



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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VOLUME 145 • NUMBER 055 • 3rd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, June 3, 2010**

—  
**Speaker: The Honourable Peter Milliken**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 3, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)  
[*English*]

### INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** I have the honour, pursuant to section 38 of the Access to Information Act, to lay upon the table the report of the Information Commissioner for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2010.  
[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### CERTIFICATES OF NOMINATION

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 111.1 (1), I have the honour to table in the House of Commons and refer to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics a certificate of nomination from the Prime Minister for the appointment of Suzanne Legault as Information Commissioner.

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### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 13 petitions.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

concerning its participation in the 120th IPU Assembly and related meetings in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from April 5 to 10, 2009.

\* \* \*

### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

**Mr. Robert Carrier (Alfred-Pellan, BQ)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-525, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (maximum—special benefits).

He said: I am honoured to present this bill, which would extend the maximum period for which special benefits for serious illness may be paid from 15 weeks to 50 weeks. This bill was introduced in previous Parliaments, but has never been passed at third reading. My colleague from Chambly—Borduas staunchly defended it, and he assures me that I have his full support in presenting this bill once again.

I feel it is my duty to present this bill today. It is my responsibility as the member for Alfred-Pellan to show my support for my constituent, Marie-Hélène Dubé, who was behind a petition with 62,700 signatures that was presented in the House by the member for Chambly—Borduas. Ms. Dubé, a mother of two children, has thyroid cancer. Despite initial surgery and treatments, the cancer has spread to the lymph nodes, and further treatment is required.

This bill would help those who must cope with this terrible illness and who are only eligible for 15 weeks of employment insurance.

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

\* \* \*

• (1005)  
[*English*]

### PAKISTAN

**Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday, May 28, in Lahore, Pakistan, as members of the Ahmadiyya community gathered for Friday prayers, they came under a deadly co-ordinated attack at two of their mosques, the Baitul Nur mosque, Model Town, and the Darul Zikr mosque, Gharishaw.

The ability to practice one's faith in peace and security is a basic human right.

*Routine Proceedings*

Therefore, I am seeking unanimous consent for the following motion, which I jointly move with the member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park and seconded by the member for Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor. I move:

That this House condemn the violent attacks on Ahmadiyya Muslim worshippers who were attending Friday prayers in Lahore, Pakistan; urge the Government of Pakistan to bring to justice all those involved in perpetrating these barbaric acts; and work to ensure that all Pakistanis can worship in peace and safety.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt and the hon. member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.  
(Motion agreed to)

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**CANADA-PORTUGAL DAY**

**Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the parties and if you seek it you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. On behalf of Parliament's Canada-Portugal Friendship Group, seconded by the member for Brossard—La Prairie, I move:

That, in the opinion of the House, throughout Canada in each and every year, June 10 shall be known as Canada-Portugal Day in celebration of the friendship between Portugal and Canada and in recognition of the history of the Luso-Canadian community and its contribution to Canadian society.

**The Speaker:** Does the hon. member for Trinity—Spadina have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.  
(Motion agreed to)

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**PETITIONS**

**PRISON FARMS**

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

All six farms, including Rockwood Institution in Manitoba, have been functioning farms for many decades and have provided food to the prisons and the community. Prison farm operations provide rehabilitation and training for prisoners through working with and caring for plants and animals.

The work ethic and the rehabilitation benefit of waking up at six in the morning and working outdoors is a discipline that Canadians can appreciate.

On Sunday, June 6, 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 have been 16 months of public events, letters, petitions, delegations and parliamentary motions of nearly unanimous support across the country and yet the federal government is charging 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 upon 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 how the program can be adapted to meet the agriculture needs of the 21st century.

• (1010)

[Translation]

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am presenting two petitions today. The first concerns Bill C-391, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act (repeal of long-gun registry) and includes over 2,500 signatures.

These petitioners are calling for the firearms registry to be maintained in its entirety because they believe—rightly—that this important registry is consulted by police more than 100,000 times a day also aids investigations and prevents violence in our urban areas and the regions. These petitioners believe that the bill is unacceptable and that we should all vote against it. They are also calling on the New Democratic Party to do the same.

Yesterday, René Caron, president of the Association TROP-PEACE and one of the people who lobbied for the creation of the registry, succeeded in reaching a million signatures from across Canada on a petition.

Thus, this is the first petition and I truly hope that we will all come together and vote against this unacceptable bill.

**GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT**

**Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the other petition I am presenting today concerns the guaranteed income supplement. The petitioners are calling on the federal government to: implement automatic enrollment for the guaranteed income supplement, spouse's allowance and the allowance for the survivor; increase monthly benefits for people living alone to \$110; increase the monthly allowance for the survivor to \$199; implement full and unconditional retroactivity; and extend by six months the guaranteed income supplement and the spouse's allowance upon the death of one of the beneficiaries in the couple.

This is in line with the wishes of FADOQ, and I am pleased and honoured to present this petition.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

## ASBESTOS

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, asbestos is the greatest industrial killer that the world has ever known and so thousands of Canadians have contacted me to present this petition calling upon Parliament to recognize that Canada still remains one of the largest producers and exporters of asbestos in the world and also that Canada is spending millions of dollars subsidizing the asbestos industry and even blocking other countries' efforts to curb its use.

Therefore, the petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to ban asbestos in all of its forms and institute a just transition program for any workers who are displaced by such a ban, end all government subsidies to asbestos both in Canada and abroad, and to stop blocking international health and safety conventions designed to protect workers from asbestos such as the Rotterdam Convention.

[Translation]

## GREENHOUSE GASES

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition addressed to the House of Commons and signed by teachers and staff at the École Polytechnique, hundreds of people who wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the federal government set a greenhouse gas reduction target that is too low to help limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius, as agreed to in the Copenhagen accord.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to revise the greenhouse gas reduction target to at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 50% below 1990 levels by 2050.

• (1015)

[English]

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to table. The first petition is on clean air and clean energy.

I am presenting this petition on behalf of the residents of Thunder Bay—Superior North who support clean air and clean energy. These petitioners want the government to do the following things: First, make the necessary investments in renewable energy to ensure we reduce our greenhouse gas pollution. Toward that end, they want to restore the valuable eco-energy program which the Conservatives cancelled on one day's notice. They want us to stop using taxpayer dollars to subsidize the oil and gas industry. They want us to legislate tougher fuel efficiency standards for vehicles and caps for big polluters. They want the House to support Bill C-311, Climate Change Accountability Act, which has now passed three readings in the House.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on EI fairness for new mothers.

The petitioners would like this petition tabled because they are concerned that working families cannot fairly access EI because of the way the anti-stacking rules are structured. New mothers, who have the full amount of special EI benefits, cannot get their regular

EI payments during that leave. They are petitioning the House to support private member's Bill C-378 which would ensure that working mothers have fair access to benefits. Passing Bill C-378 will mean that others can get parental, sickness or compassionate care benefits without worrying that they will lose their employment insurance if they lose their jobs in the meantime.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise representing the interests of the people of Timmins—James Bay who are very concerned about the massive shift in the tax burden brought out by the Conservative government.

It is no surprise to our people back home that the government favours big banks and oil companies. However, what they are particularly concerned about is the decision to give so many corporate tax breaks while shifting the burden of tax on to senior citizens, those on fixed income, and force families who are heating their homes in northern Ontario in the winter to pay the HST on top of all the other costs.

The petitioners are saying that we have just come through the worst recession-depression since 1930s, that families in Ontario have been hard hit by the recession and that the government's HST is a regressive tax that will hurt in particular senior citizens, first nation families and people on fixed incomes. They are challenging the government to do the right thing and stand up for average people and stop this regressive tax.

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table two petitions this morning.

The first petition is from many residents of the greater Vancouver area who are concerned about the persecution of the practitioners of Falun Gong.

The petitioners note that Falun Gong is a peaceful and beneficial spiritual practice centred on the principles of truth, compassion, forbearance, and a series of meditation exercises. The petitioners also note that in the People's Republic of China, there has been an organized campaign of persecution by the government against practitioners of Falun Gong. They note that many people have been imprisoned and many people have died in custody. There is also the absolutely horrifying practice of organ harvesting related to Falun Gong practitioners who are imprisoned in China, which has been a major concern of people around the world.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners ask the Government of Canada to help stop those atrocities by condemning the government of China for committing these crimes against humanity. They urge the government of China to end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners and to release any who are imprisoned immediately. They also ask that immediate measures be taken with regard to the issue of mass killing and organ harvesting.

• (1020)

SALMON FISHERY

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by many people in British Columbia and Alberta who were very concerned about the collapse of the sockeye salmon fishery last summer. The sockeye migration into the Fraser River was the lowest in 50 years last summer. Nine million sockeye salmon disappeared from that important run. This is very important to the economy and also to the culture of British Columbia in so many ways.

These people were very anxious to see a public inquiry called into the disappearance of the sockeye salmon and called on the government to establish that. I know that this has been done, and I am sure that these people are relieved. However, I do not think that takes away from the urgency of the matter. I am sure that I speak for the petitioners when I say that they hope for a speedy conclusion of that inquiry into this very important issue.

\* \* \*

**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. 208 and 212. [Text]

Question No. 208—**Mr. Peter Julian:**

With regard to the report entitled “Violence against organized unionized workers and teachers in Colombia 2000-2008”, produced by the Conflict Analysis Resource Centre and funded by the Global Fund for Peace and Security of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade: (a) what are the statistical findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report on (i) the torture, threats, killings of workers and citizens, including the chronological breakdown, (ii) the types of crimes and violence; (b) what were the judicial procedures enacted in each case; (c) who were those responsible for the reported crimes, violence and threats identified; (d) what were the convictions that resulted from related judicial procedures; and (e) why was the report not released by the government?

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Minister of International Trade, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the global peace and security fund, GPSF, managed through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade’s, DFAIT, Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force, START, allows START inter alia to support peace processes and mediation efforts, develop transitional justice and reconciliation initiatives, build peace enforcement and peace operations capabilities, promote civilian protection strategies in humanitarian contexts, and reduce the impact of landmines, small arms and light weapons. The global peace and security fund comprises three sub-programs: the global peace and security program, GPSP, the global peace operation program, GPSP, and the Glyn Berry program, GBP.

