business of Supply

You yourself, Mr. Speaker, have even had to intervene to ensure that Parliament is not reduced to a rubber stamp but remains supreme, a tool of the people. The motion today, or more accurately put, the government's resistance to it, is yet another example of its overly aggressive and closed-minded approach to public administration.

I stand here today asking the government to come to the table. It has obviously made errors. I am not sure how else one can describe budgetary overruns on this scale. I am asking it to be mindful that \$1 billion is a lot of money, money that all Canadians have worked hard for, and it should not be spent without regard for how it was obtained. That \$1 billion could have helped construct hundreds of affordable housing units. It could have increased old age security for seniors. It could have purchased new equipment for schools or hospitals. Many things could have been done with that money.

These summits will last only a few days, and with such a short lifespan, security is costing hundreds of thousands of dollars per hour. That level of incompetence is embarrassing and unacceptable. Government has no money of its own, as I said earlier. Whatever flows into the treasury, first flows out of the hands and households of Canadian people. We should not have to point that out to anyone.

I remember when the Reform Party made its first appearance in the House of Commons. It consisted of an angry lot that constantly derided Liberals, such as former Prime Minister Trudeau, for spending too much. Looking back, I wonder how those former Reform MPs rationalize the behaviour of the current government.

• (1215)

From a spending perspective, the current Conservative government makes Mr. Trudeau look like a penny-pinching fiscal moderate. The Liberals have never spent on the scale that we are seeing today. To the contrary, when Mr. Chrétien assumed the reigns in 1993, he faced a Conservative legacy of red ink that threatened everything we as a nation held dear. He did not shy away from the tasks he was sent to do and in just a few short years, Liberals turned the ship around.

The massive \$42 billion Conservative deficit was eliminated, billions of dollars of national debt was erased, strategic investments were made, taxes were cut for those who needed relief, and the \$13 billion surplus was passed to the incoming Conservative regime.

Rather than follow the responsible lead that we set down before them, the Conservatives licked their lips, abandoned the alleged Reform mantra of smaller government, and got to work playing politics with the people's money.

Short-term, visionless, partisan politics replaced responsible, long-term planning and fiscal prudence. Again, the Conservatives set their sights on spending the taxes that our grandchildren have yet to pay. I find it somewhat ironic that the word "conservative" in the small "c" sense is generally understood to mean restraint. In the context of the government's recklessness, I would far sooner be called a fiscal Liberal.

At least it is a label that I could defend to my grandchildren, who will be the ones responsible for paying the bills left by this co-called Conservative regime. It is time for fiscal prudence, long-term budgetary planning and deficit reduction to return to this place once

again. It is time for us to stop spending beyond our means, cut up the credit cards, and stop borrowing to make the minimum payments.

I want my legacy to the next generation of Canadians to be more than pages of red ink. The government can start that process today by calling for a full accounting of its overspending in the names of the G8 and G20 summits.

• (1220)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this morning a government representative, the member for Edmonton—St. Albert, admitted that he does not read *The Globe and Mail*, so I will have to read it for him. I want to read a quotation from Robert Fox, the executive director of Oxfam Canada. In *The Globe and Mail* on May 28 of this year, he said:

It is painful to think a billion dollars is being spent on the security for a three-day event when we are capping commitments to international aid for the next several years because we can't find the money...It just speaks to our priorities and the fact that when we choose to, we can mobilize resources and when there is a lack of political will, we fall short.

It is clear that this money, as the member just pointed out, could have been used to do a lot of very good things in this country. For example, we could have purchased 1,270 new hybrid buses for public transit systems in Canada. That is just one example of the things we could have done with this money.

Would the member like to comment further on this massive waste of money when the government is in a record deficit of \$56 billion?

Hon. Judy Sgro: Mr. Speaker, if the government added an extra \$100 million to the original \$179 million that it had foreseen for the expenses and said it was \$300 million, that would still leave another \$800 million that we could have invested in the people of our country.

We could have invested it in health care, ensuring that our seniors are brought out of poverty, helping to increase pensions for many of the people who are still living below pension levels or investments in our universities. There are so many areas where we could have invested that \$800 million that is going to turn around and continue to put us into massive deficit. Having two locations right off the bat indicated that it was going to cost a fortune.

I will go back to that original issue of doing it in Muskoka. I am well familiar with that area. From the very beginning, to suggest that we could even have G8 and G20 summits there was pretty much ridiculous. I did not think it could possibly be done. Was it just an excuse to spend a whole lot of money in that beautiful Muskoka area? To turn around and try it at a second location, one has to expect that there are going to be huge cost overruns.

At the beginning, when the planning was done, I have to question whether that planning was well thought through. It would have been easily visible that we could not have held those two summits in the Muskoka area.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to thank the member for her answer.

Business of Supply

Clearly, the Liberals are doing a public service today by bringing this opposition motion forward. While we cannot do anything about the existing boondoggle as we see it now, at least going forward we cannot make this mistake again. I would think that if there is enough of a public reaction to this, local residents in the countries where future G8 meetings will be held are going to look to what we are doing here today, as a reaction against a massive misspending of money.

We cannot have these summits in an urban environment. That is very clear. The security costs are just overwhelming. This cannot be compared to the Olympics because the Olympics are a different sort of situation.

In the future, these types of meetings are going to have to be held in more secure environments. Rural military bases are the types of environments we are going to have to be in. The costs would be minuscule.

I think the government is going to learn a very painful lesson through this process, but I see good going forward. I do not think it is going to want to make this mistake again.

• (1225)

Hon. Judy Sgro: Mr. Speaker, the comments are very interesting.

It is a very expensive lesson to learn. I do not think the taxpayers accept that they want us to learn lessons from overspending billions of dollars. They would much rather that the proper planning was put into place at the very beginning.

I have to put on the record that I am very concerned about my city of Toronto and the impact this is going to have on it. I have family members who work in the downtown core, and they are already being told that for at least four days before they should take their work and work from home.

It is going to cost a lot of money. It is going to have a big impact on the cost of production for many people. There is also the cost of the damages that will happen in and around the Toronto area.

Since part of the summit was already being held in Muskoka, it would seem to me that the beautiful city of Barrie would have been a great place to hold the second part of that summit. It would have been much easier to control. It is a smaller community. I think Barrie would have appreciated having that investment of money, rather than trying to hold it in the city of Toronto with all of the massive office and condominium buildings that clearly give anyone who wanted to cause trouble, and who are living on the inside of that designated area, the opportunity. I think it is an impossible job to try to secure that huge area, no matter how much money is spent.

Going right back to the very beginning when these decisions were being made, they were not thought through. We ended up with two locations, neither one particularly acceptable. I just hope that at the end of the day the summits are successful and something positive comes out as a result of them.

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise today to speak to this motion.

We are building on the success of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and promoting Canada throughout 2010: our year in the global spotlight.

The summits will provide international media exposure for our country and are a great opportunity to showcase all that Canada has to offer as a gracious host and as a terrific destination.

Muskoka and Toronto are ready to host world-class summits.

The security plan has been developed by Canadian experts. By authority of the Foreign Missions and International Organizations Act and section 17 of the RCMP Act, the RCMP is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of all summit participants when they arrive in Canada to take part in the meetings.

As the House is no doubt aware, the RCMP has extensive experience in securing major events, such as the Sommet de la Francophonie, the North American Leaders Summit, G7 meetings and, most recently, the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The RCMP is leading a G8 and G20 summits integrated security unit, also known as the ISU. It is comprised of partners from the Ontario Provincial Police, Canadian Forces, Toronto Police Service and Peel Regional Police. Each agency brings valuable expertise, as well as experience drawn from past major events or security operations to the ISU team. Integration has always been an important part of the planning components for the RCMP.

By bringing together partners from some of Canada's top security forces, the RCMP and its partners have fully integrated the planning process to ensure that seamless security and public safety services are provided.

The RCMP and its partners have extensive experience planning for major events like the G8 and G20 summits. They have had significant successes with major past events, such as the Olympics, the Sommet de la Francophonie and the North American Leaders Summit.

Members of the ISU have taken best security practices from these past events and they have developed a plan that specifically addresses the security needs for the G8 and G20.

A number of factors, such as location, threat level and stature of participants play a significant role in determining a security plan and subsequent security costs.

There is currently no major event comparable to the security planning being conducted by the ISU in preparation for the G8 and G20 summits.

In terms of costs, John Kirton, the director of the University of Toronto's G8 research group, said that the cost to host the G8 and G20 in and around Toronto next month is "within range", of what similar summits cost, adding, also, "If you want to be at the G8 table, you can't go to the washroom when the bill comes in".

Planning for the safest and most secure environment possible is the ISU's top priority. The preparations involve extensive planning and extensive coordination in the months leading up to the summit.

One of the largest challenges for the RCMP and its partners is the significant number of summit participants.

Business of Supply

Known as internationally protected people, Canada will be welcoming some of the world's most influential leaders. Working closely with the Ontario Provincial Police, the police force of jurisdiction in Huntsville and the Toronto Police Service, which has jurisdiction in the city of Toronto, the ISU will be ensuring that these visiting dignitaries receive the best protection Canada has to offer.

These two major events represent a considerable undertaking for all agencies involved in security operations in the ISU. We are ready. And we are confident in the plan. All these preparations have been done so that the participants will be able to focus on the importance of these meetings, not on matters of security.

We have a great advantage by being able to draw upon RCMP members since they come to any situation with excellent training and experience, and are strategically positioned across the country to respond quickly and effectively wherever they are needed.

•(1230)

There has been a lot of criticism from the opposition about the cost of hosting these world-class summits. Let me assure members opposite that this government, working closely with security experts in the ISU, have taken the necessary steps to ensure security costs are effective and efficient.

The creation of the ISU itself is a cost-saving measure. Planning in a joint operational structure allows the RCMP to share assets with law enforcement partners and ensures there is no cost overlap on human resource requirements. The RCMP has also undertaken internal reviews of its security plans and adjusted cost and plans wherever it was able to without compromising the security for the events. The simple reality is security costs money.

As Ward Elcock, coordinator of the 2010 Olympic and G8 and G20 security has said, the reality is that many countries have not been as transparent as Canada has traditionally been. We were one of the first countries ever to have published the all-out number on security spending for the Olympic Games. He also warned against taking at face value all the figures that have been floated in the media about the previous costs for these summits. He said:

We have been much more transparent about total costs.

Canada's Auditor General has echoed that sentiment saying:

Obviously \$1 billion is a lot of money, but I think we have to realize that security is expensive. There are a lot of people involved over a very long period of time.

We may think that the meetings only last for a few days, but all the preparations involve extensive planning, extensive co-ordination for months before that, and I think we have to be very careful.

I noticed in some of the media reports there was a comparison to another number of I think it was \$179 million. I think we have to be very careful in those comparisons, because my understanding is that the \$179 million is really partial funding, and the way government funds these things, it was not an initial estimate of what the costs would be.

When it comes to the costs, it is very important to get the facts correct. In March, \$179 million was allocated as part of the overall security budget for the G8 and G20 summits. The recently tabled supplementary estimates (A) allocated a further \$654 million. As we have always stated, overall costs will be finalized following the completion of the summits. However, based on a medium threat assessment, we have budgeted up to \$930 million for security.

Global security begins at home. As hosts of the G8 and G20 summits, we will be prepared to respond to any possible situation or threat. We will take all measures necessary to ensure Canadians, delegates and international visitors remain safe. This also involves testing our plans.

The ISU and its partners recently tested the security plans in an exercise that was called "Trillium Guardian". Through Exercise Trillium Guardian, the ISU confirmed a functional, integrated command and coordination structure with effective information and intelligence sharing in support of the Canadian national security and emergency management framework for the summits.

Virtually all summit plans and procedures were tested, and it should come as no surprise that there are solid security plans in place to meet a number of potential threats to the summits.

The reality is that Canada is hosting the G8 and G20 summits in less than a month and we are proud to be hosting the world leaders. Unlike the Liberal leader who never misses a chance to run down Canada, we are focused on showcasing Canada. While the Liberal leader said he is embarrassed of Canada, we are looking forward to sitting down with our friends and our allies. We are focused on welcoming the world once again this year to our great country.

•(1235)

Canadians know that. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, our government is proud of Canada's leadership on the world stage.

For example, when our Prime Minister had a successful and important visit to China last fall that also addressed the issue of human rights, the Liberal leader took the side of the Chinese and criticized the government for raising the issue. Typical of the Liberal leader who has criticized our government's principled position on human rights and instead said, in dealing with China, we should:

lower the volume...quietly.

When Iranian dictator Mahmoud Ahmadinejad delivered a hateful rant in the United Nations, the Liberal leader criticized the government for being absent. This is, of course, coming from the same Liberal leader who was absent from Canada for 34 years and only returned to Canada to be prime minister. It is the same Liberal leader who bashed our flag, calling it a:

passing imitation of a beer label.

It is the same Liberal leader who is embarrassed that Canada is leading on the world stage, but his failure to stand up for Canada once again demonstrates that he is not in it for Canadians. He is just in it for himself.

Business of Supply

We are in it for Canadians. We are in it to show leadership on the world stage. We are in it to work with our friends and like-minded allies on issues of development, democracy, peace and security; and we are in it to address the gravest threat to world security: nuclear arms falling into the wrong hands.

The opposition does not get it. Global security begins at home. As host of the G8 and G20 security summits, we must be prepared to respond to any possible situation or threat. We will not be influenced by thugs who want to disrupt the summits and we are on track to host safe and secure G8 and G20 summits.

Participants have an expectation that we will provide the appropriate level of security. Canada deserves nothing less.

●(1240)

Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his deliberative overview with respect to security costs, and certainly the characterization that he has given of appropriate costs is one that would be supported by all Canadians. The issue here is what is appropriate.

In consideration of all the costs associated with the other summits, these costs seem to be so out of proportion that the average person on the street is saying, how could this magnitude of “appropriate” funding be accumulated now when the experience has been that it has not been anywhere near that in other summits?

I know it is difficult to ask a question based on intelligence, but could the member share any intelligence that would be of the proportion that he has described with respect to nuclear threats, and so on, such that Canadians could say, God bless the government, that it is taking the appropriate initiative in keeping with that degree of possibility?

If that is not available, then I have to say, from coast to coast to coast, people are looking at these costs and are saying they seem to be overwhelmingly out of proportion to the appropriateness with respect to the description that has been given by the government.

Mr. Phil McColeman: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member's question is what are the comparable costs. The one example that I would point out to the hon. member is, in Japan, when it hosted the G8, the costs were \$1.7 billion just to hold the G8 in Japan.

Also I think the member should take note of the Auditor General's quote that I used in my remarks, that it is the understanding of the Auditor General that security means preparation over a long period of time, testing and making sure all of the things that we are planning are going to work and we have built in the contingencies for an unexpected situation.

These are all things that at this point are estimated costs and are contingencies built into the budgeting process by our law enforcement experts in this country.

The member has heard in the remarks of the various police service organizations who are coordinating together under a special unit, and have been for a long period of time, and are using best practices from around the world. As I say, using the Auditor General's words, it is a lot of money, as the member has adequately stated, but security costs a lot of money.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, clearly this is a huge amount of money here.

In fact, 159,000 Canadians could have received EI for the average period before finding employment; 189,000 undergraduate students could have received full funding for their tuition for the year; and as I indicated before, over 1,200 new hybrid buses could have been purchased for public transit systems in this country.

This is an enormous amount of money. Clearly there is a big problem here and the government has a public relations disaster on its hands.

Does the member not agree that the government should have looked at some other solution, such as a secure military base, away from an urban environment? Does that not make more sense than putting this summit into an urban environment, which compounds the problems of security?

Mr. Phil McColeman: Mr. Speaker, the University of Toronto expert on this, John Kirton, said it most clearly in terms of the answer to the question:

The cost for each of the two Canada summits are more or less within range of what G-8 and even G-20 summits have been costing

It's a very good investment. Most of the money has permanent benefits, well beyond the G-8.

Certainly we as a country could be very insular and not host these summits, but on a long-term basis, these are the things that build our country. These are the things that give us the international profile in a global economy to create the jobs that we need in this country.

As we showcase this wonderful land we live in and the wonderful land of opportunity that it presents to the rest of the world, and we are on the world stage in both of these summits, we are building our country. We are looking to people across the world to come to Canada, to invest in this great country, and to create the industry and jobs of the future that are so vastly important to our fellow Canadians.

●(1245)

Mr. Alan Tonks (York South—Weston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did appreciate the response that the member gave, but mine is an accounting question.

When we talk about long-term contingencies, and we have cross-referenced the Auditor General in terms of her rationalizing that long-term contingencies do account with respect to this massive amount of money, when we think of the long-term effect of the oil spill, definitely in the gulf there will be long-term contingencies that will be unbelievably high in financial and fiscal terms, but I would ask this question.

Is it the position of the government that, above and beyond the day-to-day security issues and paying for the staff and the special units and so on, if there is a regular business-as-usual approach, is it possible at the end of the summits that there may be cost overruns that in fact can accountably be paid back on the balance sheet, that the government estimated would be \$1.1 billion but these things did not happen, we hope, and the figure may indeed come in lower than the initial estimate?

Business of Supply

Mr. Phil McColeman: Mr. Speaker, as the member will no doubt know, whenever a project is put together of this nature, and in this case, the security of the people who will be here, the top leaders of the world who will be here, there have to be contingency funds built in for unexpected circumstances that can happen.

The other context we live in as Canadians and as world players is the constant threat of possible security breaches, security situations that have to be responded to in the proper manner, in a manner to save lives and to secure people. That is not to say that this is going to happen, but certainly those contingencies, as with any good business planning, are going to be built into a budget.

However, as we have stated all along on this side, the actual costs will not be known until the summits are over, and when they are finished, there will be a full accounting of every line item and the bills will be scrutinized of the people who have provided services. We as a government are one of the few governments that are actually showing all the costs up front and not trying to say, for example, that part of the RCMP role could be over in this category and we could keep it out of the limelight with a little bit here and a little bit there, as was referred to by the experts who have hosted other countries, so we are not comparing apples and apples.

Regarding the question of whether unused contingency funds will be factored into the final net cost, absolutely they will be. There will be an absolute net cost at the end and a full accounting for that.

Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate. I am splitting my time with the hon. member for Malpeque.

Last Saturday I had the privilege, as many of us do on occasion, to attend the Special Olympics regional games in the Halifax area. I could not help but look at all those wonderful people at the Special Olympics who do not have the opportunities in life that many of us do. Of special concern to me are the young Canadians who, after going through high school, because of their condition, in many cases seem to fall off a cliff in terms of their opportunities. While their friends go on to college and university and jobs, a lot of Canadians with disabilities just do not have that opportunity. I was thinking of how many programs \$1 billion could provide for them. A lot of people are comparing what other things could have been achieved with the over \$1 billion cost for security for the upcoming summits. I am going to talk about a few others but that is what crystallized it for me.

I think a lot of Canadians are wondering why the cost of this is so outrageous and are thinking of the other things that Canada could be doing with that money. People want to know how in the world we could spend \$1 billion on security alone for any kind of meeting anywhere in the world.

In 1995, the federal government, under the leadership of Jean Chrétien and the regional minister, David Dingwall, announced that the G7 would take place in Halifax. It was big news in Nova Scotia. A news article on May 4, 1995 said:

The Halifax Summit Office (HSO) confirmed today that its budget for this year's G7 Summit Meeting will be approximately \$28 million....

The budget of the HSO [the Halifax Summit Office] encompasses all of the operational aspects of the Summit from staffing to printing and security.

In that article, a spokesperson for the Halifax Summit Office is quoted as saying:

"HSO estimates that fully 60% of its budget will be spent locally on goods and services ranging from accommodation to printing to the direct employment of residents".

That G7 meeting took place just a decade and a half ago in Halifax. It was a fabulous time in Halifax-Dartmouth. There was work done. There is still legacy work from that G7 summit in Halifax. Leaders like Bill Clinton, John Major, Boris Yeltsin and others came. It went off virtually without a hitch.

My father was the premier of Nova Scotia at the time. It was a fabulous opportunity for the people of Halifax to see world leaders up close. The total cost of that was \$28 million.

I want to reference a comment that was made back then by the spokesman for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. This is from a news article dated April 30, 1995:

The federal government was wrong to put next month's G7 summit in Halifax because the city needs too many government-funded fixups, says a national taxpayers' lobby group.... The federal government "should have chosen a location which wouldn't cost that kind of money".

The person who said that on behalf of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation is now the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism. He went on to say:

There are conference facilities available, I'm sure, in that part of the world as well as across Canada that could have hosted an event like this without spending several million dollars....

A decade and a half ago, the person who is now the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism thought \$28 million was too much for an international meeting for the G7. Now the government is suggesting that \$1 billion is okay.

How have we gotten to that point? There was a point in time when members who are now on the government side would say that we should value taxpayers' money. Those days appear to be gone. Now we are in a situation where we are talking about \$1 billion, \$930 million on security alone, plus other costs, which is not only outrageous but is well beyond the original estimates. People are asking what is going on.

● (1250)

In an article in yesterday's Halifax *Chronicle Herald*, Dan Leger wrote:

So maybe that \$1.1 billion should be taken as a very expensive sign that it's time to do away with these inflated gabfests, especially since every function of a summit other than dinner can now be done over the Internet.

The \$1.1 billion might also be a sign that someone has badly mismanaged the preparations, partly because poor planning forced the use of two venues, Muskoka for the G8 and Toronto for the G20. By comparison, the G20 summit in Britain last year cost a paltry \$30 million.

The last line of his article states—

Hon. James Moore: Not true.

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, I guarantee this is exactly what he is saying. I continue to quote:

Business of Supply

There are surely better ways to spend that money, perhaps on economic and security projects that last longer than a few days. Perhaps these lavish armed gatherings of the alpha dogs have finally become too expensive, even for the richest pack in the world.

Today in the Halifax *Chronicle Herald* there was an editorial which states:

In an unprecedented move, Canada offered to piggyback the G20 on the G8. But the logistics of accommodating 12 more delegations no longer worked for Muskoka. So it stuck with the G8, while Toronto is now hosting the G20....

The opposition rightly wants federal spending watchdogs to investigate. The secrecy around security bills must change.

We have a situation where current members of the government a decade and a half ago said that \$28 million was too much to spend for a meeting of this type. Now it is over \$1 billion for security alone and it might go up.

What is the comparison? People are talking about things in their areas that they could spend \$1 billion on. I have mentioned young disabled Canadians and the opportunities that do not exist for them. I suspect that just about every member of Parliament who has been here any length of time has met with people in their communities who do not have the workshops or opportunities to continue to learn. We are wasting the potential of young Canadians with disabilities.

Let me talk about students. I spent a lot of time talking with students about student issues in this country. What could be done with that \$1 billion? I want to thank CASAA for the information on this. We could fully pay the tuition of 23,376 of the poorest Canadians for the course of their study. We could fund 28,571 Canada graduate doctoral scholarships. We could almost quadruple the funding for the Canada student grants program, the program which the government put in place after it hatched the millennium scholarship foundation.

We could expand the size of the Canada summer jobs program by 10 times. Let us put this in context. This is a time of incredibly high youth unemployment. Last year there were 128,000 more students unemployed than the year before. Student unemployment is double the national average. At the same time, we have all kinds of organizations in our communities, from recreational organizations such as youth soccer, child care and seniors programs, programs that work with the disabled, boys and girls clubs, all the organizations that take advantage of the Canada summer jobs program.

At a time of stimulus, the government could have done something. I have suggested in the House and in committee what it should have done was double the Canada summer jobs program. It employs approximately 40,000 students. The government chose to add fewer than 4,000 of the 128,000 fewer jobs last year.

We could have made that \$100 million program 10 times bigger. We could have employed another 400,000 students. There are organizations across this country that need help, including autism groups.

Members may recall a few years ago when the government changed the Canada summer jobs program and what a disaster that was. My colleagues on all sides of the House can attest to that. They remember what a disaster that was when it happened. There are a lot of things we could have done.

At a point in time when poverty rates are rising, 2.5 points up from about 9.5% to 11% for both poverty and child poverty, we could have done more.

Canada should be involved in meetings of this type. I am very proud of the fact that Paul Martin, the former finance minister and prime minister, was at the genesis of the G20 and pushed it. We should be involved in these meetings, but there comes a point when common sense needs to take hold.

The cost of this summit is outrageous. Canadians do not accept it. The government has to understand that. The government has to evaluate and rethink this. Yes, we need to be involved, but there are too many other things that Canadians need, especially Canadians who need assistance. When they look at \$1 billion going out the door on this, they say that they cannot believe it, the government should do something about it. That is why the Liberals brought this motion forward for debate today.

• (1255)

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the cost for the G8 and G20 security is over \$1 billion. That is for security alone.

Could the hon. member give me an idea of how much exactly the government is spending, not only on security, but on building an arena in the riding of the Minister of Industry and giving facelifts to a lot of buildings and land in the minister's riding? Does the hon. member have an idea of how much the G8 and G20 summits are costing as a whole?

• (1300)

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, I do not have an exact number. I do not think that anybody knows the exact number, but I certainly take the member's point. Media reports are now estimating that the costs for the G8 and G20 summits could rise to over \$1.2 billion. For that reason, the Auditor General has indicated that she is going to look at it.

We have heard over the last number of months about some of the infrastructure projects that have stretched not only from where the meetings are going to take place, but further out for political reasons. These improvements in infrastructure and communities are being done allegedly for the G8 and G20 meetings, but it appears they are being done purely for political reasons, entirely in keeping with how the government does business.

I do not know the exact number, but it is clear that it is over \$1 billion. I suspect we will find out after the fact that it is much over \$1 billion. I do not think that is something Canadians want to put up with.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too am concerned about the \$1.1 billion that is being quoted. God knows what it is going to be afterwards. Nevertheless, let us work with the \$1.1 billion figure. The hon. member has worked very hard over the years on the education file as a whole and post-secondary education in particular. It intrigued me when he touched on that area in the short time that he had.

Business of Supply

On behalf of Canada's future, our young men and women who must have a good education so that our country can be competitive, would he elaborate on how these funds could help Canada for a better tomorrow?

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned a few examples, but let me give more examples of how this \$1 billion could have been used.

It could have been used to increase the post-secondary student support program funding to provide every first nations student who wanted to go to school with the funds to do so. It could have provided a \$1,000 grant to 250,000 students for each year of their undergraduate degree. We could have reduced the student loan interest rate down to the government cost of borrowing.

I mentioned some of the other ones. How about forgiving the total student debt for 56,000 Canadian students? There are a lot of things.

On the disability side, the government with much fanfare has put \$45 million more into enabling accessibility. It is a program that has been politically butchered by the government. The \$45 million over two years to enhance buildings to make them accessible could have been multiplied by 20, 22 or 23 times to make a huge difference in this country.

We have to look at how that money could have been better spent. I think our constituents are demanding that we do that. It is the right thing to do.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, does my colleague from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour find it ironic that the Conservatives are hosting a conference whose main theme is fiscal restraint and they cannot even manage the budget for the conference?

Mr. Michael Savage: Mr. Speaker, that is almost as unbelievable as having a stimulus program and then spending \$100 million to tell everybody that we are having a stimulus program. This is the kind of voodoo economics and backward style of accounting the government is becoming well known for.

This is unbelievable to Canadians. Here we are with the worst economy in the history of our country. It is the worst deficit after the Conservatives inherited the best surplus in the history of this country and now the Conservatives are saying there is no better way of spending \$1 billion than to have summits in Muskoka and Toronto, both of which are great communities.

The Conservatives have to take responsibility. They changed the terms of these summits. They are the ones who have allowed the costs to escalate. They are the ones who have to take responsibility. They have to answer to the people of Canada for this billion dollar boondoggle. Canadians are throwing their hands up in the air and saying that it does not make any sense.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand and discuss the motion. It has been an interesting discussion thus far on the previous questions and debate here. I will read into the record part of the opposition day motion, which reads that Canadians:

...are outraged at the reckless partisan choices and financial mismanagement that have caused the security budget for the summits to skyrocket to over \$1 billion which is more than six times the original budget and more than was spent on

security for the 2010 Winter Olympics which lasted for 17 days and therefore the House calls on the government to provide a detailed breakdown to Canadians of how the money earmarked for security is being spent and an explanation of how the security budget was permitted to spiral out of control.

Some answers based on discussion here today and what we are seeing through the media are starting to come forward, but clearly this is a billion dollar boondoggle that lays right at the hands of the Prime Minister. I would think that the Prime Minister would have learned some lessons. He was the guy who talked about this country not going into deficit, took a surplus and drove the country into deficit and now we are even borrowing for tax breaks for corporations from our grandchildren. It then blows \$1.1 billion on the security summits that were basically mismanaged from the start.

The then minister of health, now Minister of Industry, wanted this dropped into his riding, for whatever reason, and for a little while in that part of the country there was a sidewalk to nowhere. Eventually, however, the government learned that the location was not right for the G20 summit. That should have been recognized in the planning stages. The government's argument is that two summits back to back is the reason for the additional costs. With two summits, we should be able to gain efficiencies. They should be able to be done in the same facilities with the same training and security measures. It is the biggest three day expenditure in Canadian history.

I asked government members what it cost to build the Confederation Bridge between Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. It was an engineering feat to build that bridge and it cost \$1.1 billion. The cost of that bridge, which took years to engineer and four years to build, is being spent in just three days by the government probably to mainly enhance the ego of the Prime Minister and give him good TV. It is absolutely sad.

An hon. member: You're being negative.

Hon. Wayne Easter: The member opposite says that I am being negative. No such thing, I am being realistic in telling Canadians how the government continues to mismanage the funds that taxpayers pay from their hard work. Slightly more than a billion dollar boondoggle for three days, the biggest three day expenditure in Canadian history.

No one is questioning the need for security for summits, which is important, but compared to other summits there is no comparison with the cost of this one. When the Toronto location was selected, City of Toronto officials urged the federal government to reconsider its position due to major disruptions it would cause the downtown core. Mayor David Miller lashed out at the federal government spending on the G20 summit saying that the money could have been better used to modernize urban transit in the city for a generation—

• (1305)

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask all members, if they are in the chamber, to ensure their cellular devices or mobile phones are turned off, including the member who is giving the speech. I will let him resume.

Business of Supply

●(1310)

Hon. Wayne Easter: My apology, Mr. Speaker. I thought it might be the Prime Minister calling to tell us the numbers had increased even further but it was not.

There is a whole other issue of security that we have been trying to deal with in my area of responsibility and that is with the Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers. It has been requesting \$50 million from the Government of Canada for about two years to enhance its security around its 1,500 operations spread right across the country. Those are 1,500 businesses that sell fertilizer and chemicals and they are doing their best to secure those operations.

In the United States, which we have to compete against, the U.S. government is assisting its agriculture retailers, who sell fertilizer and chemicals, to put up security fences, security lights and secure those operations so that no one can break in, take materials and use them as explosives or for illegal or terrorist activities.

In Canada, however, where we have to compete with the United States, CAAR, which we met with at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, is asking and has been asking for a number of years for \$50 million but both the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and the Minister of Public Safety have refused to deal with the issue. CAAR was outraged and sent a letter to the Minister of Public Safety about its outrage over this billion dollar boondoggle. It cannot even get a meeting or have a discussion on the fact that it would put us on a level playing field with the United States relative to the cost of securing fertilizer and chemicals in this country and would increase our public security as a nation in terms of those smaller operations and some quite large for that matter as well.

For those 1,500 CAAR operations scattered right across the country to find out that the government is blowing a billion dollars in terms of the summits when CAAR cannot even get a discussion on the matter, is absolutely insulting and it should not be.

The costs of the summits do not fit with the costs associated with other similar summits. The last one was held I believe in Great Britain. The one that was held in Japan cost somewhere over \$300 million. The costs of the summits do not compare with what other nations have spent on these summits or even ourselves within our own country.

The summit that was held a number of years ago was put by the former Liberal government in a somewhat isolated location and could handle the number of people who would be there. It was much easier to secure. It was planned from the first instance in a better way to make better use of funding and provide better security and less disruption to the economy overall.

The bottom line is that Canadians have every right to be outraged at this billion dollar boondoggle on the part of the Conservative government which just adds further to the debt of this country. While it is doing that, it is even ignoring other areas where it should be enhancing security, as I mentioned a moment ago about the Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers which would protect ordinary Canadians in their homes and give them a sense of security that illegal acts would not be happening with fertilizer companies

and the use of fertilizer and so on to cause damage to their economy and to their homes.

●(1315)

The bottom line is that the government must come forward with the details and explain how it has mismanaged this situation so badly as to get into this overexpenditure of dollars that looks to us as if it is just to enhance the ego of the Prime Minister.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the G20 summit is being held right in the middle of my riding of Trinity—Spadina. The merchants, the small businesses, the vendors and the residents are asking for help because if their windows are broken or their condominiums are damaged they will not get any compensation. At first I thought it was a miscommunication but it was clarified. The government said that if they were to suffer damage of this nature that their insurance would cover it. That is grossly unfair because the insurance companies said that they would not be able to do that.

With a budget of over \$1 billion, how is it possible that the Conservative government would not compensate the small businesses, the vendors and the residents who will suffer because of this summit?

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, businesses in the area, be it restaurants, retail businesses or whatever, have every right to be concerned. We have seen what has happened with what are supposed to be peaceful demonstrations to make a legitimate point at previous world summits where they do get out of hand, where there is always somebody who is trying to cause a little anarchy, which is certainly the reason for security.

However, it goes right to the point of poor planning in the beginning. To drop this summit into our biggest and most heavily populated city, just from a security point of view and an economic point of view, makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. For the government to take the position that it will not compensate businesses and families for any damage that may happen, goes to the attitude of the government that it just does not care. If it is not one of its own, it just does not seem to care.

It has been mentioned in this House where one of the ministers promotes businesses in his riding, regardless of all the others in the country he is supposed to be promoting. It is just that the Conservatives do not care.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Malpeque has raised the out of control Conservative spending that has led to a growth from \$179 million for the security for the summit to now over \$1 billion.

I would like him to speak to not just the out of control spenders but the out of touch Conservatives and to reflect on the fact that \$1 billion could buy 500 MRI machines, 340,000 hip or knee surgeries or 17,000 public health nurses. I am hearing a lot from my constituents that they want better health care, shorter wait times and better services when they need it.

I would appreciate hearing from the hon. member what he is hearing from the good people of Prince Edward Island in terms of their priorities and for him to reflect on whether these types of priorities are the priorities we ought to be focusing on as legislators.

Business of Supply

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, the numbers that my colleague outlined are in fact true. There is a need for more money in health care and in a number of other areas.

I will admit that when people in Prince Edward Island hear the \$1 billion figure, they relate that to the Confederation Bridge. The \$1.1 billion that bridge cost is exactly the same amount as what the current government is wasting, not necessarily totally wasting but in great part, for a three day extravaganza for the Prime Minister to try to show himself on the world stage and to assist with the Prime Minister's ego.

The people in Prince Edward Island wonder how a three day event by the current Prime Minister could cost—

• (1320)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I will share my time with my colleague from Sherbrooke.

It is my pleasure to speak to the Liberal motion about the mind-boggling costs associated with providing security for the G8 and G20 summits. I will read the motion:

That, in the opinion of the House, while Canadians are justifiably proud of Canada's upcoming hosting of the G8 and G20 summits and determined to provide effective and efficient security for the visiting world leaders, they are outraged at the reckless partisan choices and financial mismanagement that have caused the security budget for the summits to skyrocket to over \$1 billion which is more than six times the original budget and more than was spent on security for the 2010 Winter Olympics which lasted for 17 days and therefore the House calls on the government to provide a detailed breakdown to Canadians of how the money earmarked for security is being spent and an explanation of how the security budget was permitted to spiral out of control.

The obsequious wording of the motion belies the Liberals' perpetual fear of offending their voting base, which is melting away like snow in sunshine. The motion opens with a reminder that Canadians are justifiably proud of Canada's role as host. Come on. I have no doubt what Canadians would say if we were to ask them whether they would prefer to pay \$1 billion for the G8 and the G20 or to set that money aside for something else and have the summits held elsewhere.

Of course the Bloc Québécois supports this motion and, to be clear, we support these events, but not at all cost. A thousand million dollars is crazy.

If we were to send all of the people planning to demonstrate to Varadero, Cuba, for seven days all-inclusive with no bulk discount, we could send a million demonstrators on vacation and still have \$500 million left over for security.

The government is spending \$1 billion, and not at some random moment in time. This money is being spent after the Vancouver Olympic Games, which cost the federal government \$650 million.

This begs the question: was there not anything that was used for security at the Olympic Games—metal barriers, highly sophisticated metal detectors, surveillance cameras—that could have been loaned to the G8 and the G20?

Security is starting to become expensive in 2010.

Obviously, it is imperative to have a secure site to hold international events in Canada. We must not cut corners when it comes to ensuring the safety of the world's major leaders. However, of all the locations in Canada to host the G8 and the G20, they chose one that costs \$1 billion.

The government's budgetary documents show that the security bill for both summits has gone from \$179 million to \$930 million and now more than \$1 billion.

The budget has increased fivefold in a matter of months without any debate or justification. The only thing the Minister of Public Safety has said about the \$933 million budgeted for security is, "This is what the experts tell us is required. I don't think people understand exactly how many people are at these summits".

No, people do not understand why security for the G8 and the G20 costs \$13 million an hour, nor do they understand why such an expensive location was chosen.

Security for the G20 in London cost \$30 million and for the G20 in Pittsburgh, in 2009, \$20 million. The costs can be higher, of course. The G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, cost \$110 million, the summit in Japan, in 2008, cost \$381 million, the two-day G8 summit in Kananaskis, Alberta, cost \$190 million. But there has never been a \$1 billion price tag.

They are spending \$1 billion for a G8 and yet the Prime Minister brags about his government's extraordinary management of the financial crisis. He cannot even manage a summit.

• (1325)

The truth is that when it comes to brute force, security and defence, the Conservatives happily sign the cheques, but when it comes to solidarity, fairness and compassion, they are nowhere to be found. Oops, all of a sudden, there is no more money.

This billion dollar government is opposing proactive legislation on pay equity. That is the billion dollar government for you. I just cannot get over it. It is the same government that refuses to give older workers an income support program that would cost just \$55 million. What? That represents no more than four hours of the summit. With \$1 billion, we could improve employment insurance, fund the Francolies, the Festival International des Rythmes du Monde, the Fêtes de la Nouvelle-France for the next 200 years.

I was on *Le Devoir's* site reading the comments of an Internet surfer who, in light of the staggering amount spent on security for the G8 and the G20, suggested that they conduct the meeting by telephone conference in future to save a little bit.

Apart from the billion dollars, there is the question of ideology. These Conservatives have no problem spending money to increase the defence budget, or to put snipers on rooftops in Toronto, but they are indifferent to misery.

One of the subjects that the G8 will focus on is maternal health—a critical issue, if ever there was one. This is what it says on page 42 of the World Health Organization report titled *Women and Health*:

Business of Supply

Unsafe abortion causes a significant proportion of maternal deaths. Nearly 70,000 women die each year due to the complications of unsafe abortion. The evidence shows that women who seek an abortion will do so regardless of legal restrictions. Abortions performed in an illegal context are likely to be unsafe and provided by unskilled persons in unhygienic conditions. Poor women and those affected by crises and conflicts are particularly at risk. Where there are few restrictions on the availability of safe abortion, deaths and illness are dramatically reduced.

The use of modern contraception has reduced the need for induced abortion, yet young women, especially when they are unmarried, often face difficulty in obtaining contraception and may resort to unsafe abortion. Globally, women of all ages have abortions but in sub-Saharan Africa, which has the highest burden of ill-health and death from unsafe abortion, one in four unsafe abortions is done on adolescents aged 15 to 19 years.

How much is the Conservative government, which determined that maternal health would be a priority at the next G8, willing to invest to help these women in developing countries who die as a result of an abortion? Not a cent.

This \$13 million-an-hour government does not want to reopen the abortion debate, as if the other G8 countries would play along with the idea that this topic, which is inherent to women's health, should not be debated. Hillary Clinton was very clear about this.

And that is why we will be supporting the Liberal motion. We will continue to maintain and support Quebec's wishes. Here in the House, we will argue against poverty, and support health, education and women's groups, whose funding has been cut. We have a gun registry that costs \$4 million a year. This \$1 billion, or the \$500 million left over for security, is significant. And we could list many more examples. That is why we will be supporting the Liberal Party motion.

• (1330)

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his speech. I have a question for him. This \$1.1 billion is a lot of money, and it is not the final total. We do not know the final total, and we perhaps never will. The member mentioned some countries and cities where the G8 and G20 have already been held. The cost for those was much lower than the cost in Canada.

I would like to ask the member whether he thinks the government perhaps spent much too much money in the riding of the Minister of Industry, using the pretext that it was for the G8 and G20. Did the government spend a bit too much money in that riding?

Mr. Luc Desnoyers: Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Conservative government made the worst choice. It is obvious that the \$1 billion city was a partisan decision. The Conservative government could have chosen existing locations, like Kananaskis, where the costs would have been much lower, and which is accessible by only one road. We could have invited leaders to the G8 and G20 summits there, but instead the government chose the city with the \$1 billion price tag.

In light of the current economic situation, I think that was a bad choice and was poorly planned. The government knows very well that this money could have been used to meet Quebec's health or education needs, or to combat poverty. It is quite clear right now how big the gap is between the rich and the poor. This money could have been used for other things.

[English]

Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the narrative continues despite the facts.

We hear the same thing repeated once again, that the summit in Pittsburgh only cost \$28 million. Those were municipal costs only. The members are comparing oranges with apples. It is most inappropriate and yet they keep repeating these statements.

I would like to point out some hypocrisy. This summit that is in the Minister of Industry's riding was not the Minister of Industry's riding when the area was selected. As a matter of fact, we heard the leader of the Liberals say, on September 17, 2008, to the people in Huntsville:

—when we are the government of Canada, the next G8 Summit will be held at Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville...You heard it from me: the G8 Summit will be in this community when we form the next government.

It was very convenient for the Liberal leader, in a pre-election tone, to posture that way, and now members of his party have changed their minds.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desnoyers: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the member realizes that we are talking about \$1 billion for security at the G8 and G20 summits in Toronto. The costs have soared to \$13 million an hour. We all know that other summits have cost much less and that, in the current context, this money could be spent elsewhere, as I said earlier.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Chambly—Borduas has time for a very brief question.

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-Îles on his speech. I believe his comments were able to set the debate in context.

It would seem that this government is short on ideas of places to hold the G8 and G20. The most secure place in Canada right now is Parliament Hill, where we will not be sitting, which has media infrastructure, podiums and conference rooms. In addition, there are spots to house the delegates in Gatineau Park, which is not far. Would it not be a good idea to simply do it here?

• (1335)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles has 10 or 15 seconds.

Mr. Luc Desnoyers: Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague. Instead of paying \$1 billion for new infrastructure that we know exists elsewhere, we could have let them use this site, which is ideal, and they could have seen our Parliament.

Mr. Serge Cardin (Sherbrooke, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when I heard the news, needless to say, I burst out laughing. I laughed quite hard, and as Nelligan wrote:

I am glad, so glad, as I laugh aloud,

Oh! so glad, that I am afraid I will burst into tears!

And that is just what I did after my initial burst of laughter.

Business of Supply

I thought the media and reporters were mocking the government and the Prime Minister, pointing to the government's excesses, showing its extravagance and amateurism, in essence showing that it had been affected by summit fever. But that is precisely what is happening. There can be no other conclusion. But as parliamentarians, we have responsibilities to the public, which is watching the government spend \$1 billion to meet with friends it has met with before. The summary the leaders are going to sign at the end of their meeting is probably already being negotiated.

First, the government is meeting with eight others to set the table, have an aperitif and enjoy appetizers and the main course. Then it is going to meet with the 12 or 20 other governments for a little dessert, with port and chocolates, and hand them the declaration summarizing all the negotiations that have been going on for a month or two or even longer.

The government is going overboard; it is a simple as that. I started crying when I realized that this was costing us not an arm and a leg, but both arms and both legs. Essentially, it is costing us the earth. At the same time, many people in our society do not have enough money to meet their needs and fulfill their aspirations. With \$1 billion out of an annual budget of \$225 billion, the Conservatives cannot hold too many parties every week or there will be no more money left for a lot of people, that is for sure.

My colleague mentioned some past summits. I would like to talk about one in particular. It was not the G8 or the G20, but the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, which was still attended by 34 heads of state or their representatives. It is not very easy to provide security in Quebec City, either, what with everything that has to be put in place. Security cost \$100 million. Moreover, we have among us today the person who was essentially responsible for security at the time. Obviously, \$100 million for 34 heads of state works out to a good average compared to the figure we get for the G8 and G20 summits.

I was reading what Richard Cl  roux wrote in the *Montr  al Express*: "One billion dollars is enough to pave the Trans-Canada Highway between Montreal and Vancouver, there and back, twice over, with \$10 bills." The Conservatives might as well have done that. That would get people's attention and it would have been easier to ensure security in Toronto.

As for the equatorial conference, with our old \$1 bills, we could have gone around the equator's circumference 40 times. With \$5 bills, we could have gone around eight times and with \$10 bills, four times. Using \$20 bills, we could have gone around the equator's circumference twice.

We know how many hundreds of millions of people around the world earn \$1 a day. Imagine how generous the federal government could have been. This could have meant 1 billion person-days to help people.

The costs associated with these summits are completely outrageous, especially if we look at them from various perspectives. My colleague from Chambly—Borduas has been fighting for an income support program for seniors for years now. That much money could have paid for such a program for tens, if not hundreds of years.

● (1340)

The population is aging and many people are being laid off. That money could have been used to cover such gaps.

A Liberal member, when asking the Prime Minister a question, said that the firearms registry, which the Conservatives want to eliminate, costs only \$4 million a year, which translates into \$2,260 for each life that is saved. We need to talk about how absurd this is. One has to wonder what the Prime Minister and the Conservative government could possibly have been thinking, when they agreed to spend so foolishly. I wonder how much the excessive costs can be blamed on the fact that the summits are being held in two different locations.

The government is going way too far, in terms of both foolish spending and foolish cuts. The latest Conservative budget is a perfect example of this. Their foolish cuts have caused nothing but grief for many people and many organizations.

We know that security is critical. We are hosting people from the G8 countries, which represent more than 60% of the world's wealth. These people obviously need a great deal of security. I know people in my region who are close to governments, who have a rather large personal fortune and who spend quite a bit of money on security. However, they foot the bill themselves and do not take the money directly out of taxpayers' pockets. We do not deprive people just to put on a show.

As my colleague was saying earlier, conference calls are very effective these days, but there also is a need to show off publicly. I wonder what type of show they will put on in Toronto and the other place whose name escapes me. It was not necessary to hold the summits in two different locations. It would have made things easier to hold them in one location.

It was completely irresponsible of the government to fail to shed light on this as soon as possible. That is why the Bloc Qu  b  cois is in favour of the motion moved by the official opposition party, the Liberal Party. We need to know how much of this is excessive spending and how much of this is incompetence and at what point extravagance took over. These are all extreme examples of excess, extravagance, amateurism and lack of professionalism. Unfortunately, this government is caught up in summit mania.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my Bloc colleague what he thinks of this idea. If the G8 and the G20 were held on a military base in any given province, they would cost much less than the \$1.1 billion it will cost to hold them in the Minister of Industry's riding.

● (1345)

Mr. Serge Cardin: Mr. Speaker, if the summits were held on a military base, they would not be as picturesque. The government wants to put on a show for the whole world. I imagine there will probably be some entertainment and fireworks.

It seems clear to me that the venue selection itself suggests a lack of planning. No doubt holding the summits in two different locations will double some of the costs.

Business of Supply

The main purpose of the Liberal Party's motion is to find out whether the expenses are justified. My hope that the Prime Minister and the Conservative government will be able to justify these expenses may be in vain, but it is their responsibility to do so, and it is our responsibility as parliamentarians to ask for answers.

Surely you would like to know too, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question, but I would like to put this into some perspective. Let us look back in history at some of the large multilateral events that have taken place in Canada. The APEC in Vancouver in 1997 cost \$26 million. The Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001 cost \$35 million. The G8 in Kananaskis cost \$190 million. This summit is the \$1 billion boondoggle. The AG has said that it could cost up to \$1.2 billion.

We should put it into perspective. We could have hired 23,000 police officers to do that in Canada. Does my colleague believe that this \$1 billion could have been spent in a wide array of areas in Canada, including health care, which would have had a much better rate of return for our taxpayers than wasting something that is orders of magnitude larger than any other summit that has occurred in history?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cardin: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is convinced that these summits are important, but the costs should be reasonable. We would like to know what should be considered reasonable in the expenses submitted because \$1.08 billion is a huge amount of money. It is 10,000 people being paid \$100,000 each. I imagine they started working a long time ago and will finish well after the summit is done.

I realize that some money will be spent on things that will last. As one colleague stated earlier in the House, there are surely some things from the Olympic Games that could be reused.

To correct my colleague, I believe the cost in Quebec City was \$100 million, for all forms of security. That amount provided security to 34 heads of state during the Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City.

I am wondering when the Prime Minister and the government are going to tell us that there were extra costs for all sorts of things, including incompetence, I imagine. That has a price and, in practical terms, it is more costly than competence. The government is trying to scrimp on competence, but that just drives up its budget.

[*English*]

Mr. Rob Anders: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Last week I wrote a note on a card to our troops in Afghanistan. I meant to say, "Keep safe and defend yourselves". For those who found my note inappropriate, I apologize for any offence taken.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to speak on this particular issue. I am going

to talk about what I hope is a plan that the government should adopt in terms of dealing with the challenges our world faces.

The G8 and G20 are an extraordinary opportunity for the world's most powerful leaders to help those who are least advantaged in our world. When the Prime Minister announced some months ago that he was going to make maternal and child health a cornerstone of the G8, we all applauded. Canada and the world applauded because, today, 344,000 women a year die of largely preventable or treatable causes in the most underprivileged areas of the world.

When a woman dies, the chance of her children under the age of five dying is greater than 50%. Therefore, not only is this a catastrophe for her but also for her children. Unfortunately, the government chose to open up the abortion debate and substantive challenges and solutions that could be implemented have been obscured by this debate.

Saying he is not going to open up the abortion debate is exactly what the Prime Minister did, because he chose to deprive women in other countries from having the same rights as women in Canada have, which allows them to be masters of their destiny and bodies and to be in control of their lives, something that Canadian women and men for a long time fought for.

Yet while women in Canada thankfully enjoy that right, women abroad do not, and the Prime Minister chose to put Canada in a corner, away from all other G8 countries, turning back the clock of time and saying women in developing countries would not have access to a full range of family planning options, including abortion, in the countries where it is legal.

I am not going to dwell on that. Rather, I am going to talk about a plan of action that our country can adopt to take the leadership role it should be taking at the G8 summit in order to mobilize the world's most powerful countries to help those who are least privileged.

To put this in perspective, with all respect to people who are against abortion as that is their right, many have said that we need to prevent abortion and give women rights to access counselling and social services. I have news for people. That is not what happens in big chunks of the world.

I have been to Africa 26 times and worked next to a war zone twice as a physician. What happens is that women are raped. Male family members have guns put to their heads or machetes placed across their necks and are told to rape their mothers and sisters or every person in their families will be killed. That is the choice these people have. Women are raped and get pregnant. Young women get raped and get pregnant.

A 14-year-old who is raped and gets pregnant has hips that are too small to be able to carry a child to term. As a result, if she carries that baby to term, she can die or suffers from irreparable damage to her organs, including obstetric fistula, which causes her to become a pariah because she is leaking stool and urine for the rest of her life unless it is repaired. It is a horrendous situation.

That is the reality. In those countries, there is no counselling. There are no social programs or social services. In the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, up to 70% of women in some towns have been raped. That is the reality in these towns. There are no social programs or social services. There is no hope. These women have nothing.

Unless they deal with the challenges they have, they get abortions that are unsafe. As a result, 68,000 women a year die of septic abortions. What part of pro-life allows those women and half of their children under the age of five to die? There is nothing pro-life about that. It is unconscionable that we are allowing that to occur. It is a crisis occurring in the world that we can do something about. We can follow the signs and the facts and do what is right in the name of life and giving these women a chance at life.

What can we do? The fact is that 344,000 women a year die of five largely preventable causes: babies get stuck; women bleed; they suffer from sepsis; they suffer from something called eclampsia where their blood pressure rises and they can have seizures and die; and lastly, 68,000 women a year die as a result of septic abortions. Again, what can we do?

The interesting thing is if one can treat a woman for the five obstetric complications she could have, one could also treat 80% of what comes through an emergency department.

● (1350)

How would we do it? We do it through primary health care. We enable people to have access to trained health care workers, basic medications, diagnostics, clean water, a power source, micronutrients and proper nutrition, and a fully array of family planning options and safe abortions in those countries where it is legal. If they were enabled to have access to these things, 344,000 women's lives would be saved each year and lives of the children who die, too, when the mother dies. What a remarkable thing that would be if we took charge of that.

How would we do that? We could do that by each G8 country taking a leadership role in one of those inputs. For example, Canada could take the lead on providing access to nutrition and micronutrients. The amazing micronutrient initiative at the University of Toronto that Dr. Stanley Zlotkin championed will save millions of lives.

Every year, 88,000 women die as a result of iron-deficiency anemia. Their hemoglobin is so low that when they go into delivery they bleed a bit, which pushes them over the edge, and they die. If their hemoglobin were brought up to normal, they could have a baby without hemorrhaging to death even if they bleed somewhat. Their lives could be saved for mere pennies.

The United States could take the lead in training health care workers. The French could be the lead in providing access to family planning services and abortion services in those countries where it is legal. In this way, there would be a division of labour. Each individual country could take a leadership role in one of those inputs. That does not mean to say they would do it alone, but if each country is in charge of one thing, we could have a structure that works.

How would we roll this out? The World Food Programme, the UNHCR, UNICEF and others work in some of the most

Business of Supply

impoverished places in the world. The World Food Programme has feeding centres, which provide nutrition to those people most at risk. What do we find in those areas at risk? We find people with the highest mortality and morbidity rates.

I have met with officials of the World Food Programme who told me what we could do. We could partner with the World Food Programme and other agencies. Imagine using its feeding centres and logistical system along with primary health care services. The feeding centre would provide people with access to primary health care. The logistical system would provide a sustainable route to get the assets where needed. Instead of reinventing the wheel, this would be a smart way of doing this. We could use this to get what is needed to the people who need it the most.

How would we fund it? I have a motion in the House of Commons, calling for a global fund for maternal and child health, similar to the fund we have for HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. That way, we would have a global fund and funding mechanism that could partner with other foundations and development banks in other countries to get the \$15 billion needed over the next six years to save lives.

The added benefit of doing this, which is quite extraordinary, which most people don't know, is that if we can treat a pregnant woman, we can also deal with 80% of what comes through an emergency department. I am speaking of the big killers, such as gastroenteritis, pneumonia, malaria, measles, tuberculosis, and above all else, malnutrition. We could do that if we had those primary health care services in place. We have a moment in time to accomplish this.

It is interesting, though, that we have not heard about any kind of plan of action from the government, even though it has had this issue in its hands for some time. I would encourage the government to look at this and look at the partnerships we have to implement this.

Imagine if we took \$1 billion of the \$1.2 billion that the summit is going to cost and used it to fund this very program.

● (1355)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca will have 10 and a half minutes after question period to conclude his remarks.

Statements by Members

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

COPTIC CHRISTIANS

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in January, extremists opened fire on Christians in Naj Hammadi, Egypt, killing seven people. It was Christmas Day for the victims, and we could hardly imagine the devastation felt by Coptic Christians around the world. We are approaching six months since this heinous event, with no convictions.

There are many Canadians of Coptic Christian heritage in Kitchener Centre. They were very grateful to our government for its swift condemnation of this act of terror.

Coptic Christians comprise 10% to 20% of Egypt's population. There are alarming reports of discrimination, mob attacks, harassment and even torture used against this community. My constituents are concerned about their loved ones and friends in Egypt.

On their behalf, I ask our government to use every possible means to promote within Egypt, Canadian values of tolerance and respect. Let us encourage Egypt to extend all protection and rights to its Christian minority. Let us offer hope to this beleaguered community.

* * *

● (1400)

ALS AWARENESS DAY

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the City of Ottawa has today proclaimed June 1 ALS Awareness Day to recognize those living with this dreaded disease and those who are walking for them in the ALS walk on June 19, 2010.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is a progressive fatal disease. It causes paralysis of the body and slowly robs those afflicted of their ability to walk, speak, eat and breathe. Eighty per cent of those diagnosed die within two to five years, and over this very short time span, families can spend up to \$130,000 for equipment and care.

There is no known cause, cure or treatment for ALS. As many in this House will remember, less than one year ago it took the life of our beloved friend and colleague, Richard Wackid.

This year, the Ottawa ALS walk will be held on June 19 at the Canadian War Museum. Participants will be walking to raise funds for family support services, equipment, and most importantly, a cure. I encourage the citizens of this city to get behind this initiative by either joining the walk or making a financial contribution.

I am sure all colleagues in the House will join me today in reminding Canadians afflicted with ALS that we are with them and that their courage is an example to us all.

* * *

[Translation]

LOUISE WARREN

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Louise Warren, a poet and author, was the guest of honour at the 11th Marché de la poésie de Montréal, which concluded on Sunday. This poetry festival

kicked off with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque on Saint-André Street, in honour of Gaston Miron.

Louise Warren, who now resides in Saint-Alphonse-Rodriguez, wrote *Attachements. Observation d'un bibliothèque*, published by Éditions de l'Hexagone this spring.

As part of the festival, Louise Warren organized an event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first collection of poetry written by a Quebec woman, *Fleurs sauvages*, by Léonise Valois, was published in 1910 by Éditions Beauchemin. Louise Warren, who is the great-great niece of Léonise Valois, wrote an essay about her.

In her book, *Attachements. Observation d'une bibliothèque*, Louise Warren describes her relationships with various poets, including Fernand Ouellette, Dany Laferrière, Jean-Paul Daoust and Fabienne Courtade.

I congratulate Louise Warren on her life's work and on her unwavering commitment to promoting Quebec poetry.

* * *

[English]

FATHER'S DAY WALLEYE TOURNAMENT

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP): Mr. Speaker, June is upon us and in Dubreuilville it means that the Father's Day Walleye Tournament is set to take place from June 18 to 20. With a tagged fish worth \$10,000, this catch and release event is just one of the ways that competitive anglers can test their skill in Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking.