In fiscal year 2007-08, the Colombia envelope of the global peace and security fund provided funds to the Conflict Analysis Resource Centre, Centro de Recursos para el Análisis de Conflictos—CERAC,

an independent Colombian policy think tank. As part of this project, CERAC produced a draft document entitled, “Violencia y violaciones a los Derechos Humanos de los Trabajadores Organizados en Colombia” “Violence and Violations of Organized Workers’ Human Rights in Colombia”. This document was prepared by CERAC to provide technical input to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for use in its advocacy and reporting on union-targeted violence in Colombia. It is not a Government of Canada report.

DFAIT made a financial contribution to CERAC in part to assist in the production of CERAC’s own preliminary document, for use by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. As the project was in support of a third party entity, it was for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and CERAC to decide how best to utilize and publicize the report; the Government of Canada was not in a position to release the document. The report was presented by CERAC to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as part of a broader project to strengthen capacity among Colombian civil society organizations to gather data and provide analytical reporting on Colombian conflict dynamics. Proactive disclosure information on DFAIT’s contribution to this project is posted and accessible through the DFAIT website.

Question No. 212—**Hon. Marlene Jennings:**

With respect to the representation of the provinces in the House of Commons: (a) what studies or consultations have been conducted by the government for the purposes of drafting Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (Democratic representation), or any previous version of this bill; and (b) what studies or consultations have been conducted by the government for the purposes of considering any legislative proposal that would guarantee Quebec no fewer than 25 percent of the total number of seats in the House of Commons, (i) in advance of the Charlottetown Accord, (ii) at any other time?

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a) of the question, no external studies or consultations have been commissioned or contracted by the Government for the purposes of drafting Bill C-12, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867. Democratic representation or any previous version of this bill. All studies or consultations conducted by the government have been conducted internally in support of the cabinet decision-making process. Representations and statements made by provincial governments and individuals in response to previous versions of the bill were also taken into account for the purposes of drafting Bill C-12.

In response to part (b) of the question, based on a search of government records, no studies or consultations were commissioned or contracted by the Government for the purposes of considering any legislative proposal that would guarantee Quebec no fewer than 25% of the total number of seats in the House of Commons in advance of the Charlottetown accord or at any other time. The proposal to guarantee Quebec at least 25% of the seats in the House of Commons came about during federal-provincial-territorial negotiations in 1992.

The term “studies or consultations conducted by the government for the purposes of...” was interpreted to mean formal studies or consultations commissioned by the government for the direct purposes identified in the question. The following study, which included consultations, was commissioned by the government, which included consideration of representation in the House of Commons, although not directly for the purposes identified in the question: the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing; the final report of the commission was published in 1991.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 162 and 216 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 162—**Ms. Libby Davies:**

With regard to the 2010 Olympic Games held in Vancouver from February 12 to 26: (a) what was the total financial and in kind cost of the Olympic Games to the federal government; (b) what did these costs cover (e.g., security and other); (c) what costs and amounts did the federal government commit to prior to the event compared to the final total cost; and (d) will there be a financial audit of these costs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 216—**Mr. Brian Murphy:**

With respect to the Privy Council Office, how many employees in the Privy Council Office received bonuses in the 2008-2009 fiscal year, and what was the (i) minimum bonus, (ii) maximum bonus, (iii) average bonus?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

#### PRIVILEGE

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to present this question of privilege before the House of Commons. I will not take an inordinate amount of time, but I believe it is important to get the facts on the table. I hope that you will consider the merit of the case I am putting forward.

I am asking you to find a prima facie question of privilege based on the extraordinary events that took place at the Standing Committee on International Trade. I believe the violations were so egregious that they have pre-empted these facts from being reported to the House. I believe that there has been a fundamental obstruction

#### Privilege

of my rights as well as the rights of my colleagues, the members for Saint-Maurice—Champlain and Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

These violations occurred at the 20th meeting of the Standing Committee on International Trade on June 1, 2010 during its review of Bill C-2 and its related procedural motions, which were submitted by the members for Saint-Maurice—Champlain and South Shore—St. Margaret's.

The meeting was held in camera at first. The in camera status was removed at around 4:30 p.m., shortly after the committee started clause-by-clause review of the bill, and the public meeting lasted until the meeting ended at 11:30 p.m. that evening. The chair did not notify members of the committee as to the move to a public meeting.

My fundamental privileges, as well as the privileges of my colleagues, were violated, mostly under the cover of in camera meeting status as well as, in part, during the primary stages of the clause-by-clause review of Bill C-2. While I cannot elaborate on the specifics, as everyone can understand, I will present you, Mr. Speaker, with sufficient information to make my case.

I have never in my six years as an elected MP experienced such a gross, brutal, systematic, and outrageous violation of my fundamental rights as a parliamentarian. The following facts are on the most important of these violations.

First is the violation of my right to speak. From 3:30 p.m. to the early stages of clause-by-clause consideration, I was, along with my colleagues from Saint-Maurice—Champlain and Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, unable to carry out my duties as a parliamentarian.

The chair and the majority members of the committee maintained in camera status by arbitrarily failing to debate and vote on the motion submitted by the member of Saint-Maurice—Champlain, with proper and orderly 48-hour notice, requesting that the meeting be open to the public. The chair then imposed a vote on the motion submitted by the member for South Shore—St. Margaret's without allowing any debate on this motion, which imposed a shutdown of public hearings and a six-hour cap on the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-2.

This brings me to the second important violation, a systematic refusal of the chair to allow me or my colleagues to intervene on points of order to speak against the breaking of procedural, traditional, and ethical rules of conduct. Given that the chair had the support of the majority of the members of the committee, I was unable to challenge his decision, which breached my privilege, and I was unable to request that the committee present a report on the question to the House. That is why I am bringing it forward today.

That brings me to the third point. Faced with a situation in which I could not speak, I asked for the opinion of the clerk. This is, as we know, the committee's principal adviser. I am quoting from O'Brien and Bosc, which states that the committee's principal adviser “provides advice to all members of the committee”.

*Privilege*

On this clear violation of procedural rules and Standing Orders, the chair systematically and repeatedly denied me access to the clerk of the committee, thus effectively and completely censoring my speech as well as my democratic right to participation in the committee.

In sum, these three points raise a fourth fundamental question that is at the heart of our democratic institutions. What do we do in a situation when minority members have been denied their right to speak and their right to access critical procedural resources to function as effective parliamentarians?

Virtually every written and unwritten rule has been trampled upon. This clearly constitutes an abuse of the rights bestowed upon the committee by Parliament, and as such, is contempt against the House, I submit.

While I know that it has been tradition for the Speaker not to get into a matter that should be dealt with in the committee and that it was up to the committee to decide whether what occurred through its chair was within parliamentary practices, there are exceptions to the rule, and I believe that this is one of them. I am referring, for example, to the landmark ruling by Speaker Fraser on March 25, 1990 in which he acknowledged that he might have to rule on a committee-related issue in a very serious and special circumstance.

• (1025)

This is a matter that goes way beyond committee business. It deals with the abuse by the majority in the committee of the privileges bestowed on it by the House. In our parliamentary democracy, nothing could justify the violation of the sacred right to speech. The abuse of in camera privileges to conceal the trampling of democratic rules and traditions and to hide the truth sets a dangerous precedent for our parliamentary institutions and traditions.

I am going to quote very briefly a paragraph from both Speaker Fraser and from you, Mr. Speaker, that indicates the importance of the matter.

Speaker Fraser ruled on Tuesday, April 14, 1987 and stated the following:

It is essential to our democratic system that controversial issues should be debated at reasonable length so that every reasonable opportunity shall be available to hear the arguments pro and con and that reasonable delaying tactics should be permissible to enable opponents of a measure to enlist public support for their point of view. Sooner or later every issue must be decided and the decision will be taken by a majority. Rules of procedure protect both the minority and the majority. They are designed to allow the full expression of views on both sides of an issue. They provide the Opposition with a means to delay a decision. They also provide the majority with a means of limiting debate in order to arrive at a decision. This is the kind of balance essential to the procedure of a democratic assembly. Our rules were certainly never designed to permit the total frustration of one side or the other, the total stagnation of debate, or the total paralysis of the system.

I submit that in this case that balance was far from being observed.

Finally, I would like to quote you, Mr. Speaker, in a decision on March 14, 2008, when you said, in part:

I do not think it is overly dramatic to say that many of our committees are suffering from a dysfunctional virus that, if allowed to propagate unchecked, risks preventing members from fulfilling the mandate given to them by their constituents.

You quoted at that time, Mr. Speaker, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* at page 210:

...it remains true that parliamentary procedure is intended to ensure that there is a balance between the government's need to get its business through the House, and the opposition's responsibility to debate that business without completely immobilizing the proceedings of the House.

You continued, Mr. Speaker, saying:

The Speaker must remain ever mindful of the first principles of our parliamentary tradition which Bourinot described thus: To protect the minority and restrain the improvidence and tyranny of the majority, to secure the transaction of public business in a decent and orderly manner—

There is no doubt in my mind that the events of June 1 bring truth to your prediction, Mr. Speaker, back in 2008, that if the dysfunctional virus of committees and this dysfunctional virus of the time is allowed to propagate unchecked, that risk of preventing members from fulfilling the mandate given to them by their constituents is essentially being brought to bear.

In this case, I believe very clearly that this prediction has come true. The member for Saint-Maurice—Champlain, the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, and I were prevented from fulfilling the mandate that was given to us by our constituents.

In conclusion, I ask that this be allowed to go before the procedure and House affairs committee. There I will be seeking a remedy on these issues. The misuse of in camera status to circumvent the fundamental rules and traditions of Parliament that protect parliamentary privilege cannot be tolerated, for it has the potential to seriously censor the legitimate democratic participation of elected members who are in a minority situation.

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Burnaby—New Westminster for the brevity of his remarks. I do not doubt the sincerity of his remarks, as well.

I would argue that there certainly is no prima facie case for privilege in this instance. As you well know, Mr. Speaker, better than anyone in this House, the Speaker does not normally get involved in committee business. Committees are the masters of their own affairs, and in fact, there is no report back before this House requesting that you get involved in this issue. The events are still before the committee.

Very simply, Mr. Speaker, there is no prima facie case, because there has been no report delivered to this House. I would ask that you rule so accordingly.

• (1030)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. members for their inventions in this case. I will examine the comments made by the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster and those by the parliamentary secretary and will get back to the House in due course with respect to this matter.



*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH ACT**

The House resumed from May 31 consideration of Bill C-9, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 4, 2010 and other measures, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

**The Speaker:** When the bill was last before the House, the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster had the floor, and there are six minutes remaining in the time allotted for his remarks on this bill and this group of motions.

I therefore call upon the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when I was forced to stop a couple of days ago on this issue of Bill C-9 because of the adjournment of debate at the time, I referred to this bill as the Godzilla bill, because this was a monstrous series of elements that were all brought together into one bill, completely improperly.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, we are seeing progressively a government trying to shift what has been a democratic entity, the House of Commons, one where there is debate on specific issues and bills normally are tied to specific issues, to the kind of case where there is a very clear manipulation of parliamentary procedure.

Here we have a series of bills, environmental bills, bills that sell off other large chunks of Canada and what belongs in common to the Canadian public and do a whole series of other things, such as increase HST levies that certainly in my province of British Columbia, British Columbians have been strongly objecting to. It does this all in one bill. It just throws it all together.

We talked at that time about how Godzilla runs roughshod over individuals, and this bill certainly does that. It destroys institutions and buildings, primarily buildings in Godzilla's case, primarily institutions in the government's case. We also mentioned that the one exception to the difference between the government's monster bill, the Godzilla bill, and Godzilla himself or herself, is that Godzilla at least had some concerns about the dumping of toxic wastes, for those who followed the *Godzilla* movies. In this case, with the removal of the environmental assessment process, we see that the government has even less concern for the environment than the monster that I spoke of.

This monster bill is totally inappropriate. Why did the government do this? We know full well. We have seen strong objections in British Columbia to the HST. The government wanted to tuck in the increase in HST on financial services because it is hoping that somehow British Columbians will not find out, of course forgetting that there is strong representation in this corner of the House from British Columbia with NDP MPs who have stood up and raised this issue. That is partly why we have now reached the threshold for a referendum on the HST in British Columbia in all 85 ridings. That is cause for celebration.

British Columbians right across B.C., from the Peace River to the lower mainland to Vancouver Island to the Kootenays, are saying that they want to be able to publicly rebuke both the federal Conservative government and the B.C. Liberal government for their secretive, dishonest attempt to bring in the HST, but the government is still trying.

For British Columbians who may have voted Conservative in the past, I believe they certainly will be questioning that vote in the future, because in this very secretive, dishonest way, the federal Conservatives are moving to hike and add the HST onto even more elements around financial services. It is unbelievable. When British Columbians are speaking out unanimously right across the province in every single one of the 85 provincial ridings, that means every single one of the federal ridings, including the ridings that are represented by Conservatives and Liberals who voted for the HST.

For the Conservatives to try to hide this in the budget implementation bill is profoundly dishonest, and that is why they are going to get a kicking in the next election, whenever that comes. British Columbians are not going to forget about this. British Columbians are certainly not going to forgive and forget a government that routinely has been ignoring B.C. and then trying to impose types of actions that British Columbians have very clearly said they do not want.

There has not been a single Conservative MP from British Columbia who has been willing to stand up and say, "We were wrong to try to impose this on British Columbians". There has not been a single Conservative MP from British Columbia who has stood up and said, "Now that the referendum is coming, now that British Columbians are saying no to the HST, we apologize for doing this". It would be great just to have the one B.C. Conservative or Liberal MP stand up and say, "We are sorry we did this to you. We were wrong. We apologize. We should not have brought the HST in. We should not, in this massive budget bill, try to increase the HST. We apologize to British Columbians".

I await that day when a B.C. Conservative MP or a B.C. Liberal MP will actually stand up and apologize for what they have done.

• (1035)

That is just one of the egregious aspects. The other is the whole issue of gutting the environmental assessment process. What planet are these Conservatives on? We are looking at a disaster of monumental ramifications in the Gulf of Mexico that has not been resolved, and they are saying they want to remove environmental assessment and regulations.

They are suggesting that we just go up to the Arctic Ocean and drill anywhere, with no more environmental process, no more environmental assessment, that we just go anywhere and take any risks. British Columbians and other Canadians profoundly reject Bill C-9 and its dishonest pretensions. That is why, in this corner of the House, we are saying the bill needs to be divided up so we can—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments. The hon. member for Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor.

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**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-  
sor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if my colleague covered this in the first part of his speech. I think we just got the final six minutes of it. He talked about the monster bill, just how large this is and all it encompasses, and he has a valid point. However, I want to talk about something that is lacking in this bill: the issue of pension security.

Earlier, the House endorsed the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act changes that were brought forward by his party. Most of the House certainly supported that, so maybe he can comment on that. Perhaps that was lacking in Bill C-9.

Also, they talked about foreign companies and foreign ownership into telecom. Perhaps he would like to comment on that as well.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right. He just talked about three more elements, which we cannot address in a 10-minute speech. The Conservatives are trying to impose closure on Bill C-9 when there are so many different ramifications from this monster bill that they have thrown in.

He has raised three important questions. I want to raise one more, since I did not have time to do that in the six minutes: They are raising the export tariff on softwood lumber products for Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This is one of the worst of the very bad legislation that the Conservatives have brought in. We knew the softwood lumber sellout would cost tens of thousands of jobs. We knew it would close dozens of mills right across the country.

Again, because they are so embarrassed that their softwood lumber sellout was even worse than anticipated and predicted, we now have an export tariff tucked into this monster bill that is going to hit the softwood communities that have already been hard hit by the appalling irresponsibility and incompetence of the government on softwood lumber. In four provinces, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, there will be a 10% export tariff rate.

That is going to kill the thousands of jobs that have managed to survive the Conservative meddling in softwood lumber thus far. Now we see that they have tucked it into the bill. So the member's question is absolutely appropriate. We could be going on for days and days exposing the many ramifications of this toxic bill.

• (1040)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, one of the Group No. 1 deletions that we are dealing with today is the air traveller security charge. When the government talks about reducing corporate taxes to 15%, it is actually increasing taxes on all air travellers in the country by 50%, making us the highest taxed in the world.

Where is this extra money going? We know it is raising far more than it is spending on security. Canadian taxes on foreign flights will be up to \$25, while the United States flights are \$5. We are already losing Canadian travellers to American carriers. We have been losing them for the last several years. This is going to make the situation worse.

Why is the government helping American airlines at the expense of Canadian airlines?

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Elmwood—Transcona has been one of the foremost advocates for airline passengers, for consumers who use Canadian airlines. He has been a very, very strong advocate for their rights and better treatment, and the government simply has not been at all on the side of airline passengers across the country. As he mentioned, we are increasing the security fees paid for flights. That is another tax increase if we throw in the HST as well.

The Conservatives are tax cutters when it comes to big corporate CEOs and the banks. They will shovel that tax credit money off the back of a truck to those folks, but the moment we are talking about ordinary Canadians, they just want to punish them. Here is another case where they are increasing security fees paid for airlines.

The other thing I need to mention on this is the same government's wrong-headed intention of bringing in self-service safety in the airline industry and make it more dangerous to travel. Fortunately, the NDP headed that off and we stopped that.

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to speak in the report stage debate on Bill C-9, the budget implementation bill. We are debating the first group of report stage amendments tabled by the New Democrats. I am pleased to say that I seconded all 62 of the amendments the New Democrats proposed to this legislation.

Why did we propose those amendments? We are very concerned about the scope of this bill and the huge size of this piece of this legislation. It includes many issues that should have been debated separately in their own pieces of legislation so that Parliament could give them the kind of scrutiny they deserve.

This is not a small issue for us, as members can tell. It is not often that an opposition party puts forward that many report stage amendments to a piece of legislation, but we feel very strongly that the government is doing something shifty. It is doing something that is inappropriate with this legislation by putting forward this monster bill of well over 800 pages, almost 900 pages, that includes all kinds of issues that should have been proposed, and in the past have even been proposed, as separate pieces of legislation.

This seems to me to be an abandonment of the Conservatives' commitment to accountability and transparency. They came into government claiming that they were going to change things around. They were going to do things differently than the previous government on any number of matters.

One of them we might have expected the Conservatives to take to heart was not proposing this kind of legislation. This is more American-style legislation. We all know of bills in the United States that have a title in one area that have a whole bunch of other measures attached and embedded into them. For instance, a defence bill could have a farm measure included in it. That is the system the Americans have come up with and I think it puzzles most of us here in Canada. It does not seem to be an appropriate way of giving appropriate scrutiny to many issues. That is the kind of bill we have before us today.

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Bill C-9 is a huge piece of legislation that includes topics that range from the privatization of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, changes to the mandate of Canada Post, the ultimate depletion of the EI fund, the increase in the security tax that we pay when we fly on airlines, changes to the HST initiative, changes to the softwood lumber tariffs, and changes to environmental assessment in Canada.

Each one of those things and many others in the bill deserve their own piece of legislation. In the past the Conservatives have even proposed legislation separately on some of those issues. The Canada Post issue is one of them. In earlier sessions of this Parliament and the previous Parliament, there was a separate bill dealing with these changes to Canada Post where that issue could get the scrutiny it deserves.

We are standing firm that this is a change in the practices of this House. It is going down a road that we think is totally improper. We think it abandons the Conservatives' commitment once again to accountability and transparency. It is clear that is long gone.

We have seen it in their failure to live up to commitments around access to information and the terrible report card they got, particularly the ministry of foreign affairs for compliance with access to information requests. It was so bad that the Information Commissioner had to invent a new category. It did not fit in her scale of failure and she had to invent a red alert category, saying it was so bad in that department.

We have seen it in the Conservatives' failure and their refusal to search a long time to provide Parliament with access to documents around the Afghan detainee issue, and the concerns that people Canada had captured were being tortured when they were in the custody of Afghan authorities.