There are countless opportunities for visitors to wet a line throughout AMK. Stretching from Smooth Rock Falls through Hearst to Manitouwadge through Hornepayne, from Superior's eastern shore down to Manitoulin's Rainbow Country on Lake Huron with thousands of inland lakes, rivers, and streams in between, my riding boasts some of the best drive-to and fly-in fishing available.

Lodges, campgrounds, hotels and trailer parks are eager to host travellers and share the rugged and inspiring beauty of our area. Local stores, marinas and guides will help people make the most of their experience, while powwows, festivals, golf courses and local markets help round out the experience, making memories that will last a lifetime.

I invite everyone to Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking this summer to find out what riches we have in our backyard.

*Statements by Members***SKIN CANCER SCREENING CLINIC**

Ms. Dona Cadman (Surrey North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that this evening on the Hill I will be co-hosting, along with the Canadian Dermatology Association, the fourth annual Chuck Cadman Memorial Skin Cancer Screening Clinic.

It is in memory of my late husband, Chuck, and his courageous battle with this disease. The skin cancer clinic aims to raise awareness of the need for early detection and prevention.

When found and treated early, skin cancer is highly curable.

The clinic is made possible thanks to the efforts of the doctors and organizers who are volunteering their time. Each year at the clinic, two or three cases of cancer have been diagnosed that otherwise would have gone undiscovered.

I encourage all my colleagues to make the time to come out. It could save their lives.

* * *

[Translation]

ARISTIDES DE SOUSA MENDES

Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with emotion that I wish to acknowledge today the 125th anniversary of the birth of Aristides de Sousa Mendes.

Sousa Mendes, a man of great courage and extraordinary integrity, deserves our admiration and respect. His acts of bravery in World War II must be remembered and honoured every year, but especially in 2010.

● (1405)

[English]

Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese Consul in Bordeaux, France, delivered over 30,000 visas between June and July of 1940 to refugees fleeing the Nazi horrors overtaking Europe. Twelve thousand of those visas were granted to Jews in whose faces doors were being closed one by one.

The heroism of Sousa Mendes and the use of his consular powers lies in the fact that Salazar, the then-prime minister of Portugal, ordered him to stop, an order he ignored and which put at risk the future of his diplomatic career.

[Translation]

Today, in the presence of his grandson Louis-Philippe Mendes, a proud Canadian, I am very pleased to pay tribute to this great citizen of Portugal who embodied humanity and sacrificed his career to save an incalculable number of lives.

* * *

[English]

KEVIN MCKAY

Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with my deepest sympathy and gratitude that I honour Private Kevin Thomas McKay for his service in the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

On May 13, the 24-year-old private was on foot patrol in the village of Nakhonay, in the Panjwaii district of Afghanistan, when a blast from an improvised explosive device took his life. It was only two days before the end of his first deployment.

Kevin grew up in Horseshoe Valley in the area of Oro-Medonte Township, where he is honoured by family and friends for his service to country and community, where his own grade eight project about the courage of Canadian soldiers at Vimy Ridge first inspired him to join the armed forces.

To Kevin's mother and father, Beth and Fred, and to his brother, Riley, may I join with all hon. members in conveying our thoughts and prayers, and the respect and admiration of a grateful nation.

* * *

[Translation]

ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this week we celebrate Environment Week, which has as its theme “Embracing Life on Earth”. This week provides an ideal opportunity to remind the government of its responsibilities in the fight against climate change.

At the end of the month, leaders of the industrialized world will converge on Canada to participate in the G8 and G20 summits. These meetings are another opportunity, after the failure of the Copenhagen conference negotiations, to recognize the responsibility of their respective countries for the climate crisis. Adopting and attaining specific reduction targets in line with the scientific consensus is a global issue and the main challenge of our times.

These meetings provide the Conservative government with the opportunity to show leadership in the fight against climate change, primarily with respect to adopting credible reduction targets.

We hope that, in this environment week, the Conservative government will transform words into actions. The fight against climate change must be a key part of the G8 and G20 discussions.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today our Conservative government introduced the Eliminating Entitlements for Prisoners Act. This bill will keep prisoners, such as child killer Clifford Olson, from unfairly receiving taxpayer-funded old age benefits.

This is one more measure that our government is taking to put the interests of victims first and ensure fairness for hard-working taxpayers.

Recently, the Bloc Québécois leader shamefully stated that he believes that prisoners who have broken the law should receive these benefits. I hope that the Bloc Québécois will come to its senses, listen to Quebeckers and support this important bill.

Statements by Members

Quebeckers know that the Conservative government alone will ensure that only the seniors who have worked hard and respected the law will receive the benefits they deserve and not prisoners.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL HUNGER AWARENESS DAY

Hon. Ken Dryden (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is National Hunger Awareness Day, a day we hear the statistics of those who go hungry, but statistics do not tell the story, real lives do.

Pregnant mothers who do not have enough to eat are less healthy, are more likely to give birth prematurely, and have kids who are less healthy and less strong. Less healthy, less strong kids do not develop as quickly or as well.

It is as if this is a 100 metre race and the healthier kids begin at the start line, while these kids begin 10 metres behind. To them in their world other kids somehow always seem better and smarter. They are always ahead. Kids with less to eat are sick more often, they miss more school, and they fall further behind.

This is not fair. This is not Canada.

Today, as we think about hunger and its effects on our fellow Canadians, I hope we will also reflect on how as governments, on poverty and hunger, none of us have done very well, and for all of us this remains work undone.

* * *

• (1410)

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week the government House leader raised serious concerns about a lack of fairness and due process during committee proceedings.

The chair of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics has a choice to make. Will he preside over a fair and impartial process that respects procedural fairness and the rules of evidence, or will he play politics and run a kangaroo court?

On Sunday we were shocked to see the committee chair talking on TV about potential rulings he had yet to make. An impartial judge would be embarrassed by such conduct.

Yesterday, the news media were informed that subpoenas had been issued before the subpoenas had even been served. No court of law would issue subpoenas by press release and no judge would place media relations ahead of procedural fairness.

Clearly, this committee chair is more interested in playing politics than in fair play. He should not be surprised then that his actions receive the respect they deserve.

* * *

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I received letters from two young women from

Nelson, B.C., in which they raise the issue of human trafficking in the world.

The letters, written by two sisters, Andrea and Maryn Marsland, talk about the fact that more than 27 million children and adults are trapped in modern slavery throughout the world. In fact, statistics show that an estimated 2.5 million people are in forced labour, including sexual exploitation, at any given time as a result of trafficking. The majority of trafficking victims are between the ages of 18 and 24.

Human trafficking and slavery is made possible whenever poverty and inequality deprive people of the ability to earn a living. It is a profound lack of economic power that leaves many people around the world vulnerable to exploitation by others.

It is imperative that Canada and other developed countries do more to eradicate poverty. We are currently well below the 0.7% GDP level proposed many years ago. Clearly, more needs to be done.

I applaud Maryn and Andrea Marsland for raising this issue and wish them all the very best in their pursuit of social justice in the world.

* * *

ELIMINATING ENTITLEMENTS FOR PRISONERS

Mr. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when Canadians discovered that criminals like Clifford Olson, who brutally murdered 11 children, were receiving taxpayer-funded seniors benefits, they were outraged. I received angry emails and letters from many residents of my riding of Abbotsford.

Our government was equally outraged. The Prime Minister promised to take swift action and today our government fulfilled that promise.

We have introduced the eliminating entitlements for prisoners act. This bill puts an end to the unfair practice of prisoners receiving old age security benefits.

It is yet another way our Conservative government is ensuring fairness for hard-working taxpayers and their families. It is part of our commitment to putting victims first, something that is sadly lacking from the opposition parties.

Canadians can count on our Conservative government to ensure that only hard-working, law-abiding Canadians receive the benefits they deserve.

[Translation]

MUNICIPALITY WEEK

Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this week is Municipality Week in Quebec. This year, the theme is sustainable development. The Government of Quebec launched this event in 1988 to showcase the actions and values that characterize Quebec communities.

Throughout the week, municipalities are invited to organize earth-friendly activities highlighting simple actions, such as recycling and composting, encouraging local providers to donate surplus goods to schools and organizations in their region, encouraging the use of renewable energy, reducing paper consumption, taking advantage of natural light, encouraging people to get to know their local government and highlighting social commitment.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all Quebecers to participate in various events in their communities. Municipal governments hope that these activities will help them get in touch with the people and recognize citizens' contributions to improving community standards of living.

* * *

[English]

DUFF ROBLIN

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to pay tribute to one of Manitoba's and Canada's great statesmen. Duff Roblin served for 18 years in the Manitoba Legislature, nine of those as Premier, and 14 years in the Senate of Canada.

In 2008, a poll of Manitobans declared Mr. Roblin “the Greatest Manitoban”, an extraordinary tribute under any circumstances, and no less extraordinary for a living politician who, over his career, inevitably took decisions that were difficult and controversial.

Of these, perhaps the best known was his early advocacy of a floodway to save Winnipeg from the ravages of the Red River. Initially mocked and derided, the floodway, or Duff's Ditch as we know it, became one of Mr. Roblin's greatest achievements. In his own mind, however, his greatest legacy was his comprehensive reform of the education system in Manitoba.

Duff Roblin was a true progressive Conservative, a man of courage, intelligence and vision. He was, before all else, a remarkable man and a truly great Canadian.

* * *

•(1415)

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's economy is leading the way and growing stronger, thanks to Canada's economic action plan.

Yesterday, Statistics Canada announced that Canada's economy grew by 6.1% in the first quarter of 2010. This represents the strongest quarterly rate of economic growth in a decade.

Oral Questions

Highlights from the quarter showed that consumer spending is up, thanks to our tax relief for Canadian families and that business investment is up, thanks to our strong support for job creation.

Since last July our plan has helped create nearly 285,000 new jobs. Last week the OECD said that Canada's economy shines, and both the OECD and the IMF predict our economic growth will lead all G7 countries both this year and next.

While our plan is helping our country lead the way on jobs and growth, experts say the Liberal leader's tax hikes would kill almost 400,000 jobs. Simply put, Canada just cannot afford the Liberal or the NDP tax and spend approach.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Canada increased interest rates this morning. Canadian families need to tighten their belts, for they are already the most indebted people in the G20.

Instead of helping these families, the government wasted \$1 billion on security for the G8 and G20 summits.

How can the Prime Minister explain his government's incompetence to these struggling Canadian families?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the Bank of Canada took this measure because of Canada's strong economic growth, which has now topped 6%.

As for the costs associated with the G8 and G20 summits, of course everyone would like those costs to be lower, but we will be hosting more delegates at those summits than we did athletes at the Olympic Games. That is the reality. The risks associated with security are higher, and we are determined to protect our guests.

[English]

Hon. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians still cannot understand it. The Olympic Games were nearly three weeks long. This is 72 hours. These are costing more. No one can understand it. The choices here do not make any sense: \$1 billion for security; \$6 billion in tax cuts for corporations that are already profitable.

How does the government explain these choices to hard-pressed Canadian families caught in the mortgage squeeze?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear. Of course, everybody wishes that security costs for these major summits were less. However, the reality is that we have more delegates at these summits than we had athletes at the Olympic Games. It is of enormous scale. The risks are immensely greater. The costs we are incurring are in line with what summits, unfortunately, today cost, and we will make the investments necessary to ensure the full security of the summits.

Oral Questions

Hon. Michael Ignatieff (Leader of the Opposition, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, the Olympics went on for three weeks. This is going on for a weekend. Nobody can understand how the costs got out of control, and nobody can understand how to explain that to Canadians who are facing a mortgage squeeze.

Household debt is already the highest on record. The interest rates will make it harder for Canadians to spend on child care, on training, and on learning. Instead of helping these Canadian families, we have a government that does not know how to manage public money.

Again, I ask the Prime Minister, how does he justify these charges to hard-pressed Canadian families?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the costs of these summits are in line with what summits cost today. This is the reality of the situation. We used the best security expertise to develop our plans. We would be utterly irresponsible, it would be utterly indefensible, if we did anything less than that for the world leaders who are coming to this country and the tens of thousands of people who are accompanying them. That is the truth.

When it comes to economic management, this government has the best growth rate in the developed world because of the policies of this government and because we do not listen to the irresponsible—

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1996, Brian Mulroney denied, under oath, having any business dealings with Karlheinz Schreiber. He claimed that they had a coffee once or twice. What he failed to mention was that his coffee was sweetened with envelopes stuffed with cash.

Justice Oliphant called Mr. Mulroney's testimony patently absurd.

Given Justice Oliphant's report, why has the Conservative government not undertaken legal proceedings to recuperate that \$2.1 million, plus interest, paid to Mr. Mulroney?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we thank Justice Oliphant and all those who worked with him in producing this report.

The report is now with the appropriate authorities, who will study it. The government will respond to any recommendations, indeed, any recommendations, in this area in due course.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians paid Mr. Mulroney \$2.1 million based on testimony that has been called absurd.

Any other citizen would be held accountable. After all, that is taxpayers' money. The same is true for Mr. Mulroney's legal costs, which were paid for by Canadians.

Based on Justice Oliphant's conclusions, will the government ask Mr. Mulroney to also pay back the \$1.6 million, plus interest, that Canadians had to pay in legal fees?

[*English*]

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we did move forward with a public inquiry. The questions were drafted by an independent individual. The recommendations were tabled yesterday. They are now with the appropriate authorities, and we will look at any or all recommendations that come out of that process.

* * *

[*Translation*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, following the Israeli army's assault on a humanitarian flotilla bound for Gaza, the United Nations Security Council called for an impartial, transparent investigation conforming to international standards to shed light on this terrible tragedy. The Security Council also called on Israeli authorities to free the prisoners.

Will the Conservative government wholeheartedly support the UN Security Council's demands?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position is clear. We expect all the parties involved in this incident to come forward with the facts.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is specific. I am asking whether this government, which aspires to sit on the Security Council, will support the Security Council's clear demand for an impartial, transparent investigation conforming to international standards and for the release of prisoners by Israeli authorities.

Will he support the Security Council's demand, yes or no?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, I have answered that question clearly. There was an incident, and we expect all the parties involved in that incident to present the facts in a transparent way.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Pierre Paquette (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney received more than \$2 million in an out-of-court settlement in his libel suit against the Canadian government, maintaining that he did not have any business dealings with arms dealer Karlheinz Schreiber.

Now that we know that Mr. Mulroney lied during pre-trial questioning, will the government undertake legal proceedings to recover the taxpayers' money, even though there is no recommendation about that in the Oliphant report?

Oral Questions

● (1425)

[English]

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are quite a few recommendations, and Justice Oliphant responded to questions that were put to him by an independent individual, Dr. Johnston. The report was just tabled yesterday. The appropriate authorities are having a look at it, and of course, the government will respond in due course.

* * *

*[Translation]***FORMER LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF QUEBEC**

Ms. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, speaking of recovering money, both Quebec's and Canada's auditors general have calculated that former Lieutenant-Governor Lise Thibault racked up \$711,000 in unjustified expenses from budgets made available to her by both governments.

Now that the Government of Quebec is suing the former Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec to recover the money, does the federal government intend to do the same and file its own suit against Mrs. Thibault?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has already taken steps to recover the money that was spent inappropriately. A criminal investigation is under way and Mrs. Thibault is facing criminal charges. We are awaiting the court's ruling, but let us be clear that the federal government has already shown leadership in this matter.

* * *

*[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, following a deadly raid on a convoy of ships off the Gaza coast, we learned that three Canadian citizens appear to have been imprisoned by the Israeli authorities. Has our embassy in Israel made contact with these citizens?

Could the Prime Minister update this House on the whereabouts of these individuals, and can he confirm that they will be repatriated to Canada at the earliest opportunity?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while I obviously do not discuss individual consular cases, the government obviously has full consular access and is providing consular services to these individuals.

* * *

*[Translation]***INTERNATIONAL AID**

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on another topic, with just a fraction of the billion dollars he is spending on the G20, the Prime Minister could fund NGOs that are losing their funding and can no longer help women and children throughout the world.

Is that not what the Prime Minister wanted to do: improve maternal and child health?

So why spend \$1 billion on a summit to discuss the issue, but make cuts to organizations that help women and children on the ground?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, Canada is a very generous country when it comes to humanitarian aid. We now have an initiative to save the lives of mothers and women in developing countries. We are very optimistic and believe that we will receive more funding from the international community to support these efforts.

[English]

Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, CIDA funding for the Canadian Council for International Cooperation is in jeopardy. Just like the cuts to KAIROS and the cuts to so many other NGOs, these are politically motivated and punitive. The cuts will mean that the CCIC's 90 member organizations are going to lose the voice that speaks for them all.

It is a powerful message to the NGO community: "Watch what you say or you are going to lose your funding".

Is that not what this is all about, muzzling the organizations that speak for the world's poor?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, Canada has an extremely generous record when it comes to humanitarian and development aid. In fact, the financing of those activities has been increasing.

I know that CIDA has been undertaking steps to ensure that the money goes to services to help people in developing countries with the challenges in their lives. We want to make sure that those aid dollars are spent as effectively as possible. That is the basis on which money is given to organizations.

* * *

OFFSHORE DRILLING

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has imposed a six-month moratorium on Arctic oil drilling to prevent another oil-spill disaster. Our minister has stuck his head in the sand, pretending that there is no activity going on in our north. He must have misplaced his PMO briefing note about seismic testing at exploration leases.

Inuit groups are calling for public hearings and consultation on a federal proposal to do seismic testing in a planned marine park. Why will the minister not listen to Canadians and suspend oil and gas activities in the Beaufort and Lancaster Sound until a full review is conducted?

● (1430)

[Translation]

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the situation is clear. No authorization has been granted for any drilling in the Beaufort Sea or for deepwater drilling in the Arctic.

Oral Questions

On May 11, the National Energy Board announced plans to review the regulations. The public will be invited to participate. The board will have to apply a strict legal framework under the Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act and related regulations. The industries will have to submit substantial emergency response plans as well as guarantees.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, someone should tell the minister about the economic and ecological disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. Yesterday, the minister admitted that his government had no budget to respond to a spill in Canada. Yet they are fast-tracking exploratory permits in the Beaufort Sea and conducting seismic studies in a marine conservation area.

For the sixth time, why are they refusing to disclose their emergency response plan for oil spills at sea?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is nonsense. The National Energy Board, an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal that has been in place for 50 years, is responsible for oversight including applications, regulations and project management. It can require operators to provide guarantees, emergency response plans and interventions. It can take action at any stage of the process.

It is also holding public consultations and will study what is going on in the Gulf of Mexico so that it can learn more to improve our regulations. They should stop discrediting this independent national organization.

* * *

[English]

MEDICAL ISOTOPES

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, when the supply of medical isotopes was at 10%, Lantheus negotiated a supply deal with Israel to get doctors the isotopes they need to diagnose and treat their patients. This request was turned down by Health Canada.

Could the Minister of Health explain why Health Canada has turned this essential supply down and why two and a half years after this crisis began, we still have yet to have a secure supply of medical isotopes for Canadian patients?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before in the House, we are dealing with a global shortage of TC99. We have been working with the medical community in Canada to look at alternatives to TC99 to mitigate the impact of the global shortage of supply.

We continue to work with the international community and encourage the medical community to apply for a special access program so that the supply of TC99 can be made available in Canada.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a doctor, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Health Canada has a program for health professionals under which all Canadian hospitals can import isotopes from Israel as long as Lantheus, a company accredited by Health Canada, carries out quality control. However, this kind of piecemeal approach is impossible to manage.

Why does the government not issue blanket authorization to import generators from France, as it did in 2008?

[English]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the supply of medical isotopes is a global issue and a challenge for all of us in Canada. We have been working with the international community for a year and a half in looking for alternatives to TC99 and approving products for Canada for TC99 when it is available.

We encourage the medical community to submit an application to Health Canada under the special access program and those applications are reviewed within a matter of days.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFSHORE DRILLING

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the BP drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico did not have a relief well, which has led to catastrophic consequences. To avoid a similar event occurring off the coast of Quebec, the Quebec natural resources minister has asked Newfoundland and Labrador to consider a moratorium on drilling in the Newfoundland sector of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Does the Minister of Natural Resources also intend to write to his Newfoundland and Labrador counterpart urging her to consider a moratorium?

• (1435)

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no applications have been made or authorizations given to date. No applications have been submitted for exploration or drilling in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. My colleague knows perfectly well that the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board is responsible for such matters in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This board has very strict regulations, as does the National Energy Board.

I would remind the House that on May 11 the National Energy Board announced that it would hold hearings and conduct a review to better understand what happened in the Gulf of Mexico. The public will be invited to participate in these hearings to improve our regulations—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Mr. Raynald Blais (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Magdalen Islanders are especially worried about the exploration activities recently announced by Corridor Resources, less than 80 km from the Îles-de-la-Madeleine. The Gulf of Mexico disaster has completely disrupted the way of life of coastal people, especially the fishers.

To prevent a similar situation from occurring here, will the Minister of Natural Resources join his Quebec counterpart and suggest to Newfoundland and Labrador that it declare a moratorium on drilling?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board has not received any drilling applications from Corridor Resources for the Old Harry sector, which my colleague mentioned. Before applying for authorization to drill a well, Corridor Resources must conduct an environmental assessment, apply for an operating licence and obtain approval to drill a well, which it has not yet done.

The board is already tightening up its safety measures, in light of what is happening in the Gulf of Mexico, to improve our regulations, which are the best in the world.

* * *

SECURITIES

Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives apply a double standard to Quebec. When the time comes to require French in the Supreme Court, they will not budge, claiming that it would divide Canada. But when the time comes to create a securities commission, which Quebec opposes, the Conservatives insist on moving forward and say that it is too bad if it divides the country; too bad for Quebec.

Why do ministers and members from Quebec insist on stripping Quebecers of their powers and financial autonomy? Are they non-token Quebecers, perhaps?

[English]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a Canadian securities regulator is the right thing to do to protect Canadians' investments. However, it is voluntary. Any province that wants to join is welcome to.

The reason we are doing this is to protect investors. The main reason we are doing it is to increase investments into this country. No longer should we have 13 different regulatory bodies across the country that slow down and in fact impede investment into this country. We encourage everyone to voluntarily get on board.

[Translation]

Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the coalition goes beyond Quebec, and includes the director of the Capital Markets Institute at the University of Toronto, Jeffrey MacIntosh. All experts agree, from Pierre Lortie to Henri Brun. They are unanimous.

By destroying the passport system and betting on conflicts among the regulatory bodies, the government will, in the process, force issuing companies to get caught up in the tentacles of a Canada-wide commission.

Why does the government not admit that the voluntary approach is nothing but smoke and mirrors and nonsense that just tries to create uncertainty—

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

[English]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the opposite. We are trying to increase certainty for those who want to invest in this country.

Oral Questions

However, I do have to agree with one thing. I guess the coalition that he refers to is growing. The NDP leader said that we are fortunate to have a better structure than some other countries but that there are improvements, like moving toward a national securities regulator. That is from someone within this House who agrees that we should move forward with this.

* * *

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Prime Minister to stand up and tell us, in both official languages, that women are free to choose and that he will never allow a bill to pass if it restricts that right.

He refused to answer and delegated his ministers to again provide a series of evasive responses.

On behalf of Canadian women, I would like to once again repeat my request of the Prime Minister. I would like him to stand up and answer my question in both official languages. Does he not have the courage to do so?

● (1440)

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has reiterated this government's position several times. This government has no interest in reopening this debate. What Canadians are interested in is getting on with our maternal health and child initiative. They want us to work with developing countries to save the lives of millions of women and children.

Instead of having this divisive debate, I encourage the member to work with us to save the lives of women and children.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, their flawed rhetoric will not save the lives of the women that they are condemning. The Conservatives have shifted Canada's development policy. They have refused to include the environment on the G8 agenda, against the advice of the international community.

What right does the Prime Minister have to shift Canada's foreign policy for partisan reasons? It is costing \$1 billion of public money to defend the Conservative Party's interests.

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we do know is that our policy is guided by great advice from people like those with World Vision who tell us that 24,000 children under the age of 5 will die today in the developing world.

Oral Questions

That is why we are focusing the G8 initiative on saving the lives of women and children. We have an historic opportunity. We have an obligation to support these women and children in the developing world, and that is exactly what our government will do.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week was World MS Day, a day to stand in solidarity with two million people worldwide who suffer from multiple sclerosis.

In Canada, patients diagnosed with devastating MS are actually discriminated against and deprived of imaging necessary for diagnosis and treatment of blocked or narrowed veins draining the brain.

Will the minister commit to ending this unfair discrimination and implement a practice that is consistent with charter values?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's question is so far from the truth.

Our government is committed to the health and safety of Canadians. We recognize how difficult it is for people living with this devastating illness. I had a very productive meeting with the MS Society a few weeks ago and we are working together to pull in the research community to deal with this issue, along with the Canadian Institute of Health Research.

Ultimately, at the end of the day, we are both working together to ensure that the procedure that is talked about in the community is safe and effective for all Canadians.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, where is the money? MS patients with a clear obstruction of blood flow from their brains are being denied treatment. They are denied angioplasty, a well-known universally practised procedure. It is not experimental and it is very low risk.

Will the minister explain to those MS patients in the gallery and to tens of thousands across Canada why they are being discriminated against? They are asking for \$10 million, 100 times less than the G8 and G20 boondoggle. Why?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as is the case for all new scientific developments, researchers will conduct further studies to validate these findings and determine their implications for treatment.

As well, when I met with the MS Society, we had a very productive discussion. I am working with the MS Society and the Canadian Institute of Health Research and we are encouraging MS researchers to apply for the available funding in order to further this research and treatment.

Our government has invested \$120 million for this disease.

* * *

ELIMINATING ENTITLEMENTS FOR PRISONERS

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and our government were outraged when we discovered that prisoners, like child killer Clifford Olson, received taxpayer-funded seniors benefits. We committed to

taking swift action to end this practice and today our Conservative government introduced the eliminating entitlements for prisoners act. This bill is yet more proof that our Conservative government follows through on its commitments to Canadians.

Would the minister please tell the House more about this important bill?

● (1445)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased today to table in the House the eliminating entitlements for prisoners act. This bill would put an end to the practice of prisoners, like child killer Clifford Olson, collecting taxpayer-funded old age security benefits.

This bill would ensure fairness for hard-working taxpayers and their families. It is obviously a key part of our government's commitment to putting victims first.

* * *

[Translation]

BILL C-9

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the C-9 dumpster bill includes provisions on a whole range of subjects that have nothing to do with the budget. Among other things, the Conservatives are proposing to sign off on the theft of \$57 billion from the employment insurance fund initiated by the Liberals.

If the government thinks that Canadians agree that it is a good idea to steal employment insurance contributions in order to afford tax cuts for BP and the Royal Bank, then why does it not have the courage to remove this component from Bill C-9 and put it to a separate vote in the House?

[English]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to comment on Bill C-9, a bill that has actually gone through an all party committee of the House that sent it back here for third reading and without amendments.

We have had nearly three months to debate it. There are some very critical pieces in this bill. For example, many provinces have already budgeted for the \$500 million in increased transfer payments that they require to balance their budgets.

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Yes, with their Liberal allies the Conservatives got it through, Mr. Speaker, but the NDP stood and voted against it.

Last year the Conservatives and their faithful Liberal servants joined forces to scrap Canada's 100-year-old Navigable Waters Protection Act. This year, they are teaming up again and future generations will pay the price because meaningful environmental assessment will be a thing of the past.

Yesterday the Minister of the Environment stated that he was reducing environmental assessment because that is what everyone has been asking for.

If the minister truly believes that Canadians want less environmental protection, why does he not have the courage to remove environmental assessments from Bill C-9, the dumpster bill, and submit it to a vote?

Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every year for the last 10 years the premiers and The Council of the Federation—

Mr. Thomas Mulcair: Liar. I was one of those ministers. You're lying.

Hon. Jim Prentice:—have called for a streamlining of the federal environmental assessment process. The External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation called for the same changes in 2004. Last year the Commissioner of the Environment said:

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency should propose to the Minister of the Environment options for resolving serious, long-standing federal coordination issues, including the scoping of projects....

That is what needs to be done and that has been done. Why will the NDP not support this legislation?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the Conservatives were the opposition, they criticized the Liberals for stealing from the employment insurance fund. With Bill C-9, the Conservatives are getting ready to condone this theft by wiping the slate clean and simply erasing the \$57 billion belonging to contributors.

Does the government realize that Bill C-9 condones looting the employment insurance fund, something the Conservatives criticized when they were the opposition?

[*English*]

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again I would like to reiterate how important Bill C-9 is. We had good news just yesterday. The GDP grew by 6.1% in the first quarter. Why is that? It is because this Conservative government put in an economic action plan last year and part two this year. We are trying to get money out to Canadians to save jobs and build new jobs, and the opposition does nothing but stand in the way of that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Lessard (Chambly—Borduas, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while the Conservative government is condoning looting the employment insurance fund, we are still waiting for an overhaul of the employment insurance system. By the end of the year, four pilot projects and a temporary measure will come to an end. We need to make these improvements permanent.

Oral Questions

What is the government waiting for to reform the employment insurance system instead of using money belonging to the unemployed for other purposes?

● (1450)

Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government delivered the goods when we were in a recession and when the unemployed needed us and our support. We implemented a number of different measures to support workers who were losing their jobs and who needed additional employment insurance benefits.

That party voted against those measures every time and now they are asking us to extend them. What is their rationale?

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL AID

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is gone. The Canadian Council for International Cooperation, one of the most respected and cost-effective humanitarian agencies in Canada is gone. It is gone because it dared to criticize that anti-democratic government. It is gone like KAIROS, gone like Rights & Democracy and other voices that have been silenced by de-funding and slander. Even school children dare not ask the Prime Minister an unscripted question. So what is it: democracy or a dictatorship?

Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear that this government ensures that its international development and aid is going to really make a difference in the lives of those living in developing countries. We do it by ensuring that we are accountable, but we also do it by ensuring that those initiatives we support show results and actually make a difference.

I met with a young lady today who is making a difference by raising money, and we are supporting her, for paying teachers in Afghanistan. That is the kind of support Canadians—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, CCIC represents the voices of 100 charitable and humanitarian organizations, not one person. It is gone because it recently released a report showing that the Conservative government does not follow Canada's own law regarding aid. It joins an ever growing list of respected humanitarian organizations on the chopping block: KAIROS, Rights & Democracy, and now CCIC. It is a chill kill. Is it the government's policy to silence opposition by killing the funding?

Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear that actually the proposal before CIDA by CCIC is still under review. Consequently, all I can do is respond that our government is using its international aid and development support responsibly so that we can make a difference in the lives of those living in developing countries.

It was a Liberal dominated Senate that put out a report before we came to government which said to change our aid assistance programs, make them effective, make them show results. That is what we are doing.

*Oral Questions***ETHICS**

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 1997 Canadian taxpayers paid Brian Mulroney \$2 million because he said that this House sullied his good name. The Oliphant report is very clear. It says Mulroney's claims are "patently absurd". Quite simply, the former prime minister lied. He got envelopes stuffed with cash from Schreiber and then he picked up \$2 million from the taxpayers on the way out.

Why will the government not send a clear message that Mulroney lied and we want our money back?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has certainly taken appropriate action. There was a public inquiry. A number of recommendations were tabled yesterday. Those recommendations are being looked at by the appropriate authorities, and any recommendations from the groups that are looking at it or anybody else of course will be taken into consideration.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the record of the ShamWow minister from Muskoka. He used his role as a minister of the Crown to hawk cleaning products. He handed out untendered contracts and patronage appointments to his cleaning buddies. Now we find out that he has siphoned \$50 million out of the \$1 billion boondoggle for pork-barrel projects.

It is a question of credibility, it is a question of judgment and it is a question of ethics. Does the government have no sense of right or wrong, or is it simply using the old Mulroney playbook?

• (1455)

Mr. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, regarding the preamble to the member's question, of course nothing could be further from the truth. The minister was very clear yesterday that there was no financial interest, no conflict.

Let me talk about something that is actually relevant to Canadians. Since last July, our economic action plan has resulted in 285,000 new jobs and an astonishing 6.1% economic growth rate in the first quarter of this year.

* * *

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that Canada's economy grew by 6.1% in the first quarter, the largest growth in a decade.

Canadians demand strong economic stewardship from their government, and it is this Conservative government that has delivered. When the Canadian auto sector was hit hard by the global economic downturn, it was this government that stood by its side, and that support has paid off.

Could the Minister of Industry please inform the House of the announcement General Motors made just this morning?

Mr. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Minister of Industry is in St. Catharines, Ontario today to join GM in announcing a new \$245 million investment in its St.

Catharines powertrain facility. This builds upon another recent announcement of \$235 million to support next generation engine production.

This new investment will secure 400 jobs. That is 100 more jobs than outlined in GM's restructuring commitment.

This is yet another sign that the government's support for the auto sector has helped it emerge from this economic downturn stronger and more competitive than ever.

* * *

G8 AND G20 SUMMITS

Mr. Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, incredibly the government has mismanaged its way to a \$1.3 billion price tag for this G20 summit, and it is still not covering many of the basic costs.

The City of Toronto urged the government to move the summit location, reduce disruptions and costs and possible damage. It refused to do this. Now the city has to act to ensure safety, removing 1,000 pieces of street furniture, dedicating staff at a cost of \$20 million.

I have a basic question. Will the government respect and fully compensate Toronto for costs devoted to the summit and protest-related damages to city businesses? Will it do that?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government will always treat the people of Toronto fairly. For years the people of Toronto lacked infrastructure funding. For years the people of Toronto lacked funding to support their public transit. This government has shown unprecedented commitment to the people of Toronto, whether it is in the area of public transit, whether it is municipal infrastructure, whether it is not just making the gas tax permanent, but doubling it for them.

We are very pleased to do that and we will continue to stand up for Toronto.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Ms. Johanne Deschamps (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 2008, the former president of CIDA, Robert Greenhill, referred to the Canadian Council for International Co-operation—the CCIC—as a key partner. Today, the CCIC cannot even get a response from the Minister of International Cooperation regarding the renewal of their funding agreement.

Can the minister explain why she is dragging her feet on renewing funding for the CCIC, an organization that does such excellent work?

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said, the proposal is under review by CIDA, but this does give me the opportunity to remind the member that because of our good fiscal management and growth, we are coming out of the recession.

However, the global economic recession has had an impact on developing countries. It has put over a billion people into hunger and extreme poverty.

That is why we have to make sure that our international development money is going to get results, is going to make a difference for those people who are living in extreme poverty.

* * *

HEALTH

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, victims and families of the hepatitis C tainted blood catastrophe are being told that their approved compensation claims cannot be paid because the settlement pool of funds has run dry. These people have been through enough, but the minister is just throwing up her hands and saying it is not her problem. She is trying to shift the blame to the fund's administrators, but she knows that they cannot do anything until the government either allows the transfer of funds or ponies up more cash.

Will the minister accept responsibility for this file and finally stand up for the victims of hepatitis C?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2006 our government did stand up for the victims of hepatitis C and announced a \$1 billion trust fund to compensate those individuals.

The way I understand the program is that this is a court-ordered organization, established through the courts, and there are two sets of funds. If the victims of hep C want to pursue the compensation for lost wages, their lawyers are to contact Crawford & Company to make the changes through the courts, because this is independent. It is a court-ordered change and the individuals should be contacting their lawyers and Crawford & Company.

* * *

• (1500)

THE ECONOMY

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, praise for Canada's economy keeps coming in from around the world. The influential *The Economist* magazine calls Canada "an economic star". The OECD agreed, saying that Canada's economy "shines". Both it and the IMF predict Canada's economic growth will lead the G7 this year and next.

Could the parliamentary secretary please update the House as to why such praise for Canada's economy is absolutely warranted?

Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, indeed in the first quarter of 2010, Canada's economy grew by 6.1%. Not only is that the strongest quarterly growth rate in a decade, it is the strongest first quarter in all of the G7 countries.

What does that mean to Canadians? It means the economy is growing stronger, Canada's economic action plan is working and jobs are being created, in fact 285,000 new jobs since July of last year.

We are on the right track.

* * *

G8 AND G20 SUMMITS

Mr. Gerard Kennedy (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the G20 summit, the federal government has given us another demonstration of how it is mismanaging this country.

Despite the \$1.3 billion incredible price tag, it is sticking Toronto businesses with the cost of losses related to the summit. Unless businesses stay completely open and fully staffed, incurring unnecessary costs, the government will not compensate them at all, not a nickel for lost earnings.

As usual, the government's idea of partnership with cities is "Do it my way". Why is the government sticking it to Toronto residents and businesses? Why is the city of Toronto left holding the bag for the government's incompetence?

Hon. Lawrence Cannon (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is not legally bound to pay compensation for losses suffered as a result of international meetings. Nonetheless, there are precedents where compensation has been provided to those impacted by extraordinary security measures.

The policy in place is fair and has been effective in the past. It is the same policy that was in place for le Sommet des Amériques in Quebec City, the summit in Kananaskis, as well as at La Francophonie. The assessment of all claims will be made in close co-operation with Audit Services Canada.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Armenia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Doug Horner, Deputy Premier of Alberta, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology and Minister of Liaison to the Canadian Forces.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the Gallery of the Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering winner Gilles Brassard.

Business of Supply

Also with us are the 2010 winners of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Steacie Fellowships and the 2009 Howard Alper, Brockhouse, Polyani and André Hamer Prizes.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: I invite all members to a reception in room 216-N following question period today.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Given the fact that the NDP is at the far end of the chamber, I know sometimes it is difficult for you to hear. However, very clearly, during an exchange in question period, when the member for Outremont asked the Minister of the Environment a question, he was heard to yell, at least twice, “liar”.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, that type of language is unparliamentary and is not allowed. Because of your distance from the NDP, if you wanted to consult with our chamber's top cop, the Sergeant-at-Arms, he was sitting right there. I am sure he heard what was said and he can authenticate that the member for Outremont should stand in his place and apologize sincerely to the Minister of the Environment and to the government for using such unparliamentary language.

•(1505)

The Speaker: Although I recognized the hon. government House leader because he was rising on a point of order, I did hear words that sounded like that. I have checked and, indeed, those were the words.

[*Translation*]

I therefore ask that the hon. member for Outremont withdraw his words immediately.

[*English*]

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, you do not have to confirm with the Sergeant-at-Arms on this one. I confirm what I said. I was one of the ministers he had the nerve to stand in the House and say that voted in favour of changing our environmental assessments. That is a lie. However, since I am not allowed to call him a liar, I withdraw.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Outremont must withdraw the words immediately, otherwise he will be asked to leave.

[*English*]

Mr. Thomas Mulcair: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the words immediately.

[*Translation*]

I withdraw the words, but I will repeat them outside of this chamber, because what I said is true: he misled the House.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—G8 AND G20 SUMMITS

The Speaker: Before the question period, the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca had the floor. I believe there are 11 minutes remaining in the time allotted for his remarks.

I therefore call upon the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before question period, I said that the government could adopt our plan, a plan that could save the lives of 344,000 women every year who die of largely preventable or treatable causes. Every year eight million children die as a result of preventable or treatable causes.

The key to saving these lives is investing in primary health care, such as providing access to health care workers, basic medications, diagnostics, clean potable water, sanitation, power and a full range of family planning options, including abortion in those countries where it is legal.

The government talks about having a plan, but no one in the country has seen it. The absence of a plan is a worry to all of us. Instead of articulating to the Canadian public and the world about what it is going to do during this moment in time to mobilize the most powerful nations in the world to help those least privileged, the government is saying nothing. It has actually turned on the abortion debate and has used it to obscure the fact that it does not have a plan.

We have given the government a plan and it is a plan that would be supported by many members of the G8. Our country has a chance to do something, yet the government is simply sitting on its hands.

Evidence of the government's mismanagement of this issue is the cost of the G8 and G20 summits of some \$1.2 billion. To put that into perspective, the G20 summit in London, England cost \$30 million. In 2009 the G20 summit in Pittsburgh cost \$18 million for security. Yet these summits are going to cost Canadians \$1.2 billion.

To make it even more graphic, and I hope Canadians are listening to this, the cost of the summits in tax dollars will be \$75 million an hour. The entire security costs of both Pittsburgh and London were less than the amount of money the government will spend in an hour. That is an enormous and shocking revelation. It is a complete waste of taxpayer money and an indication of utter mismanagement on the part of the Conservative government.

To make matters worse, \$50 million has been splashed around in the riding of the Minister of Industry. This money is being used not only for issues relating to what will be going on in Huntsville, but for new roads, trees and other amenities, which have nothing to do with security, nothing to do with putting on this summit.

Business of Supply

Most Canadians are aghast at the fact that the government has chosen not to put any plans forward with respect to the environment. Most Canadians would be shocked to learn that this is the first G8 summit in history where environment ministers have not met in advance to deal with environmental challenges. Nothing has come from the government in this area, perhaps because it has no plan to deal with climate change and the other great challenges we face.

Time and time again, whether it was at the CITES meeting that was held earlier this year, or whether it was at other UN conventions, the government has mentioned no plan to implement what will work. Environment Day is on June 5, but the government has no plan.

In the time I have left I want to reiterate that if the government wants to save the lives of 344,000 women a year who die from five preventable causes, obstructed labour, hemorrhage, eclampsia, sepsis, which is a consequence of septic abortions, it has to invest in primary health care. The way to make this operational is to partner with the World Food Program or partner with UNICEF.

I visited a Médecins sans frontières feeding centre in Mali, the epicentre of a famine that put millions of people's lives at risk. What if the government were to partner with UNICEF and the World Food Program and modify those feeding centres so people could access primary health care, a health care worker, medications, diagnostics, potable water, sanitation? If we did that, we would save millions of people's lives.

The government could also use micronutrients, one of our leading discoveries. Twenty milligrams of zinc twice a week can actually reduce mortality from diarrhea and pneumonia by 50%. That is absolutely shocking.

• (1510)

I encourage the government to take a look at the findings that were released in Vancouver three weeks ago at the Pediatric Academic Societies' meeting. I spoke at that meeting, which hosted 6,000 of the top pediatricians in the world.

At that time, a plan that could save millions of lives was released. They asked why Canada was missing in action in these areas. Why was it not helping to operationalize the research to go from bench to bedside? If we get our known research and operationalize that to bedside, we can save lives. We have this huge array of research at our disposal. For a long time we have known what to do, but we have not done it.

Why is the government not taking this enormous opportunity, this moment in time, to save the lives of nine million people a year? Why is it not using that to articulate and mobilize a plan with our G8 partners to implement that which works? It is quite easy to do.

The other thing is on the issue of HIV-AIDS, which receives short shrift from the government. I remind our viewers that the government has taken the Insite supervised injection program in Vancouver to court to stop what a lower court said, which is Insite saves lives. As a medical therapeutic intervention, it can be used to save lives.

What is the government doing? The government is not embracing the medical science. It is taking this to court to prevent people from accessing a life-saving intervention. That is absolutely bizarre. I have

never heard of a government saying to its citizens that it is going to take people to court to prevent them from having life-saving interventions.

Another program coming out of St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver is the seek and treat program for HIV-AIDS. Dr. Julio Montaner, Dr. Kerr, Dr. Tyndall and others have done groundbreaking work, which I hope will one day receive a Nobel Prize. The program has the financial support of the province of British Columbia. I strongly encourage the federal government, rather than sticking its head in the sand, to embrace this solution.

The members of the team at St. Paul's, once they find out people are HIV positive, they give them antiretroviral medications. That plummets the number of viral particles to such a low level that a person cannot spread the virus. This means if we cover enough people, we will decrease the number of people who are HIV positive. This is better than a vaccine. If we are able to cover between 75% or more of the population, the number of people who are HIV positive will start to decline. If we only have 50% coverage, the numbers of HIV positive people will continue to increase at a rate of 10% per year.

Because of Dr. Montaner's work, we are stopping the transmission of the virus and decreasing the population of HIV positive people. We are a long way off from a vaccine, but this works now. This would stop a virus that kills 2.2 million people a year worldwide.

This has been so effective in our province of British Columbia. Not a single baby, for example, has been born HIV positive. Although the number of women who are HIV positive and pregnant increased, not a single child born was HIV positive. Without treating the mother, the rate of transmission is 40%. If we treat the mother, the chances of a baby being born HIV positive drops down to less than 2%.

This is remarkable work. It is called the HAART, Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy, and it has been so effective in stopping babies from being born HIV positive.

However, do we see any support from the federal government? No. Why is the government not doing this? Why is it not adopting the science rather than following the ideology? Why does it not adopt and embrace that which works, and has been proven to work, to save lives? Why does it not do what is compassionate? From an economic perspective, every \$1 invested in primary care, we invest \$4 in savings in health care and we reduce social costs by \$20 per \$1 invested.

• (1515)

If the government is not willing to work on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, then for heaven's sake, it should listen to its economics. An investment in primary health care will save lives, reduce costs, and improve the ability of countries to get on their feet. The cold, hard reality is that the federal government has shut the door, turned its back, and ignored those interventions that could work.

Business of Supply

It has been suggested that the government will pursue a call for more studies at the G8. This means that it is going to wait while millions of people die. It should be investing in the primary health care interventions that can work. All it needs to do is bring together the G8 countries and ensure that each G8 country takes a leadership role in one of the inputs needed in primary care.

For example, Canada can take the role in providing adequate nutrition including micronutrients. The United States can do the work of training primary health care professionals. The French can take on providing a full array of family planning options, including access to abortion services in those countries where it is safe.

In closing, I want to talk briefly about the abortion issue. I think that all of us respect the fact that we have different views on this matter. This is a personal matter and a moral matter for individuals. However, I cannot for the life of me understand why on earth the government is depriving women in countries abroad from being able to have access to the same rights as women do in Canada.

Why on earth would it prevent women living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where 70% of the women in some villages have been raped, from being able to have safe abortions if that is what they want? As I said earlier in my speech, some of these women are raped at gunpoint. They are raped by soldiers. Some of them are young girls. They are being raped and they get pregnant.

These very young girls get pregnant and if they carry the baby to term and have that child in the areas where they are unable to access adequate medical care, they deliver the baby without care. As a result, they either suffer traumatic injuries to their internal organs or die. That is the reality. All of the counselling services in the world is not going to change that. They do not have access to the primary care services that people need. As a result, they are left with some very stark choices.

I see that my time is up. I would just plead with the government. We have given it a plan. It has a plan. If it adopts the plan that is based on science and facts, it will be able to save nine million lives a year.

• (1520)

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before we were interrupted by question period, the hon. member from the Liberal Party was speaking about maternal health. He went on for quite a while about maternal health. I would like him to give me his opinion on why the Prime Minister of Canada would stick his nose in the maternal health of other countries. Is it because of some ideological idea that he has?

Hon. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, we were very happy that the Prime Minister announced that maternal and child health would be on the agenda at the G8 summit, but he has also said that he “would not reopen the debate” by depriving women and saying that Canada would not fund access to safe abortions in those countries where it is legal.

That is exactly what the Prime Minister is doing. He has opened up the debate. I did not originally think that he was doing this for political gain, but I now have to think that he is doing this for political gain in order to shore up his base in some quarters in Canada. I think that is unfortunate. The Prime Minister is using the

lives of women abroad who do not have access to the basic services we have here.

He is playing Russian roulette with their lives. By depriving them and trying to force the G8 to not deal with access to a full array of family planning options, he is going to be responsible for the deaths of 344,000 women every year. There is also the fact that when a woman dies, half of her children under five also perish. It is a death sentence for her and also a death sentence for half of her children.

I would ask the Prime Minister to look into his heart and ask himself this question. What part of pro-life is that? What part of pro-life is allowing 344,000 women to die every single year from preventable causes? What part of pro-life is having those women's children also perish?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify, out of respect for you and your authority, that I unequivocally withdrew the word I used regarding the Minister of the Environment and I invite him to join me at any time in the hallway to discuss this in front of the microphones.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Outremont.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona.

[*English*]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his presentation today. I know he spoke yesterday as well about electronic health records.

We are talking about \$1 billion here for security for this summit. Clearly, this member is very supportive of the idea of getting services right to the people without having the big conferences that cost \$1 billion in security alone.

I would like to ask the member what he thinks of the idea of having future conferences on a military base, like the one in his own riding of Esquimalt, saving the cost of all the security and using the money for electronic health records or other types of medical research that he has talked about many times in this House?

• (1525)

Hon. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, that is a brilliant suggestion. There are many places that we could hold summits where there is already security apparatus. I would be very pleased in Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca to hold a summit at CFB Esquimalt. It is the 100th anniversary of our navy, I might add, and there are truly outstanding people from Rear-Admiral Tyrone Pile to Capt. Marcel Halle, and the entire team of men and women who serve who would do an outstanding job.

I think the government needs to know that on its watch, with respect to neonatal mortality rates, Canada has fallen from 6th to 22nd in the entire world. That is absolutely shocking. Canada has fallen from 6th to 22nd in neonatal mortality, a precipitous drop on the government's watch.

Business of Supply

The other thing, as I have said before, is that the environment is missing in action at the summit. Part of the reason is that the Prime Minister and his team do not believe that climate change actually exists. They believe it is some form of junk science and are ignoring the facts and the science.

This month, in fact, is an absolutely watershed moment in climate change because the United Nations framework convention on climate change just started in Bonn, Germany this week. This is a watershed moment. The G8 and G20 can also work with the deliberations there to mobilize the world's most powerful nations to implement a plan of action to reduce our carbon footprint in the world.

The government has simply chosen, for the first time in history, not to deal with the environment at a G8 summit. I think Canadians are all very deeply concerned about our environment and should know that the government is actually taking our country and putting it into a corner far away from the other G8 nations. The G8 nations keep asking, "What happened to Canada? Why is Canada rolling back the clock on abortion? Why is Canada not dealing with the environment? Why is Canada now an obstruction, because of the government, on important issues like the environment?"

It is quite shocking. The government has a lot to answer to, but what we are hearing is nothing.

Mr. Jim Maloway: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member a follow-up question.

With this \$1 billion that the government is spending on security, we could provide over 1,200 new hybrid buses for public transit in this country. In fact, we could stop the closure of six prison farms in the country for \$4 million and actually do something positive to rehabilitate criminals in jails.

I would like to ask the member whether he would like to make a comment about what the government is doing with these six very successful long-time prison farms in this country that are going to be closed down as early as the end of June?

Hon. Keith Martin: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. Conrad Black, who knows a thing or two about the justice system in the United States, wrote a scathing article in the *National Post* a few days ago about the government and what it is doing regarding justice. He said it is absolutely appalling. Mr. Conrad Black excoriated the Prime Minister and the Conservative government of Canada for their myopic and destructive actions regarding justice.

All of us support putting the protection of our citizens first and foremost, but we also believe in a balanced judicial system that actually enables us to protect our citizens, rehabilitate people and, most importantly, provide protection and care for victims of crime. However, the government has taken a course of action which has been thrown out in the United States as being destructive and causing more crime and expense.

Tragically, the government is playing on the fears of Canadians, warping, twisting and telling untruths about the situation in Canada, all to get the 42% it needs for a majority. Unfortunately, the cost to Canadians in the long-term will be huge. It will result in more crime, disease and costs.

One small example is drug policy. The government is taking a course in drug policy that is absolutely opposite to what is now happening in the U.S. It is taking the position that President Bush took on drug policy, which was proven to cause more drug use, harm, criminal activity and cost. That is what our government today is doing. It is harming Canadians.

We had better get our heads straight in terms of understanding that this is what is going on so that people will listen to the alternatives, the facts, and the solutions to make Canada a safer place.

● (1530)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Daniel Petit (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to mention that I will be sharing my time with the member for Prince Edward—Hastings.

I am pleased to discuss this very important issue in the House today, because the government takes the safety of Canadians very seriously.

As the Prime Minister has said, in many ways, 2010 is an international year for Canada.

We hosted the world in Vancouver and Whistler for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

And this month, Canada will host summits for the leaders of the G8 and G20 nations. These events are unique and extremely useful opportunities to show what Canada has to offer, and to demonstrate our leadership on issues that are important to Canadians.

These types of events always pose special challenges. When Canada hosts the world, it is responsible for ensuring the safety of the site and of the participants.

Although the right to demonstrate peacefully is fundamental in any democracy, unfortunately, some people try to disrupt high-profile international events, or do even worse.

It is therefore quite a challenge to provide security for events such as the Olympics and the G8 and G20 summits. It is an enormous and unprecedented task to provide security for two events attended by foreign leaders in two different locations for three days.

But Canada can count on some outstanding Canadian partners that did an excellent job on security at the Vancouver Olympics. Certainly, they will be up to the challenge of providing security at the G8 and G20 summits.

We heard about the outstanding job the RCMP is doing as the main organization in charge of security at the summits. I would also like to mention the Canadian Forces' contribution to the many aspects of this highly complex government-wide initiative.

Business of Supply

I would like to start by putting things in context. The government expects the Canadian Forces to demonstrate excellence as they do their job here at home. It also expects them to be a reliable partner in defending North America and to show leadership abroad, as the Canada first defence strategy clearly states.

The Canadian Forces are surpassing these expectations. Just a few months ago, even though they were making final plans for security at the Vancouver games, a huge undertaking if there ever was one, they still managed to quickly bring humanitarian aid to the victims of the disaster in Haiti. At the same time, our Canadian Forces were continuing their operations in Afghanistan and taking part in other missions abroad.

This was possible because Canadian soldiers are consummate professionals. Canada's sailors, soldiers and air personnel represent the best Canada has to offer.

But the government also plays a crucial role by making the necessary investments to provide the Canadian Forces with the resources they need.

Whether we are talking about buying new equipment such as C-17 Globemaster strategic lift aircraft, modernizing and replacing ageing infrastructure or investing in new integrated personnel support centres and other initiatives to look after our personnel, who are the Canadian Forces' most precious resources, the government has made a commitment to implement the Canada first defence strategy, our long-term master plan, which will allow us to provide the Canadian Forces with the personnel, equipment, infrastructure and readiness they need to do their job in the 21st century.

These investments allow the Canadian Forces to perform the task at which they excel—protecting Canadians and Canada's interests.

For example, while Canadian Olympic and Paralympic athletes were setting records on snow and ice, some 4,500 Canadian military personnel were working behind the scenes helping the RCMP and civilian organizations ensure the safety of all those who came to Vancouver to participate in those remarkable games.

The Canadian Forces played a significant and integral role in the security operation, Operation Podium, during the Olympic Games. This operation involved personnel from the navy, the army and the air force, who worked together to ensure that the 10,000 km² area surrounding the site of the games as well as the site itself were safe.

• (1535)

A number of lessons were learned from this experience. The various groups that were mobilized made a concerted effort to ensure that this government-wide security operation during the games was a success.

All aspects of this security operation, from the training and exercises before the games to the way that information was exchanged between the various departments and organizations throughout the games, are being studied and reproduced for the G8 and G20 summits.

The Canadian military is ready to play a similar role in these summits.

Although the size of the summits, each of which will be unique, is similar to the Vancouver Games, there are important differences. For example, the games took place in a generally festive atmosphere, whereas the summits are more serious political events.

In the past, events of this type have been met with large protests that have sometimes resulted in violence.

As well, the participants at the summits—the leaders and their delegations—will outnumber the participants at the Vancouver Games. Although the RCMP is doing an incredible job managing the security operations for the G8 and G20, it cannot do everything by itself.

The RCMP asked the Canadian Forces for help so that the government could draw on more security resources. The navy, the army and the air force will provide unique military resources and capabilities to ensure the security of the two summit locations as part of operation Cadence 2010.

The Canadian Forces will make their large-scale operational planning skills available to the RCMP.

They will also conduct land and air surveillance, ensure water safety, transport visiting leaders and their staff and carry out some logistic and ceremonial functions.

As was the case during the Olympic Games, the military contribution will draw on the partnership between the Canadian Forces and the United States Armed Forces set out in the bilateral North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD.

The Canadian Forces will contribute personnel to the security operation during the G8 and G20 summits and will deploy required equipment to provide security for activities in Huntsville and Toronto.

The military contribution to this large-scale operation will ensure the security of foreign leaders and their entourages, as well as that of everyone participating in these crucial events.

In conclusion, the 2010 G8 and G20 summits provide an excellent opportunity for Canada to make a useful contribution to discussions among foreign leaders about global issues that affect us all.

Canada will be in the foreground, demonstrating leadership on the world stage and promoting the values it holds dear, such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The Canadian Forces will support the RCMP and civilian organizations by working behind the scenes to keep both summits safe and secure.

Providing security during this kind of large-scale international event is just one aspect of the Canadian Forces' mandate here at home. The Canadian Forces are well-equipped to provide unequalled support for security at the G8 and G20 summits because the government committed to giving them the tools and support they need.

That is why I cannot support the motion before the House.

Business of Supply

[English]

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the parliamentary secretary. As much as we have a lot of latitude and it is wonderful when we stand up to speak, we do not necessarily have to talk about the subject.

He talked a lot about the military, its services and the proud record that it has. However, I am sure he is well aware of two things, the first one being how the government is draining our military. It is tying up frigates and some are being mothballed. We do not have money to operate them or for gas. The other day we found out that of one of our soldiers who is serving in Afghanistan cannot get medical benefits for his child who has asthma. Where is the government's pride in our military?

The member talked about the service that our military will be offering, so why would the cost not be less given that the military is there and it has a role to play in Canada? Military personnel earn their income by being part of the military forces and, as such, they do one duty when we do not have a summit. With the summit, the forces will provide some of the services that the member talked about. Would he not think that the cost would then be lower as opposed to exorbitant the way they are?

• (1540)

[Translation]

Mr. Daniel Petit: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I will answer my hon. colleague's question. Indeed, our armed forces are paid all year long, 12 months a year. I would point out that in my speech, I mentioned that we have given the Canadian Forces the resources they need, which the Liberal Party failed to do for the 13 years it was in power. It sent soldiers into Afghanistan with completely outdated equipment, while we have made every effort to provide soldiers in Afghanistan, and elsewhere I might add, with the equipment they deserve.

[English]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are clearly talking about a government that is setting up a conference in an urban environment and spending \$1 billion on security. When the world economy is in a recession and the government is running a record \$57 billion deficit, this is not the time to be spending this kind of money on security when other alternatives are available.

The member talked about the military. Why did the Conservatives not have the foresight to find a secure military facility where they would not have to disrupt an urban environment like Toronto with businesses that will lose money and there are the added risks? Why are they doing what is obviously not a good idea? Why could they not have had a better and simpler solution and saved a lot of money in the process?