We have seen it in the denial of Conservatives to allow their political staff to appear before parliamentary committees and provide information that parliamentary committees need. We have seen it in the actions of cabinet ministers coming uninvited to parliamentary committees and demanding to be heard when they are not on the agenda of committees, disrupting committees and turning those committees into places of total chaos.

None of this goes to an agenda of openness, transparency and accountability. It all dramatically undoes that. It is the exact opposite of those kinds of things.

One of the specific aspects that I want to talk about particularly in this bill is the environmental assessment component. What it amounts to is the gutting of the environmental assessment process that we have in Canada. This bill would exempt certain federally funded infrastructure projects from environmental assessment, going well beyond what was even recommended by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to streamline the environmental assessment process.

• (1045)

We all know that environmental assessment is a complicated issue in Canada. It is a process that has the involvement of many jurisdictions. We all want to make sure that we have an efficient and effective process, but we want to make sure that we have a process, a process that works and that offers protection to the environment and to Canadians.

This proposal before us embedded deeply in this bill would say that the building Canada fund, the green infrastructure fund, the recreational infrastructure fund, the border infrastructure fund, the municipal rural infrastructure fund, none of these would have the same requirements around environmental assessment that they currently do.

This bill would also pre-empt a review of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act which is to go to committee this month for a scheduled five-year review. Here we are currently debating a piece of legislation that would change that existing legislation that was scheduled to be reviewed by Parliament where we could come up with suggestions for changes that needed to be made, where the government could present its suggestions for changes that should be made to that legislation. Why is it deeply embedded in this budget bill?

The bill would also allow the Minister of the Environment to dictate the scope of environmental assessments. This new concept called scoping allows for ministerial discretion to appoint someone to decide what should and should not fall within the scope of an environmental assessment. It could mean, for instance, the road leading to the mine needs to be assessed but not the mine itself, or vice versa. There is a huge opening here for discretion and for a deterioration of the kind of environmental assessment process that we currently have.

It also means that the bill would also weaken public participation in terms of environmental assessment processes by making certain exemptions for public notification. It would also contain the first steps to take away energy assessment programs from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and give them to the National Energy Board.

These changes are of great concern to people in my riding because these kinds of environmental assessments are crucial to issues that happened in my riding. Burnaby—Douglas is home to the only refinery on the west coast of Canada, the Chevron refinery. That refinery is on the shore of Burrard Inlet. It has been there for almost 60 years. It is also surrounded by residential neighbourhoods. I am sure members can understand that a refinery placed in an environmentally sensitive location is a very serious issue. A refinery that is in a residential neighbourhood is also a very serious issue. Over many years there have been many processes developed for the refinery to work with people who live in that neighbourhood, people who are affected directly by it, environmentalists, and first nations communities that live directly across Burrard Inlet from the Chevron refinery.

Right now we are going through a crisis at that refinery where there is a leak happening. So far about 50 litres of what the refinery calls an oily substance have leaked out of the boundaries of the refinery. The substance has shown up in the ditch running along the Canadian Pacific Railway right-of-way and on the foreshore of Burrard Inlet. Officials do not seem to know what this substance is. They do not seem to know where it is coming from. Many concerns are being raised by folks in the neighbourhood, and rightly so, about this situation.

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This is a situation where we need to have effective environmental legislation, where we need to have effective environmental oversight. People depend on that. We all know that we use the products that come out of that refinery, but we also want to make sure that we are mitigating any of the damage the refinery causes to the environment and to the neighbourhood. We are seeing an example right now in Burnaby—Douglas of why that is absolutely crucial. Be assured that the people of Burnaby—Douglas, the people of the Burnaby Heights and Capitol Hill neighbourhoods are going to be keeping a close eye on the situation to ensure it is fully determined as to why the leak is being caused, that the cause is fixed and that the cleanup happens completely and that it never happens again. This is crucial to our neighbourhood, our environment, to Burrard Inlet and to the surrounding area.

People in Burnaby—Douglas do not want any weakening of environmental assessments. That is why this piece of the legislation should be debated separately here in this Parliament.

• (1050)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his eloquent speech and for pointing out what we should do.

I believe it was Yogi Berra who said that it was déjà-vu all over again. The front bench opposite, the Conservative government, for the most part was the front bench in Ontario back in the 1990s when we would see things like this omnibus bill. We know the havoc that wreaked on the province of Ontario when we had all those omnibus bills under the previous premier, Mike Harris, and some of those members on the front bench, including the Minister of Finance who is in the federal government today. They did the same thing then that is being done today. They rammed things through because the provincial Conservatives had a majority government, and the province was the worst for it.

What the federal Conservatives are doing today is going to make Canada the worst for it as well. The pieces that are in that omnibus bill that do not have anything to do with the budget are things that really should be debated before us today. Let me mention the things that are missing.

What is missing is a pension increase for those seniors living in poverty. The Conservatives decided to talk about getting rid of the environmental regulations, instead of increasing the GIS so that seniors could live in dignity and live without poverty. There was no mention of that.

I would ask the hon. member to comment on what he sees is missing here that really should be a budget item instead of all the other bits that make it an omnibus bill.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that if we talk to Canadians about top of mind issues right now, the security of their pensions, their pension income, is probably the top issue that most of them are thinking about. We certainly have not seen the kind of attention to it that is needed.

I am glad that New Democrats have raised constantly in this place questions about that. We have put forward serious suggestions about where we should be going. We have clear policies about what should be done in the area of pension reform to ensure that Canadians have

not only pensions they can depend on in their senior years, but also pensions that would support people to live well above the poverty line and live happy, healthy and fruitful years in their retirement. That is an issue many Canadians would like to see given the attention it needs.

We have seen the Canadian Labour Congress take the lead on forums across this country where Canadians have been coming together to talk about pension reform. Our own colleague, the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, our pension critic, has travelled across Canada doing the same thing.

There is clearly a need and a desire by Canadians to see that issue seize this House, seize the government, to make some progress in that area.

• (1055)

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there are so many thoughtful ideas in the excellent analysis by the member for Burnaby—Douglas that I could ask many questions, but I will limit myself to one.

Years ago, for many years, I wrote and reviewed environmental assessments. It has been my experience that environmental assessments do not usually stop projects unless they are particularly bad in every possible way. What they usually do is function as part of an expanded business plan that takes all factors into consideration, including economic and ecological sustainability, and they make projects better.

I would like to ask the hon. member how he feels that we can persuade the current government to re-examine its faulty logic on stopping these environmental assessments.

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the member has raised that important question about the environmental assessment process.

The member is right. In most situations the idea is not to prevent development. The idea is to ensure that development is sustainable, that it respects both the environmental needs and the economic needs of communities in our country. We want to make sure that happens. We want to do that in a way that takes into consideration all of the factors that are part of those kinds of decisions.

People in my own community realize that the Chevron refinery is an important employer in our community. It produces products that we all use. Even though we are seeking ways to reduce our dependence on those kinds of products, right now we do depend on them. At the same time we want to make sure that it functions in a way that respects the neighbourhood it is in and respects the environment where it is located. That means we have to have the participation of government and the leadership of government to ensure it is done in a way that respects people and the environment.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskaing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate the time I will have to speak to Bill C-9.

[*Translation*]

However, before I speak to Bill C-9, I would like to point out that in game three of the Stanley Cup finals last night, the winning goal was scored by none other than Claude Giroux from Hearst. We are very proud of him.

[*English*]

I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak to the Conservatives' budget implementation bill, Bill C-9. Given that I have only 10 minutes to speak to this unbelievably huge bill, which is hardly enough time to detail all of the significant flaws and errors in judgment present within this 800 page document, I will give the simplified version of what is fundamentally wrong with the government's budgetary plan.

First, I would like to speak to the nature of the bill itself. To put it simply, the bill resembles some of the overly political, opportunistic, pork laden legislation that was the hallmark of the Bush administration. With over 800 pages, 23 separate sections and over 2,000 individual clauses, Bill C-9 has easily become one of the largest pieces of individual legislation ever to pass through these halls.

The sweeping nature of Bill C-9 could perhaps be a little easier to swallow if it were not filled with amendments that seem almost completely out of place in a budget bill. Perhaps that was the plan that the Conservatives wanted to present all along; a bill so massive that it becomes almost impossible to scrutinize in its entirety, something that they expect we, as members of Parliament, would not take the time to scrutinize and simply rubber stamp through.

The people of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking did not elect me to rubber stamp anything. They elected me to represent their interests and the bill is not in their best interests.

I will take some time to speak specifically to part 20 of the bill, which would amend the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act to give the Minister of the Environment the authority to forgo environmental assessment of federally funded infrastructure projects. I am a steadfast believer that appropriate environmental assessment, now more than ever, is vital in ensuring our natural environment does not take a back seat to handful of special interests who seem to believe that a larger profit margin is more important than preventing an environmental disaster.

This authority should not be given to any single individual. This is particularly dear to me because I actually live in an area and represent an area that has a couple of Great Lakes, lots of rivers and lots of lakes.

The government never misses an opportunity to take away the power of everyday Canadians in order to please those select few special interest groups that it listens to. Who are these special interest groups? Big oil is a good example. We just have to look at the big oil spill with regard to BP. We are quite worried about what will happen here in Canada.

What are the big oil companies getting in this budget? What about corporate tax breaks or perhaps the gutting of Canada's environmental assessment regulations? Those are two examples of the way

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that the interests of the government's friends win out over the interests of Canadians.

There is a reason environmental assessment is so important. I am certain that the majority of people sitting here today have had a chance to catch the news at some point in the past month or so. Again I will talk about that oil disaster.

The disaster off of the Gulf of Mexico has been monumental. It stands as one of the greatest environmental tragedies of all time. Many argue that the simple drilling of a relief well, which is a standard practice of offshore oil drilling, could have kept the disaster under wraps.

What are we hearing now? We are hearing claims from BP that a relief well is currently being drilled but that it will likely not be finished until some time in August. I realize there will be some contention on this argument, but I will wrap up my thoughts on part 20 of Bill C-9. It is barely what should be considered a budgetary matter. It should given an appropriate forum for discussion in its own right. It should not be part of the bill whatsoever.

The next issue I would like to discuss is part 18 of Bill C-9. The summary of part 18 states that it authorizes the taking of a number of measures with respect to the reorganization and divestiture of all or any part of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. businesses.