[Translation]

Mr. Daniel Petit: Mr. Speaker, I think Toronto has the right to host summits, just like any other city. Otherwise, it would mean undermining the capacity and the strengths of Toronto, Canada's largest city. I think it has the right to host this summit. Anyone who is against Toronto should not be sitting in this House.

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite missed the point. The question was clear: why did

they choose such a big site? Why did they not choose another site that is easy to protect, instead of a downtown, urban environment? That is the first thing.

The second thing is that the Canadian Forces did not have enough money for their ships and frigates. This is just an excuse to divert money to the armed forces so that they can continue putting fuel in their frigates. Am I right? That is my question for the hon. member.

Mr. Daniel Petit: Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the hon. member that we are not diverting funds. This money is needed to protect the visitors. When my colleague has guests at home, he has to protect them and ensure that they return home safely. If my colleague does not understand that, then there is not much I can do about it.

[English]

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government is proud that really, in an unprecedented fashion, Canada is going to be hosting two back-to-back summits of world leaders in just a few weeks' time.

Our government remains focused on the economy, which really is the priority. It welcomes this opportunity for Canada to demonstrate its leadership on the international stage and to work with its G8 and G20 partners to develop credible and durable solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges.

The theme for the Muskoka 2010 G8 summit and the G20 summit really is recovery and new beginnings, because that is where we are in this world today. Under this theme, in Toronto, the G20 will focus on restoring the global economy to a sound footing. In Muskoka, Canada will work with its G8 partners to address the most pressing developments and peace and security challenges. While I appreciate that costs are of interest to this House and our taxpayers, and I can certainly assure my colleagues that it is an important priority for the citizens I represent in Prince Edward—Hastings, I think it is important that we take an opportunity to remind members, Canada, and the world that these priorities are real for our upcoming summit.

The global economy, we all recognize, is in the midst of recovering from the first synchronized global recession since the Great Depression. Canada is planning to deliver a focused agenda that will follow through on the critically important promises made by G20 leaders when they met in Pittsburgh last fall. It is a follow-up to ensure a full recovery and to lay the foundation for future prosperity and growth. Without future prosperity and growth, we do not have a future.

Coordinated actions by Canada and the G20 partners have helped to ease the impact of the economic crisis on workers and businesses around the world and have helped to accelerate recovery. Because of these actions, conditions are now improving here at home and in many other countries.

Business of Supply

However, we have to be mindful that this recovery is still fragile, and unemployment remains at clearly unacceptable levels. There are also concerns that unsustainable fiscal balance sheets in a number of advanced economies, such as in the PIGS—Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain—could derail the recovery and weaken long-term growth. At the Toronto G20 summit, Canada will work with world leaders to ensure a full recovery and to lay the foundation for future prosperity and growth.

This government's first priority at the G20 is to ensure that it follows through on its shared responsibility to steer the global economy out of the recession and to build a stronger global economy that is rooted in sustainable growth and prosperity for all. To do this, G20 members will need to continue to fully implement stimulus measures until recovery becomes more entrenched. However, once stimulus is implemented, it is important that countries around the world act quickly to restore their public finances. Our government is already on track. It is laying out a clear and credible plan to restore fiscal balance in budget 2010. In Toronto, we will encourage our G20 partners to do the same.

Our second priority for Toronto is to make real progress in implementing the framework for strong, sustainable, and balanced growth, which was launched at the Pittsburgh G20 summit. The framework is a key mechanism for the G20's shared economic co-operation going forward. The framework is a tool that will help the G20 set common economic objectives and assess our respective fiscal, monetary, and structural policies to ensure that they are consistent with our collective goals.

With the support of the international financial institutions, G20 members have completed the initial phase of a mutual assessment of their national and regional policy frameworks and programs and of the projections underneath those frameworks. In Toronto, leaders will need to agree, and we all know that this is not a simple job, on a common diagnosis of the challenges facing the G20 as we attempt to achieve our shared objective of strong, sustainable, and balanced growth. Leaders will also need to agree on a broad set of policies to address these challenges and on steps for co-operation under the framework.

A third priority for Toronto will be to ensure that progress is made in implementing past commitments to financial and regulatory—

• (1545)

Mr. Jim Maloway: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to rise on a point of order, but the member is a parliamentary secretary. I just think that his reference to Portugal, Ireland, Greece, and Spain as PIGS is not really appropriate. I would ask him to retract that.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is not, in fact, a parliamentary secretary, but I will allow him to respond.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, it is just a reference that I have heard and read on many occasions in national news, in business editorials, and in magazines. I just thought it was clearly an acronym that was acceptable. If the member does not feel that it is acceptable, I would certainly go along with that.

Mr. John Cannis: Mr. Speaker, for the sake of this honourable House, just for clarification, the term “PIGS” is the first letter of each country—Portugal, Ireland, Greece, and Spain. I believe that the member did not mean anything dishonourable.

• (1550)

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair takes that at face value and takes that explanation to be appropriate.

The hon. member for Prince Edward—Hastings.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member across for his consideration and courtesy on that matter.

Progress in this area will ensure transparency in the marketplace. It will help link risk and performance, and it will reward and encourage a culture of prudent behaviour that is focused on the long term.

Our fourth priority for Toronto is to keep markets open to trade and investment. Since we are a global economy, unless there is international currency and unless it flows across the globe, things will not work. Investment will not happen. Jobs will not be created. Families will not have the means to survive. Open markets contribute to both national and global prosperity. They have facilitated the growing prosperity of this and past generations for as long, certainly, as I can remember and for generations before us from our forefathers.

Major economies have a responsibility to take concrete measures to actively promote trade liberalization and to encourage investment, or we risk losing these gains in prosperity. Canada is leading by example. We are eliminating tariffs on all manufacturing inputs, machinery, and equipment, which will ultimately make Canada a tariff-free zone for manufacturers. There are several in my riding who are taking advantage of this and the deferred capital cost writeoffs. There is certainly a gain. This is something that can be applied universally around the globe in other areas. These are obviously arguments that will be presented at the G20.

This government has also taken steps to liberalize trade through bilateral agreements and has reduced restrictions on foreign investment.

Our fifth priority for Toronto is to advance the G20's work on quota and other reforms at international financial institutions, including, of course, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and so on. The international financial institutions play an important role in supporting growth and development and in reducing poverty. The reforms being pushed forward by the G20 will increase the legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness of these institutions and will ensure that they are adequately financed.

Finally, in Toronto, G20 leaders will also discuss the important goal of achieving debt relief for Haiti.

Now I would like to turn to our priorities for the Muskoka G8 summit that Canada will be hosting June 25-26. We are certainly proud to host this Muskoka summit. As G8 president, we will advance a very pragmatic and results-driven agenda that follows up on our past G8 commitments and sets focused goals for G8 leadership going forward. It is about the past, present, and future.

Business of Supply

At Muskoka, we will focus on two areas: development and international peace and security. These issues are central to the values and interests of G8 members. They are areas in which the G8 has had an enduring role to play.

On development, as members are aware, Canada is championing a major initiative to improve maternal, newborn, and child health in developing countries. We believe that the G8 members can make a tangible difference, some in different manners, and we will make this a top priority of our Muskoka G8 summit. The statistics are staggering. Each year, nearly nine million young people die before they turn five. On maternal mortality, between 340,000 and 530,000 women die in pregnancy and childbirth annually, with 99% of these deaths occurring in developing countries. Many of these deaths can be prevented by strengthening the health systems and by improving women's access to health care and to trained health workers.

In addition, ensuring better nutrition for mothers and children and supporting the prevention and treatment of diseases and illnesses, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, pneumonia, and diarrhea, can contribute to making progress on maternal, newborn, and child health. We have had a tremendous amount of support from around the world for this initiative. It is something that we have to work on collaboratively to provide results for people.

Of course, there is security. Security planning has unfortunately been a fact of life since 9/11, dramatically so. That is why we have worked with security experts to develop this comprehensive security plan. As we have heard from experts, proper security does come with a cost. John Kirton, director of the G8 Research Group at the University of Toronto, said, "If you want to be at the G8 table, you can't go to the washroom when the bill comes". That is the truth, and the cost for these two summits are more or less within the range of what G8 and G20 summits in the past have been costing.

I can say that we are on target. We have listened to security experts, and we have budgeted for the costs. Unlike the Liberal leader, who said that he was embarrassed that we were holding these summits, I believe that our party and most members of the House are proud that we are. We are proud that we have a role to play.

At two back-to-back summits in Muskoka and Toronto, we will welcome the world.

• (1555)

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from Prince Edward—Hastings referred to the leader. I do not think that is what the Liberal leader said. However, we do know what the Prime Minister said when he talked about being embarrassed for Canada when we chose not to go to war in Iraq with the United States. In Canada, our history speaks for itself.

The hon. member talked about trade liberalization. I support that. We have to go out there and get our share of the market. He talked about security. He talked about what we are doing in third world countries, and I agree with him.

He comes from one of the most beautiful parts of the province, of the country. It has a tourist industry. The area he comes from needs to be protected. The environmental issues are so important. I have not once heard anybody on the government side talk about bringing environmental issues to the summit.

Canada is spending \$1.1 billion or \$1.2 billion. Why are we not talking about the environment?

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, I am certainly pleased that the hon. member appreciates the benefits of the riding of Prince Edward—Hastings and all the wonderful tourism potential it has to offer. I would welcome him down any time. Perhaps we could share a glass of lemonade over the summer, and he could experience it first hand.

On his question, clearly, the G20 is a follow-up to the Pittsburgh summit. The Pittsburgh summit was basically put in place to deal with the severe dramatic economic circumstances of this recessionary period. Clearly, the G20 is a follow-up to that, with the same priority, since we know that we have not escaped from the dramatic impact of this financial downturn. There has to be a way of moving forward. Whether it is an economic situation, an environmental situation, or a national defence situation, it still comes around to the fact that we need an economic base to survive. It is basically the genesis of the entire process.

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a friend who lives in Aurora, a gentleman by the name of David Brandon, who spent some time working in the country of Indonesia. One of the things he always said to us was that in resolving conflicts, resolving problems, the Indonesian people believe that a person needs to meet four eyes. That is the term they use.

I wonder if the member could tell us the importance of having the members of the G8 and the G20 countries meeting face to face to discuss these issues.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, I will simplify my answer by suggesting that this is a question that all of us in the House could share, regardless of the side of the House on which we sit.

A lot of times we do not know one another. We have an opinion based either on philosophy or on a few words exchanged across the House. However, when we have the opportunity to go out to socialize, to fraternize, or to work together on a cohesive goal, whether it be a parliamentary association or so on, we understand one another and are finally able to move forward collectively with a passion and a purpose.

Quite honestly, I believe that when we take that to the ultimate level, with thousands of senior mandarins from all of the countries and all the particular leaders, and we establish that eyeball to eyeball contact and see that body language that is so important, we can have a further understanding.

I accompanied the Prime Minister on his trip to China, where, quite honestly, our trade balance was not where we wanted it to be. After brief meetings with President Hu, we have enabled over \$1 billion in trade with China over this last three months. That is a result of that personal meeting.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, nobody on this side of the House is questioning the need to have these conferences and to meet face to face. That is not the question.

If the tables were turned, and the Liberals were in government right now, and they were putting on a conference in downtown Toronto with a security bill of \$930 million or almost \$1 billion, the Conservatives would be going crazy. There is no question in my mind about that.

Business of Supply

Why do the Conservatives not just admit that they made a mistake and promise to do better in the future?

• (1600)

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, quite honestly, if it were 25 years ago, I might even agree with the member opposite.

However, the fact is that times and things have changed. We live in a new world. We live in a world where, quite frankly, we are not appreciative of the changes. We live in a world where we are all under threat, under duress, and where terrorism, in many cases, has become a norm. Quite frankly, that puts a lot of trials and tribulations and pressure on everything from forces to—

The Deputy Speaker: I will have to stop the member there because the time has expired for questions and comments.

We will resume debate with the hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member for Prince Edward—Hastings talked about is so true. We live in a new world, and Liberals were in government at the beginning of the new world we live in. At that time, it was under Jean Chrétien and then Paul Martin. With that new world that the member talked about came a lot more responsibilities, and obviously costs, but somehow we managed them.

The unfortunate part, though, is that when we had to take those steps, there was the Reform Party, as they were then known, and there was criticism, negativity, anti- this and anti- that. Today, I am very pleased because we are hearing comments that we have to deal with the world, we have to spend money, and we have to go to conferences.

When the Liberals planned to go to conferences, to world trade summits or the G8 or G20 that was initiated by a Liberal former prime minister, Paul Martin, the members opposite were negative. They said we should not be there. So I am pleased that the Conservatives have turned around. Now they can speak as a government. The ones who do not have to make decisions, such as the NDP, can say anything they want to Canadians, knowing they never have to deliver. Nevertheless, the Conservatives now have a taste of what it is like to make responsible decisions.

Throughout the day I was listening to the debate and decided I did not want a prepared text, that I would select a few comments from different members who have spoken and add my observations and comments. Before I do, I briefly want to read for the record the Liberal motion for the day, which states:

That, in the opinion of the House, while Canadians are justifiably proud—

We stressed that because earlier a member from the government side said, “We are proud to showcase our country”. I support that statement. So we should.

—of Canada's upcoming hosting of the G-8 and G-20 summits and determined to provide effective and efficient security for the visiting world leaders, they are outraged at the reckless partisan choices and financial mismanagement that have caused the security budget for the summits to skyrocket to over \$1 billion

I will not read the entire motion, but certainly it compares the security costs for the 2010 Winter Olympics, which lasted 17 days and cost the same money. These summits are a three-day event, I say to Canadians, that is going to cost us, the government says, \$1.1

billion, and there is a contingency included. Earlier today, one of the Conservative members talked about a contingency plan, which I will address in a minute, which guarantees Canadians that it will exceed that \$1.1 billion.

What does that mean? It means the government is going to be spending over \$400 million a day. That is mind-boggling. There was discussion about the trade with China that the hon. member brought up. That is wiped out in three days. Where is the benefit? There is zero benefit. If anything, it is costing us money.

The member for Brant earlier today talked about contingency funds built in. When Liberals were in government, the way we made our country number one, the way the Conservatives inherited the best country in the world, \$13.2 billion in surplus, a balanced budget and the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio was because we had a contingency plan for a rainy day, which was \$3 billion. If that money was not used, it went straight to debt repayment.

The way the Conservatives manage the economy, they eliminated the contingency plan. In their budget preparations, there is no contingency plan. When the world, never mind Canadians, was telling the Prime Minister and the Conservative government three or four years ago that we are headed into troubled and difficult times, their attitude was no, we are fine, do not worry, be happy, there is no recession, nothing is happening.

• (1605)

We know what has happened today. Hundreds of thousands of jobs were lost. Are these summits good? Absolutely.

The hon. gentleman talked about this as a spinoff from the Pittsburgh summit. I agree. Part of the Pittsburgh summit was about how to get economic order moving, how to get countries working. That is why I brought up the environment, because today everybody is talking about the green economy. Everybody is talking about investing in new ways, more efficient ways, more effective ways, and more cost-effective ways of running our households and our cars. We have to make an investment in these new technologies to benefit future generations and for the beautiful riding of Prince Edward—Hastings to be environmentally sound, which I know it is today, and all others, whether it is the Rouge Valley system in my neck of the woods in Scarborough or whether it is High Park in Toronto, or wherever it is.

I am very disappointed that there is nothing to address the environmental issues. I understand why, because the last time there was an environmental conference worldwide, the environment minister who is the Minister of Transport today did not want to show up. As a matter of fact, the conference did not want him there, because he did not have anything to say.

The government has totally abrogated its responsibilities when it comes to the environment. I believe and my party believes that there is a future industry in the green economy. President Obama, for example, talks about investing in the green economy. All the other world leaders are talking about investing in the green economy. Rahim Jaffer is talking about the green economy. It is to create jobs. That is the environment. That falls under the envelope called “the environment”.

Business of Supply

This summit is a disappointment to each and every Canadian who cares about smog, who cares about a clean environment, who cares about an environmentally friendly Canada. They have been tossed aside.

This summit started off with a budget of \$175 million or \$180 million. All of a sudden, it just ballooned. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice spoke earlier about our military. He said that the Liberals took away all the money, that the military had no money to buy new equipment, that we did that.

Let me just say to the member, because he is a new member, that at least I can say I have the benefit of having been around here 17 or 18 years and have had the great privilege of being the chairman of the national defence committee and veterans affairs. If anybody was there witnessing it, it was me.

On the floor of this hon. House, I asked General Hillier and the minister of defence at that time about the \$14 billion in new equipment that was being talked about. I asked if it was new money, plus the \$14 billion from the Liberal budget that they inherited, for a total of \$28 billion. After three tries, he said it was the \$14 billion allocated by the Liberal government. That is where the money should have come from for new equipment.

When the member made that statement, I will say respectfully, it was intellectually not true, just for the record and for Canadians to know.

Today, when we do not have moneys to pay benefits for a sick child who is suffering with asthma and we do not have the money to have our frigates or our submarines working and we store them, or we do not have the money to replace propellers, they have been in government four and a half years. They did not just take over yesterday. So they talk a good story.

That is what I am worried about with this summit, that there is a lot of talk, but when the government gets behind closed doors, is it really going to be in there fighting for Canada? We do not believe so, given the history, given what has happened in the past.

The government has misled Canadians in many ways. It has manipulated the messaging. It has been misleading Canadians. It has been manoeuvring, misstating and misrepresenting. As a result, the government has been mismanaging the economy. But enough of the letter M words; we will go to another part of the dictionary.

How has the government been misleading Canadians? It has been misleading Canadians in terms of the deficits and in terms of raising taxes. I will give one example. When the government brought its budget in a couple of years ago, it said it would lower taxes. The lowest tax bracket with the Liberals was at 15%. The Conservatives increased it to 15.5% and called it a tax decrease. Then they talked about EI.

• (1610)

In order for the economy to prosper, we cannot tax employers. What is the first thing the government is doing? According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, it is raising over \$13 billion in employer-employee taxing. As a former employer, I say that would have cost me more money for my deduction as an employer, and of course, less money for my employee's pocket. Yet

it is not raising taxes. If that is not misleading Canadians, I do not know what to say.

They have obviously misled Canadians, as they misled Canadians on the gun registry, for example. The member for Portage—Lisgar made defamatory statements towards Toronto Chief of Police Bill Blair, who is a decent man, a good man, who calls it as he sees it, who calls a spade a spade.

I call on that hon. member to do the right thing and apologize to Chief Blair, because we know that the gun registry does not cost the \$1 billion or \$2 billion. Every time the government stands up, it is a different figure.

That is why we cannot trust the government going to the summit. It is always misstating the facts. We now know that it costs \$4 million a year. We also know that it hid that report supporting the registry until after the vote. If that is not misleading Canadians, I do not know what is.

Earlier today, the hard-working member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour spoke. He gave us some examples of what we could do with some of the moneys.

My good friend from Sydney—Victoria, the hon. Liberal member, gave one example. He talked about the dredging that needs to be done in Sydney Harbour. He said that just 15 minutes of that conference would pay for half of the cleanup, and 30 minutes would wipe everything out. That is about \$38 million.

As a member of the Greek community in Toronto, I say that one minute of that conference cost would help complete the Hellenic Cultural Centre, the first one, in its centennial year. Maybe the government will consider that.

The member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour gave us some examples of what \$1 billion could do. He talked about how we could support children in need, for example. He had a report that indicated that the national child benefit could have prevented 78,800 families, or 171,100 children, from living in low income.

That is the future of Canada. That is our children. Those are some of the things that I want the Prime Minister to think about as he goes to the conference.

I have often spoken in the past about the future of our country. I have great respect for our seniors and our veterans. We in between will find our way, but we have to give emphasis to the future of our country; that is, our young men and women. I agree with the hon. member that in order to be competitive, we have to reach out and we have to have a well-educated society.

Unfortunately, it is very expensive today. The government could take some of this money and invest it into education, as the hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour said earlier. He gave us some statistics when he said, for \$1 billion, we could fully pay the tuition of 23,376 of the poorest Canadian students. Increasing the post-secondary student program funding to provide every first nations student who wanted to go to school with the funds to do so would cost approximately \$700 million.

Business of Supply

It could fund 28,571 Canadian graduate doctoral scholarships or 57,143 Canadian graduate master's scholars. That is preparing the brains for Canada to be competitive tomorrow.

The list goes on. We could reduce the student loan interest rates down to the government's cost of borrowing of 4.1%, which was a figure from 2008. We could expand the size of the Canada summer jobs program tenfold. That would help young men and women work during the summer.

That is part of the Pittsburgh spinoff, as the member said. It is helping Canadians get back to work. That is what I think these summits are really meant to be. How do we get our nations working and co-operating? How do we resolve issues?

One of the major issues is the environment. The government has done zero on that. I explained earlier why, because I think they might not have shown up on the hosting of their own conference.

The agency is just about to hire the staff right now. They are looking to hire two or three weeks before the summit. They do say that each person must pass a mandatory training program and have a security guard licence, which is fine. They are going to train them in a week or two to get ready to secure the world leaders. That is shocking.

• (1615)

This average security person is going to earn about \$1,200 a week. That is about \$60,000 a year. I am at a loss for words. There are people today who are hurting, who just want to earn something to put food on the table and we are going to pay approximately \$1,200 or perhaps even more per week. I will let Canadians judge for themselves. That is all for a three day summit.

With respect to an audit, the Auditor General confirmed that her office will examine the spending. By the time the Auditor General does the audit it will be three or four years down the road and there will be no relevancy. God willing, the Conservatives will not be in government.

Kevin Page, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, also wants to do an audit but how can he? The Conservative government appointed him, but the minute he started putting the figures out, the Conservatives did not like it and they clamped down on him. They have taken away from his budget. He cannot do his work.

The message is very simple. Those who do not agree with the government are going to be shut down. Those who do not agree with the government are going to have their funding taken away. Certain groups, KAIROS for example, and certain work that they do, certain organizations that they reach out to, if it is not part of government policy the Conservatives eliminate the funds. Maybe they do not like the Greek community in Toronto and that is why it is not getting any funds for its community centre.

I have been asking since 2006, for four years, that maybe the government could contribute a \$1 million or \$2 million. The government has given money to other community centres, but unfortunately the Greek Canadian community has been starved. I do not think all of the Greek community votes Liberal. They vote Canadian and they pay their taxes, so they deserve consideration.

The estimates are really a concern. When the government included in the supplementary estimates the funding required for these summits, I do not know how it came up with the figure.

The summit in Britain for example cost almost \$20 million. That country is very security conscious, maybe even more than Canada because unfortunately and sadly, certain incidents occurred in England. There were bombings. It has had other problems domestically and international interference. We would think that Britain would be spending more money to make sure when it hosts international guests that they are protected.

The question arises as to how Britain could do it with such a smaller budget when ours is astronomically high. We are discussing this subject because when we go back to our ridings Canadians are going to ask, "What are you guys doing? This is our hard-earned money". The government talks about hard-earned money. It talks about choices. It talks about keeping more money in the pockets of Canadians. We agree with that.

I support these conferences. I believe that they have a value, but the hypocrisy around this is really hurting Canadians.

When the current Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism was a member of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, he said that the conference in Nova Scotia was too expensive. Today he is a member of the government, but back then he was complaining about the \$8.1 million for a conference in Nova Scotia. Today he is in the government and he is approving \$1.1 billion and counting.

I close with this. Those people are now in government. They came to Parliament to do things differently. They are now realizing it is not what they see. I am glad they have had a turnabout. Hopefully when they become opposition they will not be as angry as they were last time around.

• (1620)

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like clarification on a couple of points.

With all due respect to the member opposite's financial acumen and judgment, the government's activities on the international scene on financial management have been ranked number one in the world by no less respected authorities than the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the internationally respected *The Economist*, and many others. It is quite a stretch to suggest that the government does not have a handle on the economy when everybody else around the world has judged us to be sitting in the number one position.

The member talked about all of these dollars, so much per minute, per hour, per day. He has been around this institution quite a bit longer than I have and he must realize and certainly must admit that the planning and preparation and construction of the infrastructure is a lengthy process. This is not a three day conference. It is a three day formal meeting. The preparation and planning has taken days, weeks, months, and has even stretched into years. There has been an enormous capital investment in manpower, technology, training, security, and organization. It is quite a stretch to suggest that all costs by the hour, by the week, of the actual conference can be directly attributable to that.

Business of Supply

A lot of the other countries have not been as transparent as Canada has been when it comes to what has been spent. Some countries just included the overtime costs for the given day, not the regular ongoing operating costs. We have been transparent and open about all of the ongoing daily operating costs, and that is what Canadians want to see.

Mr. John Cannis: Mr. Speaker, I was just writing down what the gentleman said so that I could repeat it verbatim.

The member said that other countries have not been as transparent as Canada has been. I would suggest we be very cautious with our words because telling other countries that they have not been transparent is an insult. That is like telling them they have not been transparent, that they are hiding something, or that they are misleading people. If that is the case, I do not want their officials in my country. I do not want them around the conference table. I do not want them giving suggestions to me here in Canada if they are not transparent. Let them stay home and work in their non-transparent environments.

In answer to the member about the cost, let me simplify it. If I build a house today and it costs \$200,000 and three years down the road I want to build another similar house, the same square footage, the whole bit, and I add in the increase in inflation, et cetera, the cost of that house would go from \$200,000 to \$1.2 million. If I paid that \$1.2 million, people would think I was stupid or that I had been suckered in. That is why I gave those other figures.

If England can spend \$20 million, if Japan can spend \$200 million or \$300 million, and it does things first-class as we do here, how can we jump to \$1.1 billion plus a contingency fund? I can guarantee to Canadians that the contingency fund will be accessed and we will see where we go with it.

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Liberal opposition members like to throw around numbers in the range of \$20 million, \$30 million, \$40 million that they know are not realistic.

There are people in the security business who actually know what it costs to put on a conference like this. They know that the conference in London or Pittsburgh did not cost \$30 million or \$40 million in total. It was up around \$1 billion. They have made several comments over the last few days that if we compare apples to apples, that is, if we take all of the security costs into consideration when putting a number to the cost of a G8 or G20 conference, we would come within the same range as what this government is prepared to spend to host these two conferences in Canada.

As a matter of fact, within the last few days \$1.5 billion was the figure that came out as being spent for the last conference in Hokkaido, Japan. It was not \$20 million, \$30 million or \$40 million. It was \$1.5 billion, which represents the total cost of putting on that conference.

The numbers the Liberals are throwing around represent only a small portion of the actual cost. They know it, but it sounds better for them to say it in the way that they are. They are not being completely honest when it comes to the actual cost.

● (1625)

Mr. John Cannis: Mr. Speaker, in the last 17 years I have sat here, I have never heard more dishonesty—and I can use that word, Mr. Speaker, because it was used—come from anywhere but that party. For example, there is the billion dollar boondoggle lie, the one or two billion dollar gun registry lie.

Mr. Richard Harris: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member knows full well that he cannot use those kinds of words when describing things that the government is saying or has said. Calling this government a liar or accusing this government of telling lies is simply not acceptable in this Parliament. He knows that. He has been around here for 17 years, as I have.

The Deputy Speaker: I think insinuating that members were telling lies or being dishonest, I would encourage the member to move away from that kind of language.

Mr. John Cannis: We will move away from that, Mr. Speaker. We will just let Danny Williams, the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador call it as it is. I think he used that word without any hesitation whatsoever. Sometimes people just do not like it when we put the truth on the table. However, I will say that the Conservatives have been intellectually dishonest with Canadians from day one.

The figures I used came from the various conferences that were held, the Ottawa-Montebello conference, the Toronto-Halifax conference, the Kananaskis conference, and the Muskoka conference. I used the figures from the various conferences. If they are in dispute, then we should look at them accurately and say whoever gave us the figures might have been misleading us.

As I said earlier, I am pleased that the Conservatives are in government and finally learning how to run the country, but they are not doing it that well. When he first came here, the member was a Reform member, and then an Alliance member, and now he is a Conservative member. He knows very well how his party misled Canadians. For example, his party played out the gym as a palace to Canadians. It is a room with some fitness equipment. They talked about the limousines. His then leader, Preston Manning, gave it away and he was using a limousine on his own and was driven here. There was the clothing allowance. It was okay to talk about it. Now we see that the Prime Minister has a limousine entourage like we have never seen before, but that is okay. Canadians can judge for themselves.

I put the figures on the table. If anybody would like to see them, I would be more than happy to make them available.

Mr. Richard Harris: Mr. Speaker, while the member attempts to convince Canadians that the numbers he is using are comparative to the actual cost of putting on an exercise like a G20 or a G8, in fact, he is not comparing apples to apples. The conferences that he mentioned are in no way comparable to what we are planning and what other countries have done, where it cost them \$1 billion or \$1.5 billion, as well, the number in Japan that I just finished reporting again for about the fourth time in the House today. Why is it that the Liberal members refuse to acknowledge that is an actual real number for a conference exactly like what we are planning in Canada? It cost \$1 billion in Japan to put that on. It cost \$1 billion in Canada to put that on.

Business of Supply

•(1630)

The Deputy Speaker: I will have to stop the member there to give the member for Scarborough Centre enough time to reply.

Mr. John Cannis: Mr. Speaker, let me summarize it.

Canada proudly put on the Winter Olympic Games, which lasted for 17 days. There were thousands of very important people, starting with our athletes, Paralympics and all, and it cost less than that. Is that not a large venue to use for comparison?