• (1100)

The Conservative government seems confident that selling off Canadian firms and resources is the best way to ensure economic growth in this country. Sure, a few high profile individuals may make a quick buck, but what about the people on the front line, the workers?

Many people within my riding, and particularly those living just outside of my riding in Sudbury, know all too well the damage a sell-off of our companies and resources can be. Just last week a rally was held here in front of Parliament Hill by the United Steelworkers Union, Local 6500. The hard-working men and women of Vale mine have been on the picket line for almost a year now fighting to retain the fair pay and benefits for which they have fought for over a century to gain.

What will happen to the AECL workers if their company gets sold from under their feet, thanks to an amendment that has been crammed into a beast of a budget? Will they end up getting laid off? Will they lose their benefits? Will they be replaced by a cheaper workforce?

I would call on the government to remove part 18 from the budget bill so we, as elected officials, can take the appropriate time to fully discuss how this deal would affect working Canadians. I wish I had more time to debate the nature of this sell-off but my time is short and there is more, I feel, that is needed to be discussed here.

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I will now detail some concerns I have with part 15 of the bill. In my riding, we are very worried about the weakening of Canada Post. Again we see the mantra of business first and are being told that a company can provide overseas service more efficiently and make a profit at the same time. How is that possible? To us, this is merely coded language that adds up to paying workers less and demanding that they do more. Efficiency is a good and desirable thing but hoarding wealth in the hands of fewer and fewer people is not.

Increasing the workload stress in job security of the people who actually perform the work so investor can siphon off profits is not the best way to perform this service. Worse, if this is a way for Canada Post to make a few bucks, why would we want them to get rid of it? We need to allow Canada Post to make money so that it can afford to provide postal service to the people of Canada.

There is a situation right now in Constance Lake that I would like to share with the House. In Constance Lake, which is a first nation community, residents have lost their Canada Post outlet. For approximately the past one and a half years, residents have had to make an 80 kilometre round trip detour to Hearst simply to mail a letter. Luckily for Constance Lake, a Canada Post outlet is in the process of being rebuilt, because we have pushed for this, both Constance Lake and myself and the CUPW workers, but this is just an example of the concerns that have been echoed by the rural people living in my riding. Many other communities live with the fear of losing their postal outlets. People in towns like Moonbeam wonder if they are next when the Canada Post axe falls. Chapleau has also approached me on this before.

If Canada Post loses more revenue by cutting out its international mail revenues, how can it provide anything but less service? How is that efficient?

I wish I had another hour to speak to some of the issues I have with the bill. I call on my colleagues throughout the House of Commons to push to have this bill stripped down to its core. Many portions of the bill are out of place. I realize it is part of the Conservative agenda to slide things past the Canadian people without giving them or us, as elected officials, the time it takes to adequately examine the consequences of what is transpiring here.

I would like to finish by quoting one of the Conservatives' own senators, Lowell Murray, but I see my time is up so I will have to do it later.

• (1105)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would be interested in hearing from the member exactly what Senator Murray said because the Conservatives clearly are not listening.

I know the hard work that the hon. member has done on behalf of the labour movement. She has spent a great many years working on behalf of workers in this country and should be commended for that.

Besides the quote by Senator Murray, which I know the hon. member will be happy to give us, there is the stripping out of \$57 billion from the EI fund, a fund that was there to protect workers. I would ask her to comment on why the budget bill is setting up an account for EI rather than the real progressive step of the government saying that it will refund the \$57 billion to the EI account, funds that are owed to the workers of this country. In that way, if there were

another recession or downturn in the future, which we know will occur, workers would be protected, as they should have been protected in the first place, with the very money they paid into that system and which belongs to them but was squandered by the previous Liberal government and now by the Conservative government.

At the very least, the government should have told workers that their sacrifices over the years are respected, that it respects the fact that it collected their money and, with that type of respect owed to workers, the government intends to give it back to them. However, there is no intention to do that.

I am hopeful that my colleague will comment on the stripping of \$57 billion from the EI fund and then, of course, quote hon. Senator Lowell Murray.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, I will read the quote in a second, but my colleague is absolutely right with regard to the EI fund. These are workers' dollars, not government dollars. Yes, it is the former Liberal government's fault as to why the funds are not there anymore.

The Conservative government has a responsibility to ensure the money is refunded. We are not out of the woods yet with regard to the economic crisis in which we found ourselves. We need to continue ensuring there is proper training for workers, access to EI for workers, women being the ones least able to get benefits, and that there is a government in place that respects the rights of workers and the money of those hard workers.

With respect to the comment made by the Conservatives' own senators, Lowell Murray has gone on record stating that, "No self-respecting or Parliament-respecting MP or senator should allow C-9 to go through as is". If one of their own cannot support this bill, why should we as opposition support it?

It is quite interesting that of the questions being asked in the House, we are not hearing the Liberals or Conservatives speak to this issue. I think the Conservatives have a reason for not wanting to speak. It is because they want to continue hiding what is in the bill.

• (1110)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe that in the recession in 2009 the banks made \$15.9 billion profits and yet the federal government is rewarding them with a reduction in corporate taxes to 15%. This is at a time when the government is increasing the air travellers tax by over 50%, making Canada the highest taxed country in the world.

I would like to know what the member has to say about that.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Elmwood—Transcona is an advocate for air travel passengers and the bills that he has put forward need to be passed in order to protect travellers here in Canada. What the government is doing really speaks volumes to whether people will want to travel either in or out of the country.

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I appreciate the fact that he brought this forward. We do not need people being taxed more and we need to ensure that the money they are paying out is being used wisely. Based on this bill, we can see that the government is again putting its friends at the forefront.

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to join the debate on Bill C-9.

I will start by talking about a visitor who came to Parliament a few weeks ago, Dr. Jane Goodall, and her remarks. Dr. Goodall is a world renowned primatologist and also a leader in thinking about the kind of world we want for the future. In her remarks she said that some say we inherit the earth and the world from our parents and some say we borrow it from our children. Dr. Goodall is concerned that we are stealing from the next generation because borrowing with no plans to repay is in fact stealing. I share her view that it is time we get together and start to pay back to ensure we create a better world for future generations.

Bill C-9 raises questions for me on issues such as the economy, the environment and democracy and whether we are stealing from future generations in the provisions contained in the budget implementation bill. There certainly is stealth in the bill and I will talk about that in my section on democracy. Major changes are hidden in it in such a way that we are unable to properly debate them. They should be in separate legislation.

Let me start my comments with the economy. This is another budget that borrows significant funds and the funds will need to be repaid in the future. This means the government is borrowing from the future. Are there proper plans for repaying these funds, which would indicate that the government is borrowing and not stealing?

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has raised questions about the competency of the Conservative government in terms of its financial projects and plans, as he has done repeatedly over the past several years. He has publicly stated that Bill C-9 falls short in its assertion that the books will be balanced in five years. He estimates that the government's budget predictions are inaccurate and off by about \$10 billion. Mr. Page said that the government's budgetary assumptions were "not a prudent basis for fiscal planning". The Parliamentary Budget Officer is bringing to light the fact that the government has failed to build in a cushion for the unexpected and failed to plan for tomorrow.

More than being concerned about weakness in the planning, I have huge concerns about the government's priorities. As was brought to light in the budget implementation bill, ideological cuts have been made to women's groups, to poverty alleviation groups and to very important education groups. What we see as the government's priority is its millions of dollars, and some assessments say over \$100 million, in self-serving advertising paid by the taxpayer to promote the government's fiscal management. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is a more neutral commentator on plans and budgets.

There are five new tax increases in the budget. When I pointed this out to my constituents, they were very surprised. The Conservatives' expensive advertising campaign by no means suggests transparency with respect to these new tax increases, including \$15 billion in payroll taxes, which are counterproductive and aggressive.

Is this budget stealing from the future or are we investing in the future? I am concerned about the funds that are being spent on the upcoming international meetings. Less than six months before these meetings, the venue for the G20 was changed. It is going to cost over \$1 billion for a few days of meetings.

● (1115)

I know others have compared the spending for the summits with the spending on the Olympic Games, but it is not only 17 days of Olympic Games. There are also nine days of Paralympic Games, with heads of state and VIP to be secured and protected. To spend over \$1 billion on these few days of meetings at a time when budgets are being cut for very important social issues and other issues is a huge mismanagement of public funds.

With respect to the environment, this budget continues the inaction on climate. Unfortunately, there are cuts to the eco-energy home retrofit program that brought homeowners and families into reducing the footprint of their households. There are cuts to climate science. Gordon McBean, the chair of the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences, sums up the effect of budget 2010 on climate change research as follows:

Budget 2010 is basically the nightmare scenario for scientists across the country – our community is gutted.

Are we borrowing from our future generations or are we stealing from them? That is really the question that came to mind as I looked at the provisions in the budget. It weakens the federal oversight of the environment. It removes from the environment department the power to assess environmental projects and moves it into other organizations that have worse records in terms of public participation. It gives the minister power which he or she should not have, because ministers are subject to lobbying.

On the Gulf of Mexico oil leak, we see the ministers deferring to other regulatory bodies and not taking responsibility for answering whether we have strong enough regulations. They are being very evasive on the questions on oil tankers in the Pacific north coast, giving us a range of different answers designed to confuse. It is clear the government is paving the way for that super tanker on our vulnerable Pacific north coast, which we should never allow.

*Government Orders*

Last, I wanted to touch on democracy. I know some of the other speakers have been eloquent on the issue of combining a lot of different, non-linked policy and legislative changes in an omnibus bill. The Prime Minister commented on this a number of years ago. In 1994 he asked for a ruling to split a budget implementation bill, saying that it was becoming standard practice with governments to bring in omnibus legislation following every budget under what might be called the kitchen sink approach. He described that as improper and said it should be ruled out of order. That was referring to a bill of 20 pages.

What the Prime Minister is putting in front of the House is 900 pages. It is a far larger kitchen sink with far more in it. The hypocrisy is unfortunate. Democracy is impacted when Parliament does not have the opportunity to debate substantive changes around Canada Post, AECL and environmental assessment. This should be 14 different bills according to senior members of the Senate.

This is an abuse. Unfortunately, it is a corruption of Parliament. It brings me back to my question. Are we stealing from future generations? When we undermine democracy, we undermine the role of Parliament. I do not support Bill C-9. It is a very poor example of statespersonship. It is an unfortunate undermining of the Canadian confidence, both economically and environmentally. The government's priority should be to protect and strengthen our democracy.

• (1120)

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question for my colleague from the Liberal Party is simple. She says in her final wrap-up of her speech that she does not support Bill C-9. I assume if one does not support it, one will vote against it. Certainly the members of the NDP will vote against it.

Is my colleague speaking on behalf of her party, or is she, as an individual, going to vote against it? Will enough Liberal Party members vote for the bill so it will pass? Will the rest of her party share her conviction that Bill C-9 is not worthy of the support of Parliament and vote against it as a group, or will they leave a bunch of their members at home again or tell them to leave the chamber when it comes time to vote?

On the opposition benches, we all need to know what the Liberal Party will do about Bill C-9. Will it force the government to split it? Will it vote against it at the report stage, knowing that this may mean an end to the Conservative rule of our country?

What are her colleagues going to do about voting on the bill?

**Ms. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, members of the Liberal Party will vote against the bill.

In a way I find it interesting to be scolded by the member of the NDP on this issue. He talked about an end to Conservative Party and the Prime Minister's governing seat. That party, in December 2005, undermined its policies, which it had brought to the fore with the Liberal Party of the day, by ensuring that the government fell before Kelowna and before many of the important policies the Liberal Party was bringing forward in its upcoming budget.

• (1125)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians find it hard to believe that in a recession in 2009 the banks made \$15.9 billion. The federal government rewarded

them by reducing their corporate taxation rate to 15% and this was while the CEO of the Royal Bank, Gordon Nixon, and Toronto Dominion Bank's Edmund Clark were earning around \$10.4 million.

What do Canadian citizens get as a reward for this? A 50% increase in the air travellers security charge, making Canada the highest taxed in the world. This is up against an American security charge of only \$5. The government is driving Canadian customers to fly on American carriers. How is that smart economics?

Does the member have any comment on these points?

**Ms. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly do have comments on those points.

The member points out one of five tax increases, and that is to the travelling consumer, at a time when our corporate taxes are far lower than our neighbours to the south. This is the reason the Liberal Party is committed to not do further tax cuts for corporations until such time as we do not have to borrow money.

While the government is adding taxes to workers through payroll tax increases, it is planning to cut the taxes of corporations, which I support when we can afford it. However, I do not support doing that with borrowed money, digging future generations further into debt. This debt will have to be repaid at a time when it will be more difficult than ever, with fewer people in the workforce and other demographic pressures that we will face as Canadian governments.

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity on behalf of my constituents of Winnipeg Centre to enter into the debate on Bill C-9 at report stage amendments.

I think it is important to put in perspective what we are doing here at this point in time on Bill C-9 and on behalf of the people I represent.

We should remind Canadians that this is the point in the legislative process where the government of the day comes to Parliament to ask permission to spend the taxpayers' money in a certain way. The government introduces its budget, and then, by virtue of a budget implementation bill, the government outlines the detailed way in which it intends to spend that budget.

The government comes to Parliament for our permission, and it needs our permission to go ahead. This is why there is the urgency with Bill C-9. This is why the government is going to put time allocation on the debate, if it can, to ram this thing through by the end of June when Parliament adjourns for the summer recess.



*Government Orders*

Technically, the government does not have permission to spend the money it proposes to spend. It is coming to us. I wish the government would show a little bit more humility when it comes to us, because it does not even have a majority. It cannot force anything in this Parliament. It needs the co-operation of the members on this side of the House to get permission to spend that money.

A lot of Canadians would like to believe that members of Parliament could work together in between elections to paddle our canoe in the same direction, as it were, to do what is best for the country. I think if people sought it, they would find a fair amount of goodwill in the House towards that, because we all recognize we have been going through difficult economic times. The opposition parties did not try to interfere, block or stop the massive stimulus spending. We accepted that this was what was going on in the world.

What is mean-spirited about this and what is wrong with the way the Conservatives are handling this is that rather than seeking the co-operation of the House for the implementation of the budget this year, they tried to insert a bunch of things that do not properly belong in a budget implementation bill. Canadians should understand that.

It is deceit of the highest order to ram this bill through. For the necessary spending, or at least giving permission for the government to spend, they are including a bunch of things that do not belong here. It is a very American-style thing to do. Those of us who are observers of politics in other countries will recognize this as earmarking, as they call it in the United States, where a budget bill will start out at, say, 30 pages, and by the time every senator adds their special spending bill that they trade their support for, it will be 200 pages long. There will be all kinds of irrelevant additional material rammed into that bill.

This is what is happening here today. In terms of implementation of the budget, I do not think there would be great opposition to some parts of the bill. We are clearly against other things that deserve debate. However, there are some things that clearly should not be in this bill at all, and that is what speaker after speaker on the part of the NDP have been trying to point out.

I know the people in my riding would be disappointed in a number of the aspects of this budget implementation bill. In its current form, it does not deserve our support. Any opposition member worth his or her salt would vote against this bill.

My colleague from Hamilton is exactly right in saying that we should not only be opposed to this bill, we should be willing to stand in our place and be opposed to this bill and be counted in our opposition to this bill.

Believe me, we will be counting the heads on those vacant benches over there when it comes time to vote against this bill. It is unworthy of our support. Never mind the merits of the bill or the faults of the bill, by principle we should be voting against this bill because it sets a dangerous precedent that they are trying to insert a number of things that clearly do not belong here.

In the brief time I had to research the part 1 amendments, I counted up a number of tax grabs in Bill C-9, the current budget implementation bill, that should be of grave concern as well. They

are clearly contrary to what the Conservative government would have us believe, that they are all about tax cuts and not tax grabs.

• (1130)

Clearly, a lot of these measures are tax grabs in no uncertain terms, yet the Conservatives have left opportunities for revenue without any comment at all. For instance, a budget implementation bill or a budget itself is the opportunity to finally plug the outrageous tax loopholes that exist for offshore tax havens. This is money left on the table that the Minister of Finance does not see fit to pick up and put in his pocket.

I cannot understand it, because I used to hear Conservative MPs, when they were in opposition, rail about the outrageous tax havens, rail against the former prime minister, Paul Martin, for shielding a lot of his assets in offshore tax havens with his 13 shell companies to hide the profits of Canada Steamship Lines, but they have not taken any active steps to deal with this.

I forget what the chartered accountants call it, but it has a fancy name in terms of hiring a tax avoidance lawyer; “tax-motivated expatriation”, those are the words I was groping for. It sounds like a legitimate move that a tax consultant would advise. In the cocktail party circuit, it almost sounds respectable. For people to say they are going to take part in some tax-motivated expatriation almost sounds as though they are going on a holiday to some warm country. In actual fact, it is a sleazy tax-cheating loophole that the Conservatives are afraid to close because it is their friends who avail themselves of it. So they do not want to offend their friends.

In the U.S., an estimated \$100 billion a year in revenue is lost through its tax haven regime. Other experts have taken that money down with our economy and it would be a minimum of \$7 billion per year of lost revenue that our tax havens are costing the taxpayer. So as we are offloading this tax burden with tax grabs from ordinary Canadians, we are leaving this money on the table. It is incomprehensible to me and it is contrary to what we were led to believe about the policies of the Conservatives.

The other thing that should be pointed out, and again the people in my riding of Winnipeg Centre deserve to know that someone is raising this in the House of Commons, is the very valid and legitimate point that my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona made, that the current round of corporate tax cuts that the Conservatives have not only contemplated but are implementing are going to cost the general revenues in the neighbourhood of \$7 billion to \$10 billion. I have heard as high as \$15 billion. We do not have that money. That is money we have to borrow. We are going to be borrowing money to give to already profitable corporations in terms of yet another handout. This is what is incomprehensible to ordinary Canadians.

It is not as though we are giving a struggling industry some kind of helping hand up. That is one thing. We can talk about whether that is corporate welfare, but we are not opposed.

*Government Orders*

For instance, if it were the shipbuilding industry and we wanted Canada to get back into shipbuilding, some kind of help to get the industry back on its feet can be justified, but the already most profitable industries, the oil industry, as well as the big banks who are showing record profits, are now going to get another gratuitous handout of up to \$15 billion of money we do not have. So we are going to be raising taxes of ordinary Canadians to give a handout to the banks who in turn gouge those ordinary Canadians and have both hands in their pockets.

There is something fundamentally wrong with the mindset of anyone who would craft a financial instrument such as Bill C-9. It should be rejected, it should be opposed, and every member of the New Democratic Party can be counted on to oppose the bill and send it back where it came from for a complete rewrite, I would hope.

• (1135)

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, given the fact that the member for Winnipeg Centre is a former labour leader who I believe was the president of the carpenters in his province, which is a huge responsibility, and of course, representing workers who have seasonal work, EI matters large. Given not only his experience as a long-term veteran MP but also as a former labour leader of his entire province, what does the member think about the idea that \$57 billion is literally being stolen from the pockets of unemployed workers?

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Hamilton Centre for giving me the opportunity to touch on something that time did not permit me to deal with in my original speech.

It is quite true. As a former labour leader, I have a great deal of working knowledge of the EI fund. I can tell members that when the original cuts to the unemployment insurance program were made by the Liberals in 1995 and 1996, those changes in eligibility rules took \$20 million per year of federal transfers out of just my riding of Winnipeg Centre alone. It is no wonder the fund went into surplus. That money, we should remember, is only money from the employer and the employee. The federal government pays nothing into the EI fund. Brian Mulroney stopped doing that in the mid-1980s.

Can members imagine taking \$20 million a year of income maintenance from the federal government out of one of the poorest ridings in Canada? That would be like losing the payroll of two major factories of 2,000 employees each. That was the net effect of the Liberals' cuts to EI.

But then the surpluses started building up, because they created an unemployment insurance system where nobody qualified any more. So it is no wonder. The Liberals milked it like a cash cow. There was a \$57 billion surplus that was spent on everything except income maintenance, and now the Conservatives have driven the final stake through the heart of the unemployment insurance program by saying that reserve is gone, that we have to start from scratch and raise premiums.