I will close with this. If the member bought a car tomorrow, a certain brand that I will not name, and he paid \$40,000 for it and a year down the road I bought the same model of car with the same options and everything, I would pay ten times the amount. This is what I am trying to say. I used the Olympics as an example. I used the building of a house as an example. This is common sense. It is not revolutionary in any way. Canadians are too intelligent. They are going to see beyond the smokescreen and one day they will judge.

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the hon. member for Nickel Belt.

It is nice to have the opportunity to speak to this motion today. It relates to a hot-button issue that is hurting the government in the coffee shops across this land: the out of control spending on security for the upcoming G8 and G20 meetings in Huntsville and Toronto later this month.

If one were fortunate to have heard *Cross Country Checkup* this past weekend, one would have been able to pick up on the overwhelming outraged voices at the escalating costs of security for these meetings. Many of the callers were overcome by sticker shock with the huge sum that security in Canada's biggest city for these events will cost. Some callers detailed what items could be purchased or what measures could be pursued with such a vast amount of money. Others spoke of our record deficit and the lingering effects of the economic crisis.

A very few were completely supportive of the cost of security for these events, while others admitted that there needs to be spending on security for these events but felt that perhaps this too had snowballed out of control under the government's obsession with George Bush-style security concerns.

That is probably closest to our opinion. We are not saying that there should not be security for these events. We are not saying that there is no reason whatsoever to have these meetings. Our heads are not stuck in the sand on this issue but they are not up in the clouds like the government's either. One could say that we are not drinking the Kool-Aid that seems to flow freely over in the government lobby. That would be a reasonable way to characterize our position on today's motion and the issue of security at these kinds of events.

Perhaps it is merely a matter of perception that separates us from the Conservatives. We do not see terrorists around every corner or fall asleep at night worrying about some bogeyman-fueled crime spree either. Conservatives look at people who do not share their opinions and see the worst in these people. How many times has the Minister of Public Safety stood in this place and gone on about terrorists and petty thugs?

To hear the Conservatives speak, one would think there is a terrorist cell in every neighbourhood across the land waiting to lash out and send our lives into disarray. To listen to the Minister of Public Safety try to justify the incredible cost of security for these meetings, one would think that we are constantly under threat from these unsavoury individuals.

This is the hallmark of the current brand of the Conservatives. They are great at recognizing perceived threats that allow them to pursue their agenda and spread the public's money around to their supporters. In this case, it is for those in the private security business, the people who rent them the security fencing and provide the private security guards. They too share the view that we are just not safe.

However, the government will not protect us from real threats, such as the threat to our health from the eroding environment. It will not protect our communities in a meaningful way when they are left decimated by terrible policies in forestry or laid to waste by foreign owners who have no respect for the Canadian way of life that built companies like Inco.

For the majority of people in my constituency, this expenditure for security is yet another sign that the Conservatives are primarily interested in investors and not citizens. It is a government that will go out of its way to clear the path for any investor, to let them trample rights and long-standing covenants in pursuit of the only virtue Conservatives seek: profit.

If people want to buy a company and change everything in the process or if people do not like the pension plan, they do not need to worry. They do not have to honour it. They can just lock out the employees or close down the operation, like Xstrata did, and sit on the resources until they can find people to work at slave wages with little or no additional compensation.

Those are the kinds of outcomes that are a result of the meetings that we are spending \$1 billion to protect.

Mr. Richard Harris: We are back in the 1930s. Pat, tell her this is 2010.

Mrs. Carol Hughes: The member across is right. He is talking about what it was like in the 1930s and this is exactly where the government is trying to bring us. That is the kind of economy these G8 and G20 types most desire.

•(1635)

My constituency, which sits in the epicentre of our recent and ongoing financial crisis, cannot support this. We will not condone spending money to protect the interests of the companies that are going to war against the Canadian workforce and our way of life. We see this in Sudbury right now with Vale Inco. A lot of my constituents actually work there, as well as my husband, by the way.

We will not condone spending this kind of money while the government allows pensions to collapse or remain underfunded, all the while allowing companies off the hook for doing so. We will not condone spending outrageous sums to protect the elite while refusing to spend to protect the most vulnerable and those who have given their whole lives to build this country.

Business of Supply

One of the ironies that will come out of the G8 and G20 meetings is that we will likely hear the call for reduced taxes for wealthy corporations and the investors that fuel them. We will hear how this will make them competitive and that they will be able to thrive with this advantage. Yet these champions of a world without corporate taxation or corporate responsibility will suck on the public teat the whole time, drawing money from every worker across this land and using it to protect themselves while they issue statements admonishing the same workers for expecting too much from the corporate elite. It is a theatre of the absurd.

Will Canadians come to accept the incredibly huge cost of security for these meetings? Will they forget about it over a hot, long summer? The government can only hope as much. The Conservatives are laughing on the other side because they do not think the money they are actually going to spend on this is a serious issue. This is a big issue for my constituents.

They know, too, that there is only so much that John Q. Public will take. They see the wounds piling up, the scar tissue from the outrageous behaviour of the former minister of state for the Status of Women and the way her husband attempted to sell access to the government's inner circle while successfully dodging drunk driving and hard drug charges that still fuels the chatter around the coffee pot. Will this be another black eye that refuses to fade for the government? Only time will tell.

I know this much. We have identified an opportunity for the Liberal Party to join us in actually standing up on behalf of all Canadians and telling the government that enough is enough. We have offered the Liberals the opportunity to put their money where their mouth is and truly stand up to the government and say no to items like the sale of AECL, the gutting of Canada's environmental impact assessment process and the after-the-fact lessening of the wholesale handover of the employment insurance fund that will allow profitable corporations in Canada to enjoy yet another round of tax breaks.

In many ways, that is what this motion is really about. It is about piling on to everyday Canadian taxpayers. It is about how the little guy will pay the freight yet again so that those with the most wealth and influence can move about freely and make arrangements to push through the remnants of the corporate global agenda. That is why there is so much outrage on this issue and why the government prays that the public has a short memory on this issue.

Of the many interesting ideas that were floated on the radio this past weekend, one was to arrange for a permanent site for these kinds of meetings, a site with the appropriate security built into it, a site that would allow these meetings to take place without having to inconvenience people who just want to go to work or a ball game, a site that would simply allow these meetings to take place.

One drawback of such an arrangement is that it would not make for the same kinds of photo ops. On one level, that is what these meetings amount to: groups of elite in expensive suits lining up to appear chummy before the camera so the people who cannot afford to put their children in hockey this year can have a flashy picture of the Prime Minister looking like the best pal of the chancellor of Germany. They can look at the picture and see the architects of the demise that has taken away our forestry jobs and the henchmen of

the international investor movement who have paved the way for locked out and lost mining jobs.

It will show up time and again in Conservative advertising as they extol the virtues of our policy of bending over to accommodate the whims of the international market and the desires of corporate elite to control policy while refusing to participate in the heavy lifting of implementing it. It will make a great souvenir to remind them of the life they used to enjoy before the corporate elite excused themselves from having to participate in society.

● (1640)

The Deputy Speaker: Before I move on to questions and comments, it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis, Environment; and the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, Public Safety.

Questions and comments. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague's comments this afternoon and they gave me the utmost proof that members of the NDP are totally out of touch with the world.

They obviously do not understand what the G8 and the G20 are all about. They are about the economy. If we look at the economy of Canada, which we recently found out, we had a 6.1% growth in the economy. We can look at the job creation we are having and compare that to the Socialist governments of the world. Let us take Greece as an example and a look at what is going on in Greece with the protectionism and the left-wing policies of the 1970s. It shows how out of touch it is.

It is obvious to me that these protestors, these anarchists, these people who are ready to come forth and disrupt the G8 and G20, are writing the NDP policy. That is what I have come up with as a conclusion this afternoon.

I have a question for the member. Knowing how important the economy is and knowing that Canada does not live in a box and that we have to work in a globalized economy with other countries of the world, does the member not feel that it is appropriate that we do ensure this is a good experience for the world to come to Canada and work toward—

The Deputy Speaker: I will stop the member there to allow the member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking enough time to respond.

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, \$1 billion for security. I just think of the economic stimulus we could have on other projects that we so rightly deserve.

The member talks about the economy and the need to stimulate the economy. This is a government that did not even believe we were going into an economic crisis. The member talks about job creation.

Business of Supply

I have some projects here that were denied funding. The Gore Bay Airport in Gore Bay wanted \$1.7 million to repave the airport that the federal government uses but the funding it was offered was pulled the next day. What a shame. Elliot Lake needed \$15 million for a multiplex. It was told it would get the funding but the next day it was told that it would not, that a mistake had been made.

Here is the money that could be spent. Let us look at the township of Hornepayne. The Hornepayne town centre is about to close. It is the only high school in that community, with the only pool, the only restaurant and the only hotel. Funding to help it would be—

The Deputy Speaker: I will have to stop the member there so we can accommodate another question or comment.

The hon. member for Shefford.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the people who are out of touch are those on the other side of the House. If they read the papers every day, they would know that we are not the only ones asking why \$1 billion was spent on security.

If it cost so much—\$1 billion—to hold the G8 and G20 in Toronto, they could have chosen any other site in Canada. They could have chosen a location that would have cost less than \$1 billion. They could have saved money.

As the member was saying, we could have used the money saved for older worker assistance programs, which cost \$75 million per year. We could have helped these people rather than using this money to protect others. We could have found a much less expensive way to protect them. What does my colleague think?

•(1645)

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. The Conservatives mentioned that jobs have been created. I am sure the same has happened in his region. They say they have created a lot of jobs but, truth be told, they are part-time or very low-paying jobs.

We should really be investing in such programs as the Regional Green Technologies Centre in Hearst, which focuses on climate change and green jobs. The centre applied for about \$350,000 from FedNor but, once again, there is no money.

[*English*]

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise and speak to this motion that calls on the government to provide a detailed breakdown to Canadians on how the money earmarked for security for the G8 and G20 summits is being spent and an explanation of how the security budget was permitted to spiral out of control.

I wanted to speak to this motion because it relates to one of the key elements of the government's campaign promises to Canadians: more accountability and more transparency

This issue is a glaring example of precisely the opposite by the government: significantly less accountability, significantly less transparency. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the government has perfected the art of secrecy and offered no greater accountability than the previous government.

This past April, in a report entitled "Out of Time", the interim Information Commissioner gave more than half of the 24 government departments reviewed either a below average or a failing grade for compliance with access to information. In fact, the Department of Foreign Affairs received an overall red alert rating for its deplorable handling of information requests.

Is it any wonder that after four years in office a majority of Canadians still do not trust the government or the Prime Minister? Worst still, the government promised Canadians that it is a better manager of the public purse. Instead, Canadians have been treated to moves like wiping out the more than \$57 billion in contributions made by workers and employers off the books of the employment insurance fund while providing billions in corporate tax cuts. Talk about misguided priorities.

I guess we should not expect anything else from the Conservative government. That money belonged to the workers and employers. As well the government has built into its own budget projections an increase in the EI payroll tax, which will generate a surplus that could reach \$24 billion by 2020. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has said that the tax hike will cause a loss of 200,000 jobs.

I have unemployed workers in my riding of Nickel Belt who are running out of employment insurance benefits or have run out and cannot get the retraining they need. Our communities have been disproportionately hit by the recession. What an insult to the hard-working families of Nickel Belt.

New Democrats believe there should be no payroll tax increase until the previous \$57 billion surplus is paid back. At least \$7 billion of that was accumulated under the government's watch. I could list countless other examples of the lack of accountability and transparency.

However, to return to this particular issue, we need to understand how the government's own estimates of spending on security for the G8 and G20 could spiral from \$179 million to almost \$1 billion in just three months. It is absolutely outrageous.

Ask any Canadian whether this latest blunder meets the test of improved accountability and transparency. When they have calmed down from being outraged, their answer will no doubt be a resounding no.

It is hard to fathom that security for a three day summit will cost more than the security for all 17 days of the Vancouver Olympics. For comparative purposes here are some numbers on the Olympics. There were about 5,500 Olympic Games athletes and officials; approximately 1,350 Paralympic Games athletes and officials; 10,000 media representatives.

Remarkably, the government now tells Canadians that it is about to spend \$1 billion on a three day event. What burns me and what burns many constituents is the fact that the money could be more efficiently spent on programs for Canadians.

Business of Supply

In four years the government has abandoned so many citizens. As my colleague, the member for Sackville—Eastern Shore, has pointed out, we now have veterans turning to food banks. That is scandalous. Our aboriginal people living on reserves are among the poorest of the poor in this country. That is unacceptable.

My colleagues from Halifax and Churchill have spoken about the fact that funding for aboriginal friendship centres has not been renewed.

•(1650)

My colleague from London—Fanshawe has spoken eloquently about the lack of support for women in this country.

My colleague from Sault Ste. Marie has rung the alarm bells about the sorry poverty in this country.

A report released last month by Citizens for Public Justice noted that 3.9 million Canadians are poor, an increase of 900,000 from 2007, including 160,000 more children. It also noted that last year, nearly half the unemployed did not even qualify for EI benefits, and 777,400 unemployed Canadians were not receiving EI. Further, it noted that social assistance caseload increased in all 10 provinces, with Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia seeing increases greater than 20%.

What is lacking here is federal leadership. The Conservative government is not here to serve the people. It is here to fly planes to Tim Hortons. The Conservatives probably think they need the \$1 billion in security to protect themselves from the ever-growing ranks of the poor.

If I had more time, I could provide even more examples of where this money could be better spent. Thank goodness for New Democrat MPs who stand in the House, day in and day out, highlighting the unfairness of the government, providing clear, insightful direction on how public money could be better spent.

In this country there is a desperate need for real federal leadership, for real investment in people and communities. Instead, the government siphons off billions from employment insurance, money taken directly from the workers to fill part of a giant revenue shortfall created by billions in corporate tax giveaways.

In summary, this latest occasion for Conservative mismanagement only serves to remind Canadians that the Conservatives are not good fiscal managers, but rather they have become great at mismanaging public money. We need answers; we need them now.

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the hon. member's statements. I wonder what it must be like to sit in on the morning caucus meeting with the NDP. I imagine that there are probably more happy people attending funeral services than what the NDP members must enjoy over there.

I find it hard to believe that we can have the kind of numbers being created in this country and they are blind to it all. We had 6.1% growth in our economy in the first quarter, hundreds of thousands of jobs created, hundreds of millions of dollars of new investment announced today into a General Motors plant in St. Catharines, and CAW workers going back to work. That is the record of the

government. That is the impact of our economic action plan and they voted against all of it.

With respect to the G8 and the G20 summits, an unprecedented opportunity for Canada to lead at a time when Canada is a bright, shining star economically, this member would have us not provide that leadership globally. I am proud that we will be providing that leadership.

I know it is a lot of money, but I am glad that we are there providing leadership at a time when the world needs leadership from a country that is clearly leading. Why does the member not support it?

•(1655)

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite the hon. member to come to our caucus meeting tomorrow. It would give him some insight on what is happening in this country. There are poor people in this country who could use this \$1 billion that is being spent on security. There are seniors living in poverty in this country. I would like to invite the member to come to our caucus meeting on Wednesday and get a feel for what is going on in this country.

Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member from the Conservative Party said Canada is taking a leadership role. The fact of the matter is, there has been no leadership. The problem is that the world is saying, "Where is Canada? Where is Canada on the environmental file? Where is Canada on reducing maternal and child health?" The government has not articulated a plan.

My question to the member is this. Does he not agree that the central unifying place upon which Canada can invest money, and reduce the unconscionable loss of 244,000 women's lives a year and 8.8 billion children's lives a year, is that the government work with the G8 to invest in the basic elements of primary health care in developing countries?

The Deputy Speaker: Order. There seems to be some other questions and comments going on at the far end of the chamber that the Chair finds quite distracting, so if members could hold off their discussions or if they need to talk to their colleagues, could they do so by sitting close to each other so they do not have to shout. I think the rest of the chamber would appreciate it.

The hon. member for Nickel Belt.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, of course, my colleague is right. The government could spend a lot more money on maternal health care. If the government had stayed out of the maternal health care business of other countries, we would probably have some successful G8 and G20 meetings. However, because of its interference in the maternal health care of other countries, the government will go down in history as a very bad government that is not minding its own business in the maternal health care of other countries.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Shefford has time for a very brief question.

Business of Supply

Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from the other side of the House said that he would like to see what happens at the NDP caucus meeting. Personally, I would find it interesting to see what happens at the Conservative caucus meeting when it is announced that they will be stealing \$57 billion from workers and employers, that this debt will be erased and not a single cent will be repaid.

What does the member think about the measure that would erase this \$57 billion debt, and what does he think about the fact that the Conservatives are stealing from the employment insurance fund?

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his good question. I do not think that anything happens during the Conservative caucus meeting because I am sure that the Conservative members are not allowed to say much. But he has a very good question. We could have used that \$57 billion to give money to people who are not working.

[*English*]

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak the motion today. It gives me an opportunity to explain the process that was followed to come to the costs in the estimates with respect to the incremental security-related costs incurred by provincial and municipal security partners in relation to the G8 and G20 summits.

We are talking about the security costs. Whenever we talk about these costs, it is important that we also talk about the facts, which I think have been lost for the better part of this day. Before I proceed into these details, I will go over some things that I feel are equally important as well. I think members opposite seem to be unable or unwilling to understand the larger budgetary process that must be undertaken whenever we consider costs in this place.

The costs put forward in Parliament on May 25 are the result of the security planning preparation initiated over a year and a half ago. In no way do they constitute an escalation in cost. The amount identified for Public Safety Canada in supplementary estimates A tabled last week was \$262.6 million. This is in addition to the initial amount of \$32.1 million allocated to Public Safety Canada through the supplementary estimates C tabled in March 2010 for the fiscal year 2009-10 for planning activities.

The parliamentary budget process provides for allocation of funding based on the assessment of the requirements, which involves cabinet and Treasury Board. This process results in the setting aside of specific envelopes for funding that can be accessed through the estimates process. The President of the Treasury Board tables three supplementary estimates, usually in late spring, late fall and early spring, to obtain the authority of Parliament to adjust the government's expenditure plan as reflected in the estimates for that fiscal year. Funding for these estimates is provided for in the federal budget and is therefore built into the existing fiscal framework.

The supplementary estimates serve two purposes. First, they seek authority for revised spending levels that Parliament will be asked to approve in an appropriation act. Second, they provide Parliament with the information on changes in the estimated expenditures to be made under the authority of statutes previously passed by Parliament.

This government has been open in its communication around the estimated costs of the G8 and G20 summits and has followed the usual parliamentary processes to secure the estimates required to fund them. We have budgeted for these costs and we have been open in communicating them. One does not just have to take our word for it. It is there, it is plain and it is in black and white.

Ward Elcock, chief of the Integrated Security Unit, said, "Canada is one of the rare countries that has been transparent about the security costs" and "if you actually could find an apple-to-apple comparison, you would find that [the costs of the summits] are actually pretty comparable"

I hope my colleagues have found this overview of the parliamentary budget process helpful. Just in case any confusion remains, I would remind them that the Auditor General has confirmed, "the \$179 million is really partial funding, and the way government funds these things, it was not an initial estimate of what the costs would be". When one understands the parliamentary budget process, one sees that the government has budgeted for these costs and it is on target.

I would like to now speak about the security framework in more detail. The RCMP is the lead agency responsible for policing and security at major international meetings held in Canada. For such events, given the scale and scope of security requirements, the planning and implementation of security routinely involves provincial and municipal police forces in the jurisdiction in which the event is held. For example, for each president or prime minister-led meeting in Canada, the RCMP gathers information and intelligence to perform a threat assessment and determine if there is a requirement for extraordinary security measures.

● (1700)

If it is determined that extraordinary security measures are required, including a significant involvement of provincial and municipal security partners, the Minister of Public Safety, in conjunction with the federal minister hosting the event, may recommend to the Prime Minister that the event be designated under the security cost framework policy as eligible for financial assistance.

The Government of Canada recognizes that provincial and municipal security partners involved in the 2010 G8 and G20 summits will incur incremental costs for the implementation of security measures to support the RCMP in providing security for these events. In this case, security measures required for the two summits exceed the local authorities' normal response capacity.

As such, both the G8 and G20 summit events were designated by the Prime Minister. Therefore, financial assistance will be provided to the provincial and municipal security partners under the security cost framework policy covering the incremental extraordinary, justifiable and reasonable security-related costs incurred as a result of their involvement.

Business of Supply

The overall objective of the security costs framework policy is to obtain the active participation provincial and municipal security partners in the provision of extraordinary security measures for major international meetings, such as the G8 and G20 events.

For the upcoming G8, the provincial and municipal security partners are the Ontario Provincial Police, the Toronto Police Service, the Peel Regional Police Service, the town of Huntsville, the district of Muskoka, the township of Lake of Bays and the North Bay Police Service. For the G20, the partners are the Toronto Police Service, the Peel Regional Police Service and the Ontario Provincial Police.

Once designation is obtained, Public Safety Canada has been mandated to negotiate and enter into contribution agreements with these provincial and municipal security partners under the security cost framework policy. Public Safety Canada officials have been engaged with these partners since November 2008 to explain the terms and the conditions of the policy that the government uses for the reimbursements of incremental security costs.

Following this designation, discussions focused on the development of cost estimates by security partners and for which a due diligence process was conducted to ensure compliance with both the requirements of the overall RCMP-led security plan as well as the policy. This includes on-site visits to understand the security requirements to validate the partners' plans and the ongoing dialogue with the RCMP to confirm alignment with the overall security plan.

Allow me to quote Canada's Auditor General again, who recently said:

—we have to realize that security is expensive. There are a lot of people involved over a very long period of time. We may think that the meetings only last for a few days, but all the preparations involve extensive planning, extensive coordination for months before that.

Based on that process, funding requirements were put forward, along with the federal departments involved with the G8 and G20 security, to secure financial allocations for the application of that policy.

Once the G8 and G20 events are over, provincial and municipal security partners will be submitting final claims for incremental security costs incurred, which will be subject to a full independent audit to determine the eligibility of the claimed expenses. Based on the final audit report, reimbursements will be made to provincial and municipal security partners. As a result, the final costs will be known after the summits conclude and a final audit has taken place.

The Government of Canada has an obligation to ensure that the leaders participating in the G8 and G20 in June are safe and secure, and that is exactly what we are doing. We have listened to the security experts to implement an unprecedented security operation with the largest deployment of security personnel in Canadian history. We are ready to showcase Canada's leadership on the world stage and are making the investments necessary to ensure the complete security of these summits.

In contrast, the Liberal leader has said that he is embarrassed that Canada was hosting the world at the G8 and the G20. His members have characterized Huntsville as nothing more than a political decision. Yet, two short years ago, the Liberal leader supported

Huntsville when he thought it would boost his political prospects. Now he is against it. The Liberal leader also said that it was the role of the federal government to fund the cost. Now he has reversed that position as well.

• (1705)

Unlike the Liberals, we are not embarrassed or against fulfilling our obligations to our international partners and to our citizens. This means that security is a reality, and providing the security is non-negotiable. As such, I cannot agree with this motion before us today. I believe that the security budget is necessary. It simply is not spiralling out of control.

Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member has indicated he is not embarrassed. I have a question about the money that was spent in the riding of the industry minister.

According to all media reports, \$50 million were spent on curbs, roads, trees, landscaping, rinks, shrubs, signs and sidewalks, none of which had anything to do with either the G8 or the G20. What we had was a good old-fashioned political pork-barrel orgy. The sad part is this \$50 million was paid for by the taxpayers of Canada. The sadder part is the taxpayers of Canada had to go out on the markets and borrow the \$50 million.

Do the people who live and vote in the member's riding have any concerns about this \$50 million expenditure, for which probity and any kind of proper spending was thrown to the wind? Do they have any concerns about paying this money back when the money is due to the bondholders?

• (1710)

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, I know that Charlottetown, as well as many constituencies across the country, has benefited from the budget that allocated the funds for the G8 and the G20 preparations for the community of which he spoke. In fact, I can reference many projects in my own constituency where tens of millions of dollars have gone to improving infrastructure and building the necessary infrastructure not only to host people who might come, but to host people who live there. This includes improvements in roads, sewers and all the things for which the action plan allocated funds.

When a community is hosting the G8 and G20, there are necessities in terms of ensuring that the infrastructure in the local community does not pose any security threats. We looked to Pittsburgh and many other communities that held equivalent events. They had to remove rocks from landscapes and different things like that to ensure they did not pose a security problem. I know some of that preparation is done.

The community in which the G8 will be held is beautiful. We look forward to the world leaders seeing that community.

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP): Mr. Speaker, given the fact that 1.5 million people are still out of work, this \$1 billion would have been better spent in programs to help them get back to work.

Business of Supply

However, I have a comment for my colleague with respect to the \$1 billion that the government will spend on security. People are going to be having a hard time getting to and from work because this is right in downtown Toronto. That will impact them being able to feed their families.

Does the member not think there should have been better thought as to having this meeting held in a more secure location, where it was not going to impact so many people, especially at a high time of the tourist season? Maybe the government should have held it in a jail or one of those facilities for which it is spending billions.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons Canada has been selected as being the host country for these summits was because of the shining light that Canada has been in terms of economic growth and the ability to recover from this recession.

We know people are still out of work. It is our belief that we need to continue to support those folks. Therefore, many measures have come in through the last budget as well as the many programs the government has put forward to ensure there will be continued growth within our economy. The NDP has consistently voted against those measures.

However, we believe the world is coming to Canada because we have seen the largest growth of GDP in the last quarter. We have not seen this type of growth for years and years in Canada. We also have seen a continued decrease in the number of people who are unemployed in Canada.

We do have a lot to showcase, not only in the beauty of our land but also in terms of the policies that we brought forward to ensure the security of our national economy.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the supply proceedings.

[English]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1740)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 52)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	André
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Asselin
Atamanenko	Bagnell
Bains	Bélangier
Bellavance	Bennett
Bevilacqua	Bevington
Bigras	Blais
Bonsant	Bouchard
Brisson	Brunelle
Byrne	Cannis
Cardin	Carrier
Charlton	Chow
Christopherson	Coady
Comartin	Cotler
Crombie	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
D'Amours	Davies (Vancouver East)
DeBellefeuille	Demers
Deschamps	Desnoyers
Dhaliwal	Dhalla
Dion	Donnelly
Dorion	Dosanjh
Dryden	Duceppe
Dufour	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Easter
Eyking	Faille
Folco	Foote
Gagnon	Garneau
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Guarnieri
Guay	Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les
Basques)	
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	
Holland	Hughes
Hyer	Ignatieff
Jennings	Julian
Kania	Karygiannis
Kennedy	Laforest
Laframboise	Lalonde
Lavallée	Layton
Lee	Lemay
Leslie	Lessard
Lévesque	MacAulay
Malhi	Malo
Maloway	Marston
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Martin (Winnipeg Centre)
Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)	Masse
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Ménard
Mendes	Minna
Mourani	Mulcair
Murphy (Charlottetown)	Murray
Nadeau	Neville
Oliphant	Ouellet
Pacetti	Paillé (Hochelaga)
Paquette	Patry
Pearson	Plamondon
Pomerleau	Proulx
Rafferty	Ratansi
Regan	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Savage	Savoie
Scarpaleggia	Sgro
Siksay	Silva
Simms	Simson
St-Cyr	Stoffer
Szabo	Thibeault
Tonks	Valeriotte

Business of Supply

Vincent
Zarac— 139

Wrzesnewskyj

Dechert
Freeman
Hawn
Roy
Thi Lac

Flaherty
Gaudet
Paillé (Louis-Hébert)
Sorenson
Toews— 16

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Albrecht
Allison
Anders
Armstrong
Ashfield
Benoit
Bezan
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge
Calandra
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Carrie
Chong
Cummins
Day
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Fast
Flaherty
Galipeau
Glover
Goodyear
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hill
Hoepfner
Jean
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lebel
Lobb
Lunn
MacKay (Central Nova)
Mark
McColeman
Menzies
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Norlock
O'Neill-Gordon
Paradis
Petit
Prentice
Raitt
Rathgeber
Richards
Rickford
Saxton
Schellenberger
Shipley
Smith
Stanton
Strahl
Thompson
Trost
Uppal
Vellacott
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Wong
Yelich

Aglukkaq
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambrose
Anderson
Arthur
Baird
Bernier
Blackburn
Boucher
Braid
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)
Cadman
Calkins
Cannon (Pontiac)
Casson
Clement
Davidson
Del Mastro
Dreeshen
Dykstra
Finley
Fletcher
Généreux
Goldring
Gourde
Guergis
Hiebert
Hoback
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Lemieux
Lukiwski
Lunney
MacKenzie
Mayes
McLeod
Merrifield
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Nicholson
O'Connor
Oda
Payne
Poilievre
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richardson
Ritz
Scheer
Shea
Shory
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Tilson
Tweed
Van Kesteren
Verner
Warawa
Watson
Woodworth
Young— 136

PAIRED

Members

Abbott
Beaudin
Bourgeois

Bachand
Block
Clement

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

OPPOSITION MOTION—OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

The House resumed from May 28 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made Friday, May 28, 2010, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Edmonton—Strathcona relating to the business of supply.