Clearly there is no working-class consciousness on that side of the House.

• (1140)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for an excellent speech on Bill C-9.

He talked about tax havens. I guess it points to the power of one individual. When a low-level computer worker, two years ago, in a Liechtenstein bank, rose up and sold a computer diskette with the information of thousands of tax evaders to the German government, the Canadian government got onto this, and guess what? Now across Canada we have these tax evaders running to Revenue Canada locations to take advantage of our tax amnesty.

The current government is so tough on tax havens and tax evaders that it says to people, "Go ahead and put your money in the tax havens, because if we catch you, all you have to do is go down to Revenue Canada and take advantage of our amnesty and pay the tax and you're scot-free".

That is our tough approach.

I would like to ask the member if he has any comments on that.

**Mr. Pat Martin:** Mr. Speaker, it does speak to a larger problem. It is an attitude problem, I suppose. The government is willing to forgo this lost revenue to tax havens. Even Diane Francis, not exactly a left-wing author, did a five-part series in the *National Post*, calling on the Conservative government to plug egregious tax loopholes that are just fundamentally wrong, that no decent person would avail themselves of if they had any conscience or any pride in being a Canadian.

One of those was the family trust loophole where we give a one-time payment of 25% and that gives us permission to send the whole family trust of billions of dollars offshore, and from that day on, all the revenue from that investment comes back into the country tax-free. We can have all of our family and friends living on these tax-free earnings offshore for the rest of their lives for generations.

Why would anybody craft such a thing that is clearly against the best interests of all Canadians except for that one billionaire? Why would we tolerate giving money away like that? Can we really afford to be so generous?

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chance to comment on the bill.

I have to say that in large part this is very much like a trip down memory lane for me because I have been here before with a Conservative government in the province of Ontario, and interestingly, who was the chief of staff to Premier Mike Harris who brought in the infamous omnibus bill 26? Guy Giorno, the same chief of staff to the current Prime Minister.

My colleague from Sault Ste. Marie is nodding his head. He remembers what went on when we had that bill. It was the same sort of thing. Bring in a bill that is meant to be one thing and then load it up with everything else that is problematic, that is going to involve a lot of debate, that is controversial and ideological. Just stuff it all in there and refuse to talk beyond the cover page. The government wanted it to go through. It was massive. It led to a major upheaval, which is putting it mildly, of our health care system. It brought in a massive review. It really set the stage for what became the dark years of the Harris regime in Ontario, years of governance which we are still trying to climb out of in terms of the damage that was done.

*Government Orders*

One of the things that is interesting and is different in this House from what I experienced the better part of 15 years ago was that the opposition actually stood up and fought. There were two opposition parties, the Liberals and the NDP, in that legislature. Not only did they stand up for the best interests of Ontarians and take on that kind of undemocratic governance, and I definitely use the term “governance” loosely, but we united around that fight. That was a majority house, not a minority where the majority vote is actually on this side of the House. We united and took on that government, head on.

In fact we had filibusters that went on for days. It was the focus of the entire provincial media. People were watching it around the clock, going to sleep while catching what was going on and waking up in the morning and plugging back into it. There were rosters that we had for going around the clock, just like picket duty, 2 a.m. to 5 a.m. could be house duty time. We went around the clock for days on end. We had the same kind of fight for the same kind of reasons against the same kind of undemocratic procedures.

What am I looking at here? I see my NDP colleagues standing up one after another going at this tooth and nail. We are doing everything we can to try to stop the bill. If we had the support of the official opposition, whose job it is to oppose the government of the day, we could do something, particularly since our leader, the member for Toronto—Danforth has made it clear that he is prepared to work with the other two parties to leverage the situation we are in right now, which is that there is still a lack of desire for an election. There is certainly a lack of desire on the part of the opposition even to threaten a possible election. Set that aside, but that is not the circumstance right now.

We know the government does not want an election right now. It might in a month, two months, a year but it does not want one now. The G8 and G20 summits are coming. The Prime Minister is over in Europe lining up the agenda.

Fine, if the Conservatives want to play hardball in terms of the bill they are trying to ram through, we ought to be playing hardball too. We should hold them to account and use that leverage. That is the whole idea of being the official opposition, not the official lapdogs of the country. It is infuriating.

**Hon. Gary Goodyear:** I have a headache.

**Mr. David Christopherson:** Mr. Speaker, the minister wants me to speak up a little. Okay, I will speak a little louder for the minister so the minister can hear every word of well-deserved criticism for that member and every other member on that side of the House.

• (1145)

Speaking of this side of the House, if there was the leadership that there should be from the leader of the official opposition to work with the other two parties, to use the fact that we on this side represent the majority of Canadians and majority of votes in the House of Commons, as my colleague from Winnipeg Centre has said, without the vote of somebody on this side of the House or MPs staying home, the Conservatives could not pass anything. We have that control. We have that opportunity. The threat of an election momentarily is suspended. Now is the moment to strike.

Instead, we have the Liberals wanting it both ways. They stand up and criticize. Heck, they could be using some of our speaking notes as they make some of the same criticisms we do, which are really good arguments I might add, but they have no intention of really doing anything. They just want to bark a lot. It is not even that much barking because we are the ones who have to put forward the speakers to keep this bill going. If we folded, this debate would be over.

It is as much with sadness as anger that I look at this situation, particularly since we do not have the imminent threat of an election, as the counterpoint to where we are. We do not want a revolution. What we want to do is bring democracy back to the House. We want this bill split. If we had the support of all the opposition members, the bill would be split.

In fact, the bill would not pass if the majority in the House of Commons stood united, but it is not, and so we are doing what we can. I readily acknowledge it is not nearly as much as we would like. We are the fourth party with the smallest caucus but probably with the greatest determination to stand up to this undemocratic budget bill.

If government members want to sigh and roll their eyes at what they think is just a big waste of time, fine. We have already heard from the government. It is the Conservatives' bill; it is their plan. What we would like is for virtually every opposition member to stand in his or her place and not only speak against the bill but commit to march into the House and exercise the greatest right and privilege that members of this place have: their precious vote. Just the threat of doing it would be enough to get the ball rolling to make changes.

However, as long as the official opposition continues to play official lapdog, the government knows that as long as it puts up with all the speeches from the New Democrats, it will ultimately get its way. The Liberals have given a wink and a nod that they will speak against it and some of them will vote against it, but do not worry, not enough to really do anything, not enough to make a difference, not enough to bring some democracy to this process. Theirs is not that kind of commitment, just the kind that they can put on a news release and base some speeches on.

There is very much to be said but I know we will all get another opportunity to go at this again this afternoon. I look forward to that opportunity. More than anything, I am hoping that during the course of this debate I will see a real official opposition acting like an official opposition and joining with the majority of the House to do the right thing for the majority of Canadians that this side of the House represents.

• (1150)

**Mr. Tony Martin (Sault Ste. Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member on a regular basis in Toronto at Queen's Park when Mike Harris was doing the very same thing as the Prime Minister is doing here, which is loading up bills with everything but the kitchen sink and then ramming them through because he has found a way to do that. I remember one of the Conservative deputy speakers of that day referring to omnibus bills as “ominous bills”, and they indeed are ominous.

*Government Orders*

What worries me is that this is the first real example. It is probably Guy Giorno's first chance to try this tactic in Ottawa. Does the member share the same concern I have, that once this precedent is set here and the government finds a way to ram through these all-encompassing bills with public policy implications all over the place, this may become a trend that we will all regret in the long run?

**Mr. David Christopherson:** Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate the comments of my good friend from Sault Ste. Marie.

We remember those days vividly. He is right, as would be all members on this side of the House at least, and maybe some others also, to be concerned about where this takes us.

I will give people something else to watch out for. The Mike Harris government was big on bringing in legislation that removed the need for more legislation if further changes were wanted. By that I mean the government turned a legislative change that needed to be debated in the House into a regulation change.

It sounds like inside baseball and half of the people who are watching probably are wondering who cares about that, but here is the point. Here is why it matters. When we have to amend a law through legislation, we have to involve this House, all the members and all the processes that are built in to protect democracy. When it is taken out of the legislation and put into regulations, it means that cabinet decides.

I am taking a moment with this because it is really important in terms of democracy. The example I use is a provincial law that says the minister of transportation is empowered to set speed limits on the highways of the province. It is done by regulation so that a new law is not needed every time a change to the speed limit is wanted because of changing traffic patterns. It can be done by regulation and it is fairly straightforward. However, when something critically important is removed from the legislative process, the democratic process is removed, because those regulations are only debated in the cabinet room and cabinet, understandably, is a private, secret meeting in terms of how our system works.

This is another ploy and there are many others that we need to start exposing that deny democracy.

• (1155)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the people watching should know that most of the bills before this House, hundreds a year, are in the neighbourhood of 10 or 20 pages long. This particular bill is 880 pages long. It is basically like vegetable soup.

I have had experience with omnibus bills in the past. Twenty years ago in Manitoba, in a minority government situation, the Filmon Conservative government of the day did the same thing. It brought in its budget implementation bill, but along with that, it put in a provision to eliminate, sell off and privatize Manitoba Data Services. Something it could not do in a minority situation up front it did through the back door.

That is what is going on here with Canada Post. The government could not get Bill C-44 through when the government introduced it last year. It knows it will not get it through so it is sneaking it through the back door.

Would the member like to make some comments about that?

**The Deputy Speaker:** There are less than 30 seconds left for the member.

**Mr. David Christopherson:** Mr. Speaker, regarding Canada Post, for which I was the critic until recently, it is clear why the government stuffed it in here because the Liberals are onside with them when it is controversial. The Liberals are playing games with the postal workers by telling them, "Do not worry, we are with you", and then not providing the votes necessary to stop the government from what it is doing.

This helps the Liberals. Maybe one reason they are not speaking so loudly is that this removes a problem. It is unpopular with the public and unpopular with post office workers, yet now it is in a bill and—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Churchill.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in the House today, a day where spirits certainly are a lot calmer than they were yesterday. We certainly got the attention of Canadians and exposed, in many ways, the sorry state of debate, not just in the House but also in our committees and the point that has reached.