● (1750)

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

*(Division No. 53)***YEAS**

Members

Ablonczy
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambrose
Anderson
Andrews
Armstrong
Ashfield
Asselin
Bagnell
Baird
Bellavance
Benoit
Bevilacqua
Bezan
Blackburn
Blaney
Bouchard
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)
Brunelle
Cadman
Calkins
Cannis
Cardin
Carrier
Charlton
Chow
Clement
Comartin
Crombie
Cullen
Cuzner
Davidson
Davies (Vancouver East)
DeBellefeuille
Demers
Desnoyers
Dhaliwal
Dion
Dorion
Dreeshen
Duceppe
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
Faille
Finley
Folco
Gagnon
Garneau
Aglukkaq
Allen (Welland)
Allison
Anders
André
Angus
Arthur
Ashton
Atamanenko
Bains
Bélanger
Bennett
Bernier
Bevington
Bigras
Blais
Bonsant
Boucher
Braid
Brisson
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge
Byrne
Calandra
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)
Cannon (Pontiac)
Carrie
Casson
Chong
Christopherson
Coady
Cotler
Crowder
Cummins
D'Amours
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day
Del Mastro
Deschamps
Devolin
Dhalla
Donnelly
Dosanjh
Dryden
Dufour
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra
Eyking
Fast
Fletcher
Foote
Galipeau
Généreux

Private Members' Business

Glover	Godin
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gourde
Gravelle	Grewal
Guamieri	Guay
Guergis	Guimond (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques)
Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord)	
Hall Findlay	
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hiebert
Hill	Hoback
Hoeppner	Holder
Holland	Hughes
Hyer	Ignatieff
Jean	Jennings
Julian	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kania	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kennedy
Kennedy (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Laforest
Laframboise	Lake
Lalonde	Lauzon
Lavallée	Layton
Lebel	Lee
Lemay	Lemieux
Leslie	Lessard
Lévesque	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunn
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Malhi	Malo
Maloway	Mark
Marston	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)	Martin (Sault Ste. Marie)
Masse	Mayes
McCallum	McColeman
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLeod	Ménard
Mendes	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Minna	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murphy (Charlottetown)
Murray	Nadeau
Neville	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill-Gordon	Oda
Olipphant	Ouellet
Pacetti	Paillet (Hochelaga)
Paquette	Paradis
Patry	Payne
Pearson	Petit
Plamondon	Poilievre
Pomerleau	Prentice
Preston	Proulx
Rafferty	Raith
Rajotte	Ratansi
Rathgeber	Regan
Reid	Richards
Richardson	Rickford
Ritz	Rodriguez
Rota	Russell
Savage	Savoie
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Scheer	Schellenberger
Sgro	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Siksay	Silva
Simms	Simson
Smith	St-Cyr
Stanton	Stoffer
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Szabo
Thibeault	Thompson
Tilson	Tonks
Trost	Tweed
Uppal	Valeriote
Van Kesteren	Vellacott
Verner	Vincent
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	

Wong	Woodworth
Wrzesnewskyj	Yelich
Young	Zarac — 274

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Abbott	Bachand
Beaudin	Block
Bourgeois	Clement
Dechert	Flaherty
Freeman	Gaudet
Hawn	Paillet (Louis-Hébert)
Roy	Sorenson
Thi Lac	Toews — 16

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[English]

* * *

JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH ACT

BILL C-9—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great reluctance that I rise to advise you that an agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Orders 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the report stage and third reading stage of Bill C-9, the jobs and economic growth act.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Canadians are expecting this bill to pass before we rise for the summer. Some of the consequences of our not adopting Bill C-9 by the summer are that payments will not be authorized for over \$500 million in transfer protection to the provinces. Bill C-9 also authorizes appropriation of \$75 million for Genome Canada, \$20 million for Pathways to Education Canada to provide support to disadvantaged youth, \$10 million for the Canadian Youth Business Foundation and \$13.5 million for the Rick Hansen Foundation. These payments and many others cannot be made until Bill C-9 receives royal assent.

Therefore, under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the Crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of the proceedings at the said stages.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

NATIONAL HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING HERITAGE DAY ACT

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC) moved that Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to address the House concerning Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day. This simple enactment would designate September 23 in each and every year as a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

These activities have helped form the fabric of the Canadian experience and our identity. Hunters, trappers, fishermen and anglers have made a significant contribution to the development of our nation by traversing and mapping the forest, streams, rivers, lakes, hills and mountains from coast to coast to coast.

I echo the Speech from the Throne in stating that our values as Canadians are rooted in our history. Hunting, trapping and fishing were an integral part of the life of Canada's aboriginal peoples and first settlers. Hunting, trapping and the availability of fish defined where people settled.

Earlier settlers forged new transportation routes as they followed herds and wildlife. Famous Canadian explorers and fur traders, like David Thompson who travelled more than 90,000 kilometres by horseback, canoe, dogsled and on foot, charted Canada's untamed land and mapped more than one-sixth of the continent, paving the way for future explorers. The natural wonders that he saw and the places he visited are part of Canada's history and many have become national parks and historic sites.

Hunting, trapping and fishing were the first forms of trade and currency and formed the very backbone of Canada's financial structures. National historic sites, like York Factory, exist because of their importance to the history of the fur trade and the history of the interaction of aboriginal peoples and the first trading partners.

Our mind now goes back to the very beginnings of this country. Our mind goes to some of the first explorers of our country, like Cabot who, if members will recall, in 1497, in a report to the Duke of Milan about the new world, stated, "...the sea there is swarming with fish, which can be taken not only with the net, but in baskets let down with a stone...". He was referring to the Grand Banks.

We also will recall, just on the river behind this very place, Samuel de Champlain and his exploration of the Ottawa valley and many parts of Canada back in the 1600s.

Through hunting, trapping and fishing, Canadian communities were forged, citizens were brought together in trading in communities and in spirit, famous Canadians, such as the first trading expansionist, Governor Frontenac who extended French trading posts all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Early settlers navigated the swift, tumultuous Canadian rivers in search of adventure and food.

A national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day would celebrate the continuity between heritage and contemporary activities. It would serve as a link between our ancestors and future generations.

A national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day would also be an occasion for Canadian hunters, trappers and anglers to raise awareness about the history of our great country and the role that hunting, trapping and fishing have played in the exploration and settlement of this country. It is an opportunity to pass on these national traditions.

My grandfather, Narcisse Viens, was a trapper and my father worked in the bushes of northern Ontario. Hunting, trapping and fishing are not only important to families like mine but to countless millions of Canadians from the very beginning, as I have mentioned, of this country.

The day would also represent an opportunity to highlight the role of Canada's aboriginal and Métis people in the settling of this country. For many of Canada's aboriginal and Métis peoples, hunting, trapping and fishing continue to this very day to provide a source of income, food and a tangible link to their history and the basis of many traditions.

• (1755)

Not only are hunting, trapping and fishing historically significant for Canada but they contribute to the economy of this country today.

Canada has a strong reputation as a premier destination for outdoor sporting enthusiasts. These industries build on the strength of Canada's economy and sustain jobs. From campsites to outfitters, from travel guides to restaurants, the hunting, trapping and fishing industry attracts visitors to Canada. The tremendous importance of these industries cannot be overstated.

In the interest of brevity, because we only have a few minutes, I would just like to relate to the House the tremendous importance of these activities on the gross domestic product of many areas of Canada and I will just name a few.

In British Columbia, the gross domestic product for angling in 2003 was some \$711 million; the GDP in British Columbia was \$116 million for hunting; in Alberta, it was over \$102 million for hunting activities, and many more millions of dollars in other trapping and hunting related activities. In Ontario, the province in which I live, hunting alone represents over \$1.5 billion in economic activity.

The fur trade in Canada contributes over \$800 million to the Canadian gross domestic product. The fur trade in Canada is composed of over 60,000 trappers, including 25,000 aboriginals, with 5,000 representing fur farmers, manufacturers, dressers, retailers and others. We cannot forget the people in the Atlantic who rely on the sealing industry.

Canadians actively participate in hunting, trapping and fishing each year. Some 3.2 million Canadians participate in recreational fishing and spend some \$7.5 billion on this sport. Nationally, about one in every ten Canadian adults are active anglers. Recreational fishing is a legitimate, social and economic use of fish resources, and is integrated into the management plans that conserve fish stocks. Managing and sustaining recreational fisheries allows Canadians to enjoy Canada's natural resources.

Hunting, trapping and fishing and tourism, generated by these activities, are vital to sustaining some of our smallest communities and creating jobs for Canadians in very remote areas of this country. Take for example that of more than \$1.6 billion spent on recreational fishing in 2005, three-quarters of these expenditures were spent on food, lodging and transportation. This is an investment in Canada's economy and creates jobs in Canadian communities.

Private Members' Business

From the Great Lakes to the mountains on Canada's west coast and the farthest reaches of the north, these pursuits continue to draw people together and entice tourists to visit Canada. Hunting, trapping and fishing are particularly important for Canada's northern communities, on both a cultural and economic level. Canadians living in these regions rely on hunting, trapping and fishing for their very survival. Hunting, trapping and fishing also fuels their economies and helps them attract more than 400,000 visitors each year as Canada's north has some of Canada's best hunting and sport fishing opportunities.

Canada's natural resources are defining characteristics of our country and a sense of pride for many Canadians. Encouraging Canadians to pursue these outdoor activities provides opportunities for many Canadians to enjoy our natural resources in a responsible and sustainable manner.

Because of their vested interest in our natural resources, hunters, anglers and trappers have made significant contributions to the understanding of Canada's vast eco-systems. For example, Canadian anglers support national parks by taking part in surveys, reporting tagged fish and participating in public consultation. They have also been key advocates and participants in conservation efforts, and the management of fish and wildlife.

● (1800)

Hunters, trappers and anglers have funded and participated in research projects to help save wetlands, reintroduce wildlife and restock lakes. They have improved safety conditions and encouraged younger generations to participate in the traditions of hunting and fishing as well as trapping.

Canada's hunters, trappers and fishermen are highly regulated. Educational programs are in place to ensure that these are safe recreational activities. In many instances, licensing fees contribute to the monitoring and protection of wildlife. I must say that I belong to several of those organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited for example.

I could not speak today without mentioning Ducks Unlimited, who have been conserving wetlands in Canada since 1938. The organization has secured six million acres of habitat through land purchases, management agreements and conservation elements. It has positively influenced 47 million acres of habitat through retention and restoration measures. It has completed 8,400 habitat projects, representing 26,000 different project segments. That is just one organization of many, not including the one I belong to, which is the Quinte Elk Restoration Committee.

I recognize that this is not the first time that this topic has been raised. I would like to assure the House that Bill C-465 does not impinge upon provincial or territorial jurisdiction for the regulation of hunting, trapping and fishing. The provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario have existing legislation and Saskatchewan's act is in the process.

These activities recognize the importance of hunting, fishing and trapping and this bill does not contradict that authority. Bill C-465 simply calls for the designation of a special day to commemorate our national history and heritage, a day to reflect on how our nation was formed and the continuing importance of these traditional activities.

The importance of hunting, fishing and trapping on the founding of the United States of America was recognized on September 26 and that date was designated by a proclamation as a national hunting and fishing heritage day. This proclamation highlighted the contributions of hunting and fishing to sound game management, the system of ethical, science-based game laws and national heritage. Canadians deserve a similar recognition of hunting, trapping and fishing, the role they played in building our nation and the role they continue to play in our national environment.

The formal designation of September 23 of each year as an official national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day would raise awareness among Canadians about the important contribution that Canada's hunters, trappers and anglers have made to the settlement of Canada. The designation of this day will provide Canadians with an annual opportunity to highlight Canada's heritage and the traditions of hunting, trapping and fishing.

A national day would build on the independent spirit of those Canadians who engage in active recreation on Canada's land and waterways, and encourage Canadians to learn about Canada's history and travel the trails and the waterways of those who came before us.

I again declare that I support the designation of this day as a federal commemoration of an important aspect of national history and heritage. It may be emotional for some people. It certainly is for this member, whose family hunts and fishes just up the way.

I ask all members of the House to support this bill. It is simple, but it does recognize the tremendous importance that these activities have on every Canadian. They have formed a vital part of why Canada is the country it is today, not only to this day but since the very founding of this country.

● (1805)

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on his passion for hunting, fishing and trapping. I have just one question I would like to ask him. He knows we have been discussing this.

There are two amendments I would like to propose at committee. One would be the inclusion of the line, "Whereas aboriginal peoples have exercised and been sustained by traditional hunting, trapping and fishing activities for food, ceremonial and commercial purposes since time immemorial". The second amendment is a friendly amendment to add the word "coast". The bill says "coast to coast", so it would be made "coast to coast to coast".

Is the member in agreement with these two amendments to Bill C-465?

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for the question and, of course, his support for this bill. Yes, I believe the inclusion of our three coasts is very important to the bill and I would welcome that.

As I made my presentation before the House, yes, we need to recognize that the traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping began with the first nations, and continue to this day. So, I do think it is important for that inclusion, and I look forward to speaking with the hon. member at committee, and exploring the way we could incorporate that into the existing bill before this House.

• (1810)

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Northumberland—Quinte West very much for introducing the national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day idea. It is an excellent idea.

I am a fisherman. I am a former hunter. I am a former licensed trapper. In northwestern Ontario, hunting, fishing and trapping are not just a hobby, as they are for many. It is a culture. It is a way of life. It is a source of food. It is a source of income for many aboriginal and non-aboriginal people.

Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in northwestern Ontario have a long history of hunting, fishing and trapping. They were the first conservationists in our area. They were the first environmentalists in our area. So, on behalf of the citizens of Thunder Bay—Superior North, I would like to commend the hon. member on this most worthwhile proposed piece of legislation,

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, I hope he is happy to know that this member will take one week off this summer. I will be flying to Thunder Bay and then driving to Armstrong. From there, we are going to take a float plane into one of the northern lakes, and he is pointing to himself because I suspect that he may be the member of Parliament for that area. We are going to go where a group of my very close friends are and we are going to be fishing for those beautiful walleye that are there. I like to say pickerel, but walleye, apparently, is the appropriate word.

The member is entirely correct. The importance of hunting, fishing and trapping cannot be overstated to the life of the people who live in the north, but not just the north. In my riding, we have first nation territories that are along Rice Lake. They still depend on the ability to hunt, trap and fish.

I am hoping that we can have a few witnesses come before the committee to tell Canadians about these things. We as members of Parliament understand some of these things, but I think Canadians, especially new Canadians who are new to this country, need to look at the rich heritage that we have.

I made reference to my grandfather who was a trapper in northern Ontario. His name was Narcisse Viens. I can tell members that the stories he told us about when he was trapping in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s in northern Ontario kept us away from the TV they were that good. That is pretty good to say when we are talking to some young people.

So, yes, to the member. I look forward to perhaps having him attend committee and talk about the importance.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the non-partisan parliamentary outdoor caucus and as the MP representing Yukon riding, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day. As the mover of the bill, the

Private Members' Business

member for Northumberland—Quinte West, is aware, I have two amendments that I would like to see added to the bill. These amendments will be proposed at committee study of the bill.

For the record here in the House, I will explain why I am proposing amendments, so all hon. members will understand them as well.

The first amendment would be inserted after the first line of the preamble, and it would read:

Whereas Aboriginal peoples have exercised and been sustained by traditional hunting, trapping and fishing activities for food, ceremonial and commercial purposes since time immemorial;

From this line, members and all those who will read Bill C-465 will take note of the recognition of aboriginal peoples and the significance of hunting, trapping and fishing in the culture, past and present.

When I first read the bill, the absence of aboriginal recognition was very obvious to me, and as a result, I consulted with several aboriginal groups. I want to thank them for their input, which resulted in the amendment that I will propose at committee.

It is also interesting to note that the right of Canada's aboriginal peoples with respect to hunting, trapping and fishing are recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982, so it only seems fitting that this fact once again be acknowledged in Bill C-465.

The second amendment that I will propose at committee is the addition of the words "to coast" in line two of the preamble. Once again, as members know, Canada is bordered by three coasts and should be acknowledged as such when we speak of activity taking place from coast to coast to coast.

One of the reasons I am supportive of Bill C-465 is because of my own private member's bill currently listed as Bill C-277. I proposed this legislation over three years ago. With each new session of Parliament, the number on the bill changes but not the content. Bill C-277 calls for the establishment of a national fish and wildlife heritage commission and to re-establish the survey on the importance of nature to Canadians, to help protect Canada's natural resources, and it promoted activities related to fish and wildlife, including hunting, fishing and trapping.

If Parliament sees fit to pass Bill C-465, which I expect it will do in good order, then possibly some of the goals I outlined in my private member's bill will be met.

As an example, in Bill C-277 I advocated the promotion of practices that will lead future generations to value recreational hunting and fishing; the promotion of public participation in fish and wildlife conservation programs; the promotion of youth participation activities related to fish and wildlife, including hunting, fishing and conservation; and the promotion of tourism related to fish and wildlife, including hunting and fishing.

Surely these objectives could be highlighted as Canadians begin to plan and mark special events in celebration of a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

Private Members' Business

While the member for Northumberland—Quinte West proposes this as a national day, other provinces and territories have already enacted or are in the process of drawing up legislation to recognize the heritage importance of hunting and fishing, as he mentioned in his speech.

In my riding, Yukon Territory, there is such legislation on the books that was passed by the territorial assembly back in 2003. It recognizes that hunters and anglers contribute to the conservation, understanding and management of the Yukon's fish and wildlife. It has been an important part of our past for our cultural, social and economic heritage and is very important for the same contributions today.

For Yukon people, hunting, fishing and trapping is about sharing knowledge, experience and history of the land and waters. It is about passing on of traditions. More important, it is about learning respect and love for our natural environment. Hunting, fishing and trapping allow us to be part of nature, to better understand who we are, what we are part of and how important nature is.

As many members know, Yukon is a large riding with a small population, but it is important to note the significant impact on the territorial economy that is a result of hunting, fishing and trapping.

One of the first points of contact for those interested in hunting and fishing in the Yukon would be the Yukon Outfitters. What is their contribution to the territorial economy? Let me tell everyone.

Yukon Outfitters directly employ more than 250 people. They also generate in excess of \$15 million that supports over 300 local businesses, their employers and the Yukon economy.

•(1815)

Yukon Outfitters account for 10% of all non-government money coming into the Yukon. Yukon Outfitters and their clients generate more than 8% of Yukon's tourism dollars and are responsible for more than 12% of Yukon tourism jobs. In effect, Yukon Outfitters are responsible for 20% of all tourism dollars in the territory. This also means that 85% of all the money generated by Yukon Outfitters remains in the Yukon supporting local businesses.

Yukon Outfitters generate more money for the Yukon economy with fewer tourists and less impact than any other Yukon business. At the same time, Yukon Outfitters are committed stewards of the land and are venturing their own funds to look after a public resource. The same is true of two other great Yukon organizations: the Yukon Trappers Association and the Yukon Fish and Game Association.

The United States has a national organization for promoting its hunting and angling heritage. Many states have enacted laws protecting hunting and fishing opportunities, and as I have mentioned, several provinces and territories have also done so. Members of Parliament should be assured that Canadian wildlife federations and fish and game associations welcome the passing of an act respecting a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

History has shown that less than 100 years ago, when wildlife was threatened like no other time in recorded history in North America, people who understood the value of fish, wildlife, trapping and wild

lands came together to restore and to protect and conserve. These people, like now, were active hunters and anglers. They helped to preserve and protect a heritage that we are asking to be recognized now with the passage of Bill C-465.

People fish, hunt and trap for a variety of reasons. Some hunt and fish strictly to put wild meat on the table. Others hunt and fish because it allows them to be closer to nature and justifies more quality time spent in the wilderness. Some individuals hunt, fish and trap because it is deeply rooted in the social fabric of their culture. The reasons people hunt, fish and trap are complex, varied and often overlapping.

These activities are deeply imprinted, to a varying degree, on all people of the world. Archeological evidence shows that these activities have been with us since the early days of mankind. Even in our modern, technological society where the majority of people are far removed from the realities of nature, individuals have retained the right and the desire to hunt, fish and trap.

As I said at the outset of my speech, I look forward to moving two amendments to Bill C-465 when it goes to committee, and if these amendments are accepted, I look forward to continuing to support this bill enthusiastically. I congratulate the member for Northumberland—Quinte West for bringing this piece of legislation forward.

I am delighted to see my other co-chair of the outdoor caucus here today. I know he is a big supporter of the bill, and as a co-chair of the outdoor caucus and member of Parliament for Yukon, I know my constituents will welcome the news when I tell them in the near future that Parliament has passed an act respecting a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

•(1820)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois is in favour of the bill that would designate a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day. As we know, hunting, trapping and fishing are legitimate activities that have a positive impact on the economies of the regions, and they are part of a way of life for many people and many communities.

This bill does not aim to protect or regulate hunting, trapping and fishing in any way. It does not interfere in the government's business or in its jurisdictions. It is the Government of Quebec's business to enforce the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife and the Fisheries Act, among other things.

Those who make a living from these activities often encounter difficulties, and this day will help inform and make the public and decision-makers aware of their situation, of their concerns and their needs. Therefore, the Bloc Québécois is in favour of this bill, as I mentioned before.

Private Members' Business

This bill would designate September 23 as National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day. This would be a day to recognize the economic and cultural contribution made by hunters, trappers and fishers in Quebec and Canada.

We need to distinguish between two main categories of activities: sport fishing and hunting, which are leisure activities, and commercial fishing and hunting, which are how some people make a living or earn most of their income. This is an important distinction, because this bill is about hunting, fishing and trapping as leisure activities, not as ways to earn a living. The two types of activities do not have the same purpose and are not governed by the same laws or sometimes, as in the case of fishing, even by the same level of government.

In Quebec, sport hunting and trapping are governed by regulations made under the provincial Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife, while fishing is governed by the Quebec Fishery Regulations, which come under the federal Fisheries Act.

Management of the maritime fishery also comes under federal jurisdiction, while the management of the freshwater fishery is a provincial responsibility, except in the four Atlantic provinces. It is important to remember that federal government delegated responsibility for managing the maritime fishery to Quebec in 1922, but unilaterally took back that responsibility in 1983.

In fact, in Quebec, two entities are responsible for managing the freshwater fishery: the Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec, which manages the resource and issues sport fishing licences, and MAPAQ, which issues commercial fishing licences.

Moreover, the fishery has always been among the areas over which Quebec has traditionally demanded control:

The provinces should have exclusive jurisdiction over the following: education, property law and civil law, hospitals, trades and professions, fisheries, marriage, agriculture, municipal institutions and schools, insurance, the establishment...

There are many economic spin-offs from hunting, fishing and trapping activities in Quebec. We have quite a few statistics. For example, 408,000 Quebecers are hunting enthusiasts; 813,000 Quebecers are recreational fishers. Each fisher spends \$1,287 every year; hunters, \$756 each. This spending adds up to a total of \$308 million spent by hunting enthusiasts each year. This spending means that 3,322 jobs are either created or maintained, it equals \$87.3 million in salaries and it generates \$157.3 million in value added. You can see how important it is.

Hunting, fishing and trapping activities are beneficial to managing wildlife conservation. Hunting, fishing and trapping are not only legitimate hobbies for thousands of Quebecers and Canadians, they are also used by governments as wildlife management tools. If animal or fish populations are not adequately controlled, a number of problems could develop, such as property damage—and related prevention costs—and rodents that damage roads, bridges, dams, drainage systems and wiring. There are also losses to farmers, their crops and livestock, as well as losses to the forestry industry.

I would like to digress for a moment and mention the comments made by Conservative Senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu on Sunday concerning the excessive deer population in the Eastern Townships.

● (1825)

He said that the decrease in hunters “has a direct impact on the number of traffic accidents because of deer-vehicle collisions”, explained the senator who worked at the ministry of recreation, fish and game for 15 years.

He added that if deer are not culled in the Eastern Townships, in any given year there are between 5,000 and 8,000 deer collisions. The ministry of transport recorded just 6,000 collisions per year. I say “just” because of the figures provided by Senator Boisvenu. The transport ministry even records minor accidents.

It is obvious that Senator Boisvenu is using the figures—although I am not sure how he has stretched the facts—to support what he is saying. It does not require more hunters or guns, but an increase in Quebec government quotas. Sport hunting and fishing is one way the Quebec government controls animal populations.

I cannot help but raise another one of the senator's ridiculous statements: “It does not occur to 14- to 18-year-olds to buy a gun”. In a roundabout way, he was explaining that he was against the gun registry and that the increasing number of single mothers raising their children alone means that “hunting is no longer a tradition handed down from father to son”.

He added the following comment, that I would call unfortunate, if not ridiculous: “It does not occur to 14- to 18-year-olds to buy a gun”. I would say that it is a good thing that it does not occur to young people to buy guns.

I will continue. We were speaking about controlling animal populations. Hunting and fishing are an excellent way to do that.

Quebec's ministry of natural resources and wildlife is relying on two studies conducted to try to determine the possible repercussions of abandoning sport hunting and trapping as a wildlife management tool. Several animal rights groups claim that hunting and trapping are outdated methods for managing animal populations and that other methods could be used. It is not as simple as that, since animal birth control and relocation are not only quite costly measures, but they have also proven somewhat ineffective.

Wildlife managers also maintain that wildlife management budgets could never be increased enough if sport hunting and trapping were ever abandoned.

I see I am running out of time, but I think I have enough time to share with my colleagues a press release issued by the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs, which welcomes this national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

Private Members' Business

The Federation...welcomes the private members' bill introduced by the federal member [for Northumberland—Quinte West] designating a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

The federation sees this as a gesture of recognition of the contribution made by hunters and fishers to the country's social, economic and ecological development. This gesture is a clear demonstration of the government's support for hunting, fishing and trapping activities, which are all fundamental components of Canada's national heritage. This measure fits into the federation's action plan, as we have been trying for seven years to have a national hunting day declared in Quebec.

Pierre Latraverse, president of the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs, confirmed that his organization wholeheartedly welcomes this proposal from the Canadian government. He said that this initiative serves to prove once again the tremendous heritage value of these traditional harvesting activities in Quebec and Canada.

• (1830)

[English]

Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-465, An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day, introduced by the member for Northumberland—Quinte West.

I am happy to support the bill and show my support for the thousands of Canadians, including many Sudburians, who relish the end of summer and approaching fall and the start of hunting season.

Let me first look at the history of these Canadian pastimes to illustrate the traditional nature and relevance of these activities then and now.

The challenge of the pursuit, the satisfaction of living off the land, hunting in northern Ontario is a local tradition that has been connecting people with nature for centuries. Hunting, trapping and fishing are part of an ancient tradition and an integral part of Canada's national and cultural heritage. Our ancestors and aboriginal groups in Canada used to hunt and fish for food and clothing to ensure their survival.

Today these activities are still an important part of life for hundreds of thousands of Canadians and millions of people around the world. For many aboriginal groups in Canada it is still an important method of food gathering and income, while for others hunting is a recreational activity that provides an opportunity to further friendships and camaraderie, an opportunity to experience nature and relax in the great outdoors and to make an important contribution to conservation.

The fact is Canadians love nature and being a part of it. A survey conducted a few years ago assessed the nature and wildlife affinity of approximately 20 million Canadians. Of those surveyed, nature-related activities were placed at a premium with a total of 1.5 billion days devoted to nature trips and taking part in activities like recreational fishing and hunting.

In 1996 approximately one in twenty Canadian citizens pursued game in the Canadian forests. Canadians who actively hunted took an average of 12.7 hunting trips annually with 16.9 days each year that the average participant spent going out on these hunts.

Spending time in the great outdoors is what we Canadians do best and it is not hard to figure out why. Canada's lush countryside and its wild forest lands, hills and mountains make it home to a vast number of some of the most magnificent game animals ever seen. This has

made Canada a year-round season for season hunting ground for seekers of wild game from all over the world.

I do not mind telling the House that Sudbury, Ontario, my great riding of course, is at the top of the list as it offers hunters and fishermen the best of both worlds. With over 330 lakes within the city limits, greater Sudbury is an urban centre just steps away from the wilderness, one of my city's greatest attributes. Local hunters and anglers can get home from work and within an hour be at their camps, hunting game or out on the lakes fishing.

Whether it is by car or bush plane, one can leave downtown Sudbury and within minutes be immersed in dense northern bush mixed with beautiful stands of birch and poplar, rolling hills, marshlands interspersed with the breathtaking blues and greens of inland lakes and winding rivers.

It is worth noting that Canada maintains various nature preserves and sanctuaries to protect big game and small game animals and thousands of species of game fowl, as well as the wild habitats to sustain them.

Areas like the Lake Laurentian Conservation Area offer 55 kilometres of well-marked hiking and biking trails. One can explore the magnificent flora and fauna of the region, including a wetlands area created by Ducks Unlimited.

Just north of the city one will find the Jackson Lookout and Information Centre that overlooks High Falls, a waterfall formed by the Onaping River that cascades 150 feet into the Sudbury basin.

The Sudbury Game & Fish Protective Association is one of the oldest conservation organizations in the area. The Chelmsford Fish and Game Association is also worth noting for its efforts in this regard.

These are just a few of the spots to see, Mr. Speaker, on your next visit to Sudbury.

Not only are these activities enjoyable and part of growing up in northern Ontario, they also make significant contributions to our local and national economy.

• (1835)

Hunting, fishing and trapping are part of a massive industry, one that helps power tourism and the economy in a number of communities across Canada. In fact, according to the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association, Industry Canada sources estimate that eight million people of all ages fish in Canada.

Canadian anglers spend \$6.7 billion annually, according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Between 1984 and 1999 anglers and hunters directly contributed more than \$335 million to wildlife habitat conservation, and I am sure that number is growing.

Canadian anglers also devoted one million volunteer days to cleaning up habitat and enhancing the fishing environment. Canadian hunters also donate close to one million hours per year to habitat conservation. Of course, the hunter licence fees brought almost \$600 million to government treasuries, which of course helps all of our economies.

While my community has fallen on rough times with layoffs and the ongoing strike at Vale Inco, many find a way to escape from their daily stresses and ongoing worry by taking a time out in nature. For many families in my riding of Sudbury, hunting, fishing and trapping are part of a family tradition. For many fathers and their sons and daughters, it can be a rite of passage, the first time a father brings his son to the hunt camp or the first fishing trip for a parent and his or her daughter.

For years families have been teaching their children how to enjoy these activities safely and responsibly while improving their awareness of the natural environment. A child's first hunting or fishing trip is right up there in terms of childhood and young adult experiences with getting their driver's licence and things along those lines. It is an important part of what it means to grow up in northern Ontario.

In conclusion, I would be very glad to support this private member's bill. I believe it is time that we as a nation recognize these popular and traditional Canadian pastimes and pay tribute to those in hunter orange and honour their favourite pastime by deeming every 23rd day of September as national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I am able to address the House today concerning Bill C-465, which has been put forward by my colleague from Northumberland—Quinte West.

I would like to take this time to highlight the importance that these activities have on our national economy, the important role that hunters, trappers and anglers play in conservation and to highlight the support this bill has received.

As co-chair of the parliamentary outdoors caucus, I was honoured to second this bill. It is a non-partisan organization, with over 100 MPs and senators as members, and its purpose is to protect our traditional heritage activities.

Hunting, trapping and fishing are Canadian heritage traditions, which provide people of all ages and abilities the unique opportunity to spend quality time outdoors with family and friends in wild places in every region and riding of our country.

A major part of these outdoor heritage activities is the direct connection to natural resource conservation of our fish and wildlife. A love and respect for nature learned through first-hand experience in fishing, hunting or trapping inspires people to dedicate their time, effort and money to the conservation and preservation of fish and wildlife, and this is a key point that I would like to emphasize.

Anglers, trappers and hunters collectively do more for environmental conservation than all other groups combined. They do so without fanfare and often without any public recognition, but with the dedication that has defined the outdoor heritage community for over 100 years. The hand that holds the fishing rod or the bird gun also holds the shovel at a stream side improvement day and the chain saw at a wildlife habitat management project.

Canadian anglers annually donate over one million volunteer days to aquatic improvement projects. Hunters also donate millions of hours and dollars each year to efforts which benefit dozens of wildlife species far beyond the few which are actually hunted.

Private Members' Business

Many of my colleagues may be surprised to learn that the very concept of parks and protected areas, first conceived in North America over a century ago, exist today across Canada and around the world due in large part to the advocacy efforts of people who hunt and fish. Our heritage of fishing, hunting and trapping includes a proud history of respect for wild creatures and wild places, which continues to translate into positive conservation action in all areas of Canada.

People who participate in these activities are also at the forefront of improved hunter safety training and safe firearm handling and proficiency. Anglers can be found advocating for and teaching water safety and boat handling training programs. Trappers teach humane trapping methods and proper conservation of furbearing species as a heritage from Canada's original founding industry. Current statistics clearly show that people who hunt, fish and trap are law-abiding members of society who are safe and who put something back on behalf of our outdoor heritage. In contrast to the negative image of these activities promoted by some for their own reasons, the facts are clear and the safety record commendable.

Over eight million Canadians of all ages fish and millions more hunt, supporting an annual economy in this country of over \$10 billion. The largest retail outlets are located in urban areas.

Over 40,000 jobs are supported by these activities in all regions of Canada. According to government statistics, more people over the age of 15 fish than play golf and hockey combined. The voting strength of Canadian anglers is almost 50% greater than seniors age 65 and over. Canadians annually spend as much to go fishing as they do to buy beer. The impact of fishing and hunting on tourism and related economies in rural areas is dramatic. Clearly our outdoor heritage activities are enjoyed by Canadians and visitors to Canada alike, from coast to coast.

● (1840)

Support for the bill has been overwhelming. Members from the Conservative, Liberal and New Democratic Parties have jointly seconded this non-partisan bill that applies to so many of our constituents. The bill also enjoys wide support from non-government organizations, businesses and individuals across Canada.

Private Members' Business

I would like to take a moment to thank a few of these groups that have been extremely helpful and generous with their support: the Alberta Fish and Game Club Association, British Columbia Wildlife Federation, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, Friends of Fur, Canadian Outdoors Network, Canadian Sport Fishing Industry Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fur Institute of Canada, Hunting for Tomorrow Foundation, La Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Outdoor Caucus Association of Canada, Prince Edward Island Wildlife Federation, Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation, Robert Sopuck, Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Shimano Canada Ltd. and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

As mentioned previously, hunting, fishing and trapping played an essential role in the early development of our nation. Today people fish, hunt and trap for some very personal and profound reasons that connect us to our history, to our magnificent outdoors and to one another. Teaching a child to fish is one of life's great moments. These activities remain as economical and relevant today as ever. Some suggest that these activities are more relevant than in the past as our modern, urban lifestyles tend to insulate us from the natural world. Fishing, hunting and trapping connect us to the wild places. They always have.

We owe our thanks to the ongoing efforts of hunters, trappers and anglers and what they continue to accomplish for all of us. It is due to these people that the conservation of land, water, forests and the species living there have been so successful in Canada. These individuals recognize the natural balance that must be maintained through science-based sustainable use of fish and wildlife.

It is my great privilege to speak in support of Bill C-465, a bill which represents the interests of so many Canadians in all regions of our nation. I encourage every member of the House to show their support for the bill in recognition of our outdoor heritage activities and the millions of our fellow citizens who actively participate and enjoy them.

I thank the member for Northumberland—Quinte West for bringing forth Bill C-465.

I have enjoyed hunting and fishing since I was very young. Unless we have experienced these outdoor heritage activities, we do not know how wonderful and valuable they are. There is no substitute for getting out into our great Canadian wilderness. Our whole attitude to the world changes through these activities. Respect for life and nature grows immensely when we participate in hunting and fishing.

I again want to emphasize the wonderful activities that we have on our doorsteps. I encourage more Canadians to participate in them and learn more about them. It can really enrich their lives. I hope this special day every year will remind us of the need to do that.

• (1845)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be speaking to Bill C-465 this evening. I see that all of the parties in the House here are in favour of the bill, so we will be sending it off to committee in due course.

The bill is fairly simple in that it will designate September 23 or perhaps the third Saturday, I believe, in September, depending on

how the committee develops, as a national hunting, trapping and fishing heritage day. We have to recognize that in the United States there has been such a heritage day in existence since 1972.

With the increased border changes over the last couple of years, with the United States requiring passports for their citizens to get back into the country and with the global recession still not quite resolved, there is a lot of pressure on the tourism industry right across Canada, and certainly in Manitoba and northwestern Ontario which is very close to Manitoba.

The camps are hurting. There are numerous camps, fishing and hunting camps, in northern Manitoba and in northwestern Ontario that rely very heavily on American tourists, cross-border tourism. We are finding that this business is down. I think the sponsor of the bill recognizes that, in effect, it is down around 30%. We have to do whatever we can to try to get the hunters and fishers back to Canada to keep our industry alive.

I listened to all of the speakers today, and each one of them made very good speeches on this topic. The immediate past speaker talked about how large an industry we are talking about. Canada is still a country that is rural based. We like to pretend in the city that somehow Canada is becoming increasingly urban, and that certainly is true.

I recall only 30 years ago, in the 1960s, Winnipeg was, I think, the third largest city in the country. I believe Montreal was first, Toronto was second, Winnipeg was third and Vancouver was fourth. That has all changed now. Toronto, becoming the huge city that it is, is number one. Montreal dropped in terms of the relativity. Other cities like Calgary and Edmonton are coming up.

Having said that, Winnipeg still has a percentage of the Manitoba population. It used to be 50% of the entire population and now it has grown to perhaps 70%. Having said that, and even though my riding is 100% urban, the fact of the matter is people are only one step removed from rural life and rural farms.

People go out in the thousands to cottages outside of Winnipeg and northwestern Ontario. They participate in fishing and hunting. It is a very substantial part of our economy. However, there are pressures with increased populations, with the animal rights movement and our young people increasingly becoming vegetarians, and taking a little bit different attitude toward the rural lifestyle. I find that to be particular to the urban setting.

People are gradually getting somewhat removed from their rural roots. I think it is very important for us to try in some way to get back to our past and recognize where we came from.

I did some research on the topic yesterday and the day before, looking into the history of the buffalo hunt as an example.

•(1850)

I think that the buffalo hunt is a really good example of an activity that had a lot of the worst signs of a hunt. Hunters went out and hunted and just killed enormous numbers of buffalo. The fact is that after a number of years, the buffalo population was almost extinct. However, the settlers of the day recognized that this could not be sustained. They worked to bring back the buffalo population to the point that in 2005, it was estimated that there were over 500,000, or half a million, bison on farms and ranches in North America.

To the pessimistic people among us, I want to say that the history of the buffalo is a good example of how we should be able to recover from our mistakes and create a balance.

The Bloc speakers mentioned that the number of accidents between cars and deer rises in Quebec when hunting activity drops. As in all things, there has to be a happy balance.

It is no different for a minority government. It has to recognize that to get things done, we have to co-operate. This is a good example to the member who brought this idea forward that he is going to have unanimous agreement to move this bill on to committee.

I want to thank him very much for—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order. The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

•(1855)

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in tonight's adjournment debate, otherwise known as the late show. For the benefit of those watching at home, this is an opportunity for parliamentarians to focus briefly on what might be considered unfinished business of the House prior to adjourning for the day.

The unfinished business that I would like to talk about tonight is in reference to a question I posed to the Minister of the Environment on April 1 about the contamination of the Athabasca River being caused by oil sands industry activities. In his very short response to my question, the minister betrayed his misunderstanding of three areas in particular: first, Dr. David Schindler's findings; second, the Fisheries Act and third, the Canada-Alberta Administrative Agreement for the Control of Deposits of Deleterious Substances.

Those are the three areas I would like to focus on in this very brief debate. First of all, it bears mentioning that the minister has qualified the science that has been done on contamination of the Athabasca River by oil sands activities as garbage science. He has mentioned this in media interviews. He considers this garbage science even

Adjournment Proceedings

though there is mounting evidence by very reputable scientists that the oil sands are contaminating the Athabasca River and its tributaries; in other words, the Athabasca watershed.

A related aspect of the minister's misunderstanding of the science is found in his answer. He called Dr. Schindler's research "allegations", which I think is a little disrespectful of one of the world's greatest water scientists. He suggested that Dr. Schindler's findings, in a report that he presented to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, are related only "to airborne emissions as opposed to Fisheries Act issues".

It is true that Dr. Schindler's research found a link between oil sands development and the deposit of pollution in the Athabasca coming from particular matter that is settling in the Athabasca River. There is no doubt about that.

However, while Dr. Schindler's research found high contamination of polycyclic aromatics, including several known carcinogens in snow samples from the Athabasca River, near the centre of oil sands activity and at the bottom of the impacted Athabasca River tributaries, it also found high concentrations of several contaminants under the ice that are known to be high in tailings ponds. They are sites that are just downstream of tailings ponds, indicating that there is some effect of tailings pond leakage under winter's low-flow conditions.

In other words, not only is pollution being deposited on the river from the air, but contaminants are also found in the water in winter under the ice, which means that these are contaminants coming from the tailings ponds that are leaking into the Athabasca.

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I always find it sadly shocking when a Liberal member brings up issues on the environment, which highlights what has happened because of 13 years of inaction from a former Liberal government. In the four short years that we have been the government, there have been dramatic successes in cleaning up those messes left by the previous Liberal government.

Environment Canada is an active participant in monitoring the development and growth of the oil sands through environmental assessments, multi-stakeholder environmental management committees, science and technology research, and the enforcement of regulations.

Dr. Schindler's study suggests that emissions from the oil sands industry are higher and cover a wider area than previously thought. However, the study does not assess the ecological impact of the suggested higher levels of emissions. Environment Canada scientists are currently assessing fish health in the Athabasca and its tributaries to determine the ecological impact, if any, of these emissions.

Adjournment Proceedings

The government is working with all the stakeholders on a national approach that will reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The government will assess current air and water monitoring programs in the Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan areas and will evaluate whether supplementary information needs to be collected. The study's authors claim that the results show that better monitoring is needed and that more remedial measures need to be taken to ensure the health of those living along the Athabaska and its tributaries.

Environment Canada works closely with the Alberta government under the Canada-Alberta Administrative Agreement for the Control of Deposits of Deleterious Substances under the Fisheries Act. The Alberta government issues permits that prohibit the release of tailings to surface waters. Under the Canada-Alberta agreement, the province has a commitment to alert Environment Canada if monitoring indicates leaching into the waters frequented by fish.

Environment Canada has a research initiative to focus on the fate and remediation of natural ecosystems. The purpose is to understand the effluents from the oil sands industry, their fate, and the effects on the natural ecosystems and to establish baseline data for the health of the Athabaska River system so that we can gain insights into the possible ecological effects of the oil sands activities.

With regard to the enforcement of the regulations, Environment Canada is committed to working with the province of Alberta and all stakeholders to ensure that oil sands development respects the environment. Environment Canada works to ensure that any existing new or expanded facility meets the requirements and regulations of the Migratory Birds Convention Act, the Species at Risk Act, the Fisheries Act, water pollution prevention provisions, and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Since 2002, enforcement officers have conducted 26 inspections and two investigations under subsection 36(3) of the Fisheries Act related to the release of deleterious substances into freshwater frequented by fish.

We take our enforcement role very seriously, and action is taken if violations are found.

● (1900)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the federal government does not take its enforcement responsibilities seriously at all, and this is the problem.

The hon. member mentioned the Canada-Alberta Administrative Agreement for the Control of Deposits of Deleterious Substances, but the federal government has been absent, really, from this agreement. In fact, the Commissioner of the Environment stated only a year ago that the main coordinating committee of this agreement has not met for three years.

Also, the agreement has not been fully implemented. For example, and I am reading from a note from the Library of Parliament, under clause 5.2 of the agreement, Canada and Alberta envisioned establishing an arrangement relating to "complementary and co-operative monitoring programs with provisions for information sharing".

However, it appears that no such arrangement was ever concluded. The government is missing in action on this. I must remind the hon. member that under the Fisheries Act, one does not have to prove that the ecosystem is damaged, only that deleterious substances are being deposited, whether from air or from water.

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, the member well knows that the only government in Canadian history that has been so absent in action was the previous Liberal government. He referenced the commissioner. She said that the Liberals made great announcements but that before the confetti hit the ground, they were gone and had forgotten what they had just announced.

This government is working with the provinces, territories, and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive air management system that would significantly reduce air pollution emissions from all sources in Canada. All industrial sources, regardless of the air quality or where they are located, would be required to comply with a sector-specific national emissions standard. If air quality in a given area is under pressure, even more stringent requirements will be imposed on any industry or facility in the area by the provincial department of the environment.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to follow up on a question about the government's funding for police officers in cities and towns across Canada. I asked this question in the House on April 20. Earlier that morning I had met with representatives of the Canadian Police Association as part of their annual police day on the Hill.

I had an opportunity to sit down with three police officers from British Columbia, two of whom were from the Victoria Police Department and one from the Coquitlam RCMP detachment. In addition, I have had the pleasure of meeting with police representatives on a number of occasions in my role as public safety critic for the New Democratic Party. I can say very clearly that it would do well for all members of the House, and the government in particular, to start listening to police officers about the positive social investments needed in our communities to keep Canadians safe.

The CPA came to Parliament Hill with three key priorities: first, long-term sustainable funding for police officer recruitment; second, an independent police association to facilitate collective bargaining for RCMP members; and third, a public safety officer compensation benefit for the families of fallen police officers.

I am pleased to say that New Democrats have stood in the House and supported the Canadian Police Association on each and every one of those matters. It is time for the government to follow suit.

With regard to the long-term sustainable funding for police officers, New Democrats have long supported an increase in resources for policing. New Democrats especially want to see more community policing in Canada. When police officers work in partnership with schools, with neighbourhood associations, with cultural groups and with leaders in the community our streets are safer for everyone.

Adjournment Proceedings

In Vancouver Kingsway, we want to see more police in our communities, on Main Street, at the SkyTrain stations and patrolling our parks. This is the kind of police presence that works for prevention and it works to bolster community confidence.

We have called for funds to be tied directly to the recruitment of officers and for the funds to be renewed and sustainable in the future. This is critical because it is not enough just to advance funding for the creation of positions. Stable funding is needed to sustain these positions well into the future. We also must remember that for every one police officer position we create, we need civilian support staff who do critical work in supporting that police officer.

New Democrats also believe in the right to collective bargaining for all Canadians and that right belongs to RCMP officers no less. Police officers in municipal police forces across this country have the right to collectively bargain in detachments without any interruption in service or impact on public safety, but the RCMP is the only police force in our country that does not have this right.

The government should stop fighting RCMP officers in court over their access to basic labour rights enjoyed by virtually every other Canadian and work with them instead to further the safety of our communities. RCMP officers simply want a right to have a say in their working conditions and, with essential services obviously being a designation that they would fall under, this would present no interruption or threat to the provision of services.

Last, New Democrats believe that the government should implement a public safety officer compensation benefit for the families of fallen police officers. My colleague from Nickel Belt introduced a private member's bill that would establish a \$300,000 benefit for families of fallen RCMP officers that would be payable regardless of years of service. I was proud to second that bill, Bill C-514, when it was introduced in the House and I would call on all members to support this. We do not care who gets the credit. We just want to see that it gets done.

I have three questions. First, will the government commit to providing permanent stable funding for new police officers? Second, will it work with RCMP officers to allow them to exercise their rights to free collective bargaining to improve their working conditions? Third, will the government join with New Democrats and support a \$300,000 benefit for families of fallen RCMP officers and for public safety officers across the country?

• (1905)

Mr. Mark Warawa (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will respond to the questions of the member for Vancouver Kingsway regarding the police officers recruitment fund. It sounds as if he is not aware of the good work that this government is doing with police. I hope the NDP is now no longer a member of the hug-a-thug club.

One of the government's most important duties is the protection of its citizens against threats to their safety and security. This government takes this duty very seriously and one of our priorities since coming to office has been to strengthen public safety and security, to protect Canadians in their homes and communities and to ensure that Canada remains the best place in the world to raise a family.

To achieve this goal, we have made significant investments in policing, starting in 2006 when we became government, with \$645 million over five years to increase the RCMP's federal policing capacity, including funding for an additional 1,000 positions to focus on drugs, organized crime and other law enforcement priorities.

As part of our safer community strategy, this government has also delivered on the key platform commitment of making funding available to the provinces and territories to support the recruitment of 2,500 new front line police officers. Budget 2008 set aside \$400 million allocated on a per capita basis and over five years for the creation of the police officers recruitment fund to encourage provinces and territories to recruit additional front line police officers.

Establishing the first-ever police officers recruitment fund is a considerable federal investment that marks an important step forward in a way that respects provincial and territorial jurisdiction for policing, while ensuring maximum flexibility.

Consistent with their responsibility for policing, it is up to the provinces and territories to allocate funding as they see fit in their municipal and provincial police services. Provinces and territories are able to use the fund in a way that is best suited to address their local public safety priorities and policing needs.

All provinces and territories publicly confirmed their participation in the police officers recruitment fund and the fund was established on March 31, 2008. All provinces and territories have received their allocations and have the flexibility to draw down all of these funds at any time over the five years.

A number of provinces have publicly announced how they intend to use this funding: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island. For example, in February 2009 British Columbia announced it will be using its share of the fund toward hiring 168 new police officers within two years to focus on gang violence.

Given the diverse public safety needs across Canada, the public officers recruitment fund will go a considerable way toward supporting and complementing the costs of provincial police recruitment initiatives. This is an example of governments working together to respond to the priorities of Canadians.

All governments acknowledge the importance of reporting to Canadians about how public funds are used. Under this initiative, provincial and territorial governments have been encouraged to report directly to their residents on the expenditures and the outcomes anticipated.

• (1910)

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned the hug-a-thug club. I have never hugged a member of his government yet.

Adjournment Proceedings

Police officers know what is needed to keep our communities safe. When one sits down and talks to them, they very often express priorities that are common sense, progressive and in line with what New Democrats have repeatedly called for from the government, but which it refuses to deliver.

Police know that successful crime prevention is, by definition, the best way to keep our communities safe. Yet the government has cut funds for crime prevention. It knows we need serious investments in mental health and addictions treatment in our communities and that we need to tackle social problems like poverty and homelessness if we truly want to get to the root causes of crime. Instead, the government plays games with cheap headlines and silly comments like the one the member just made.

Police know that community safety starts with children. We need youth diversion programs that keep kids away from gangs. We need to have courses in high school and to properly fund primary and secondary education in every province and territory so young people finish high school and get rewarding educations and employment.

Does the government agree with police on these points? If so, will it commit to making the social investments needed in our communities to keep Canadians safe?

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, Canadians know the proof is in the pudding. How has the NDP voted on justice bills? The \$400 million for the police officers recruitment represents significant new funding for provinces and territories. How did it vote? It voted against that.

I cannot think of one justice bill that the NDP has ever supported in the House. Talk about the hug-a-thug club? It is the NDP. Canadians know this government is serious about making Canada safer. We place the rights of Canadians over the rights of criminals every day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:14 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Eliminating Entitlements for Prisoners Act

Ms. Finley	3225
Bill C-31. Introduction and first reading	3225
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)	3225

Interparliamentary Delegations

Ms. Ratansi	3225
-------------------	------

Petitions

Mining Industry

Mr. McKay	3225
-----------------	------

Canadian Forces

Mr. Atamanenko	3225
----------------------	------

Animal Welfare

Mrs. Wong	3225
-----------------	------

First Nations University

Mr. Russell	3225
-------------------	------

Assisted Suicide

Mr. Tilson	3226
------------------	------

Security and Prosperity Partnership

Mr. Julian	3226
------------------	------

Prison Farms

Mr. Maloway	3226
-------------------	------

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lukiwski	3226
--------------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—G8 and G20 Summits

Mr. Holland	3228
Motion	3228
Mr. Del Mastro	3231
Mr. Maloway	3231
Mr. Simms	3231
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	3232
Mr. Rathgeber	3232
Mr. Maloway	3234
Mr. Holland	3235
Mr. Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	3235
Mr. Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	3235
Mrs. Mourani	3236
Ms. Sgro	3238
Mr. Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	3238
Mr. Marston	3238
Mr. Lessard	3239
Mr. Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	3239
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	3242
Ms. Sgro	3242
Mr. Maloway	3242
Ms. Sgro	3243
Mr. Maloway	3245

Mr. McColeman	3246
Mr. Tonks	3248
Mr. Maloway	3248
Mr. Tonks	3248
Mr. Savage	3249
Mr. Gravelle	3250
Mr. Cannis	3250
Mr. Brison	3251
Mr. Easter	3251
Ms. Chow	3252
Mr. Brison	3252
Mr. Desnoyers	3253
Mr. Gravelle	3254
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	3254
Mr. Lessard	3254
Mr. Cardin	3254
Mr. Gravelle	3255
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	3256
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	3256

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Coptic Christians

Mr. Woodworth	3258
---------------------	------

ALS Awareness Day

Mr. McGuinty	3258
--------------------	------

Louise Warren

Mr. Paquette	3258
--------------------	------

Father's Day Walleye Tournament

Mrs. Hughes	3258
-------------------	------

Skin Cancer Screening Clinic

Ms. Cadman	3259
------------------	------

Aristides de Sousa Mendes

Mrs. Mendes	3259
-------------------	------

Kevin McKay

Mr. Stanton	3259
-------------------	------

Environment Week

Mr. Bigras	3259
------------------	------

Justice

Mr. Généreux	3259
--------------------	------

National Hunger Awareness Day

Mr. Dryden	3260
------------------	------

Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics

Mr. Rickford	3260
--------------------	------

Human Trafficking

Mr. Atamanenko	3260
----------------------	------

Eliminating Entitlements for Prisoners

Mr. Fast	3260
----------------	------

Municipality Week	
Mr. Laframboise	3261
Duff Roblin	
Ms. Neville	3261
The Economy	
Mr. Keddy	3261

ORAL QUESTIONS

Public Safety	
Mr. Ignatieff	3261
Mr. Harper	3261
Mr. Ignatieff	3261
Mr. Harper	3261
Mr. Ignatieff	3262
Mr. Harper	3262
Ethics	
Mrs. Jennings	3262
Mr. Nicholson	3262
Mrs. Jennings	3262
Mr. Nicholson	3262
Foreign Affairs	
Mr. Duceppe	3262
Mr. Harper	3262
Mr. Duceppe	3262
Mr. Harper	3262
Ethics	
Mr. Paquette	3262
Mr. Nicholson	3263
Former Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec	
Ms. Gagnon	3263
Mr. Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	3263
Foreign Affairs	
Mr. Layton	3263
Mr. Harper	3263
International Aid	
Mr. Layton	3263
Mr. Harper	3263
Mr. Layton	3263
Mr. Harper	3263
Offshore Drilling	
Mr. Regan	3263
Mr. Paradis	3263
Mr. Regan	3264
Mr. Paradis	3264
Medical Isotopes	
Ms. Bennett	3264
Mrs. Aglukkaq	3264
Mr. Patry	3264
Mrs. Aglukkaq	3264
Offshore Drilling	
Ms. Brunelle	3264
Mr. Paradis	3264
Mr. Blais	3264

Mr. Paradis	3265
Securities	
Mr. Paillé (Hochelaga)	3265
Mr. Menzies	3265
Mr. Paillé (Hochelaga)	3265
Mr. Menzies	3265
Status of Women	
Mrs. Zarac	3265
Ms. Ambrose	3265
Mrs. Zarac	3265
Ms. Ambrose	3265
Health	
Ms. Duncan (Etobicoke North)	3266
Mrs. Aglukkaq	3266
Ms. Duncan (Etobicoke North)	3266
Mrs. Aglukkaq	3266
Eliminating Entitlements for Prisoners	
Mrs. McLeod	3266
Ms. Finley	3266
Bill C-9	
Mr. Mulcair	3266
Mr. Menzies	3266
Mr. Mulcair	3266
Mr. Prentice	3267
Mr. Lessard	3267
Mr. Menzies	3267
Mr. Lessard	3267
Mr. Blackburn	3267
International Aid	
Mr. McKay	3267
Ms. Oda	3267
Mr. McKay	3267
Ms. Oda	3267
Ethics	
Mr. Angus	3268
Mr. Nicholson	3268
Mr. Angus	3268
Mr. Lake	3268
Automotive Industry	
Mr. Allison	3268
Mr. Lake	3268
G8 and G20 Summits	
Mr. Kennedy	3268
Mr. Baird	3268
International Co-operation	
Ms. Deschamps	3268
Ms. Oda	3269
Health	
Ms. Charlton	3269
Mrs. Aglukkaq	3269
The Economy	
Mr. Sweet	3269
Mr. Menzies	3269

G8 and G20 Summits	
Mr. Kennedy	3269
Mr. Cannon.....	3269
Presence in Gallery	
The Speaker	3269
Points of Order	
Oral Questions	
Mr. Hill.....	3270
Mr. Mulcair.....	3270

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply	
Opposition Motion—G8 and G20 Summits	
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca).....	3270
Mr. Gravelle.....	3272
Mr. Mulcair.....	3272
Mr. Maloway.....	3272
Mr. Petit.....	3273
Mr. Cannis.....	3275
Mr. Maloway.....	3275
Mr. Vincent.....	3275
Mr. Kramp.....	3275
Mr. Cannis.....	3277
Ms. Brown (Newmarket—Aurora).....	3277
Mr. Maloway.....	3277
Mr. Cannis.....	3278
Mr. Kramp.....	3280
Mr. Harris (Cariboo—Prince George).....	3281
Mrs. Hughes.....	3282
Mr. Carrie.....	3283
Mr. Vincent.....	3284
Mr. Gravelle.....	3284
Mr. Del Mastro.....	3285
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca).....	3285

Mr. Vincent.....	3286
Mr. Warkentin.....	3286
Mr. Murphy (Charlottetown).....	3287
Mrs. Hughes.....	3287
Motion agreed to.....	3289
Opposition Motion—Oil and Gas Industry	
Motion.....	3289
The Speaker.....	3290
Motion agreed to.....	3290

Jobs and Economic Growth Act

Bill C-9—Notice of time allocation	
Mr. Hill.....	3290

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day Act

Mr. Norlock.....	3290
Bill C-465. Second reading.....	3290
Mr. Bagnell.....	3292
Mr. Hyer.....	3293
Mr. Bagnell.....	3293
Mrs. Lavallée.....	3294
Mr. Thibeault.....	3296
Mr. Breitzkreuz.....	3297
Mr. Maloway.....	3298

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

The Environment	
Mr. Scarpaleggia.....	3299
Mr. Warawa.....	3299
Public Safety	
Mr. Davies (Vancouver Kingsway).....	3300
Mr. Warawa.....	3301

MAIL  POSTE

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

Lettermail

Poste-lettre

**1782711
Ottawa**

If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:
Publishing and Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and
Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les
Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>