It is an honour to rise in the House on behalf of the people of Churchill in northern Manitoba and to speak, as a member of the New Democratic Party, to why we need to oppose Bill C-9 and to the absolutely critical reason that we need to put a stop to the government's destructive agenda for Canada.

I speak as a member of Parliament representing my constituency. I have the honour of being one of the youngest members of Parliament in the House and in history as well. In many ways, that is a testament to where I come from, which is a part of Canada that is very young. Northern Canada is known as being the youngest part of our country, which is very much the same as where I come from. What comes hand in hand with that is the idea that we need to be looking out for that young population, which is my generation and the next generation.

Today I would like to speak to Bill C-9 in terms of how it stands against my generation and the improvement of the quality of life for my generation. It truly takes away the benefits, supports, the spirit of co-operation for which Canada is so well-known and the system that has truly made Canada one of the best countries in the world in which to live.

We are slipping and we have been slipping for years in a downward direction that started in the mid-nineties under the direction of the federal finance minister of the time, Paul Martin, who systematically decided to pay off the debt of this country on the backs of all Canadians, but mostly Canadians who, in many ways, were living not just on the margins of society, but who we needed to ensure had the support of our social safety net, whether it was women's organizations, aboriginal organizations, programming when it came to employment insurance or, quite frankly, when it came to health care or post-secondary education.

*Government Orders*

All of those areas suffered as a result of those cuts, and we have never recovered. In fact, it has become worse. While there has been Band-Aid solutions, a project here, a project there, that social safety net upon which Canada was built, the social safety net that made Canada what it was, certainly after the second world war, began to be broken apart piece by piece.

What we are seeing with the government and with Bill C-9 is the continued erosion of that safety net and, if anything, a speeding up of that process, a move to deregulate, a move to privatize with such vigour, and all of that hidden in a discussion about the budget in the budget.

Many of my colleagues have stood in the House to talk about that exact piece. The Conservatives must know that these are poisonous pills and, for that reason, have stuck them into this larger framework, the budgetary framework, when they are measures that have nothing to do with the budget, quite frankly, and have everything to do with taking away from our country and giving benefit to, one would presume, some of their friends. That tells a sad story when it comes to the future that my generation has to look forward to.

• (1200)

When it comes to our future, Bill C-9 is destructive in many ways. We have stood in the House to speak to many of them but I want to point to the ones that I believe are absolutely critical and have a direct impact on my generation as well.

One of the top issues that young people in Canada are concerned about today is the environment. We have been shamed around the world by the government's lack of leadership when it comes to the environment and dealing with climate change. Here we have yet one more step in that direction, something that I know concerns many people my age, and that is the removal of environmental assessments and deregulation when it comes to looking ahead at federally funded infrastructure projects.

If we do not have the federal government looking out for sustainable infrastructure development, respect for the environment and consultation with appropriate groups, including first nations, aboriginal people and peoples living in the area, who will look after it? Where is that leadership?

I will move on to employment insurance. I have been told by grandparents, elders and seniors across Canada. They remember the days when unemployment insurance, which became employment insurance, was not a system that existed or a system that people could count on when they needed it most. The development of that program, a fundamental piece of our social safety net, was eroded by the Liberals starting in the 1990s and continues to be eroded under the current government.

The employment insurance account was emptied after holding a surplus of \$57 billion. This insurance fund was what workers across Canada put their blood, sweat, hard work and money into to have that peace of mind and support when times were tough. The money was taken away previously by the Liberals and it continues to be mandated in such a way today. Where is the money going? It is going toward corporate tax cuts for the oil and gas industry and the banks. Those are the dollars of the hard-working Canadians who the government claims to speak out for. It looks like theft to me.

Another item is the privatization of important institutions across our country, such as AECL. I had the honour of stopping in Winnipeg last weekend for a mine rescue competition. I met with individuals working with AECL in southern Manitoba and we talked about their concerns, the future of AECL and what will happen. I talked with people who, as a result of reduced programming, will be losing their jobs, good paying government jobs, jobs that have the safety record in a very dangerous industry.

Here we have a government that is willing to sell off AECL at the worst possible time for a bargain basement price. It is an institution in our country that must be regulated and supported by government.

I want to speak to the actions in terms of the softwood lumber industry which is being sold off in many ways. The government's softwood sellout deal, as we call it back home, has deeply impacted my region. Communities like The Pas, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Wabowden and communities all across northern Manitoba depend on forestry. These measures in the budget have nothing to do with budgetary measures. The interest owed to corporations is being lowered by 2% but, most important, an export tariff on softwood lumber products for Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan is being raised by 10%

Many of these mills are non-existent, but many of them are operating at bare bones and yet these industries are being asked to deal with this increased tariff. People in my communities, who have been asked to make so many concessions, are being asked to put up with this because their government is unwilling to stand up and protect them.

• (1205)

One area that I find to be the most disturbing and perhaps the saddest in terms of its completely shameless positioning in this budget is the significant measure to privatize Canada Post and remove its legal monopoly on outgoing international letters, or the remailer program.

Canada Post, as are many crown corporations that we are so proud of, is a corporation that Canadians depend on. While we talk every day about average Canadians, it is these kinds of crown corporations and these kinds of programs that we need to protect. That is why we call on—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Questions and comments. The hon. member for Hamilton Centre.

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I compliment my colleague from Churchill for an excellent analysis of this critical issue. I would also point out that I think any arm's-length observer in this place will recognize a rising star in the making. I want to publicly state what a phenomenal job the member is doing, not only for her constituents but for her generation.

On the generational issue, one of the big concerns that a lot of us have is the number of young people who are not voting, who are saying "a pox on all our houses", and just checking right out of the whole political process because they do not think it is democratic, meaningful or that it helps them in any way.

*Government Orders*

With something as cynical as this document is, which plays all these democratic games and denies democracy, I wonder if the member for Churchill sees a concern in terms of how this will affect younger people and their cynicism toward the whole democratic process and the things that we do here.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Hamilton Centre for his kind words. It is an honour to work with such a fantastic team made up of himself and members of the NDP who for years have fought for my generation and generations of Canadians coming up.

I could not agree more with my colleague's point. We are dealing with some of the highest rates of electoral disenfranchisement, young people pulling out of the system entirely, a cynicism like we have never seen before. I have heard members of the Conservative caucus talk about that and ask that question. If they want an answer, this bill is an exact example of why young people tune out.

This budget has poison pills in it that have nothing to do with a budget. If anything, they take away the role of government whose fundamental role is to look out for our well-being. When we see government break away, give favours to its friends, take away good paying jobs that mean so much to my generation and fails to look at the priorities of young people, whether it is on the environment or post-secondary education, then, no kidding, young people will be cynical.

• (1210)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of the many things that Bill C-9 would do is remove the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency from reviewing energy projects and instead substituting the National Energy Board and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. This would remove a review of major industrial projects from an agency that is dedicated to environmental protection and instead hand it job over to an industry-friendly board. That is typical of Conservative governments, not only here but anywhere in the world.

The NEB does not have the experience necessary to conduct proper public consultations and environmental assessments. Of the over 300 staff at the board, only a few dozen work on environmental issues. When the NEB held hearings about lifting the same-season relief well policy, only written submissions were accepted. No public hearings or consultations took place. With the exception of a single Inuit group, the board only heard from the big oil companies.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency was specifically designed and set up to conduct reviews of projects that may have serious consequences. The Conservatives are trying to fast-track the expansion of the tar sands and building oil pipelines by handing over the oversight to the industry-friendly NEB. This is classic Conservative thinking; let the industry regulate itself.

I would like to ask the member whether she has any further comments on these observations.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona, who further makes light of just how shameful the removal of environmental assessment is and how truly this has no place in a budget bill. It is extremely destructive when it comes to how we are moving forward.

I just want to note that there is hope here. There is the ability of the opposition to stand united in its opposition to Bill C-9, to listen to our calls, and to stand up and say that these poison pills have no room in this budget bill. They have nothing to do with this budget bill. They have everything to do with weakening our country and taking away from the well-being of Canadians, and we have to oppose it.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand up today to support the set of amendments to Bill C-9 brought forward by my colleague from Hamilton Mountain.

I would like to reiterate that we in the NDP find it disheartening that the government would include so many policies in its budget document that would never be passed had they been introduced as stand-alone legislation. If the government were serious about its desire to be more transparent and accountable, it would not have attached these policies to the budget.

One of the most objectionable policies hidden in this budget relates to the current environmental assessment process. In keeping with our party's concerns about the oil sands, the measures contained within Bill C-9 are very worrisome. If passed, the bill would exempt certain federally funded infrastructure projects from environmental assessment, which goes well beyond efforts by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to streamline the environmental assessment process.

It also allows the Minister of the Environment to dictate the scope of environmental assessments. It weakens public participation, and it enables the removal of assessments of energy projects from the Environmental Assessment Agency and moves them to the National Energy Board and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.

The notion of saddling our children and our grandchildren with debt is regrettable. That we should also bequeath them an environmental liability on their natural heritage through this process is reprehensible.

That our Conservative minority government should, with the complicity of the Liberal Party, seek to make environmental protection a matter of ministerial discretion is a demonstration of the worst sort of shortsightedness. The notion that to help make building projects shovel ready we should make the application of environmental law optional is something that no elected official will ever be able to justify.

Eighteen months ago, the Conservatives came out with their now infamous economic and fiscal update. Within this update they gutted the Navigable Waters Protection Act, which had been in place for 100 years, and our Liberal colleagues supported them.

Now the Conservatives are trying to finish what they started by doing away with environmental assessments for most projects that receive federal funding. Several provinces have rather weak legislation and no way to conduct real inspections and/or assessments. The Navigable Waters Protection Act was the only way some provinces could have assessments done.

*Government Orders*

Last Friday we debated a motion brought forward by the member for Edmonton—Strathcona that called for a review of all laws, regulations, and policies related to deepwater oil and gas drilling. It followed the disaster that is currently ongoing in the Gulf of Mexico. This disaster shows exactly why environmental assessment is so vitally important.

All too often it is impossible to stop permanent or long-lasting environmental degradation once spills or other events have taken place. What this means is very simple. As difficult as it is to stop all environmental disasters, it is much easier to fight these causes than it is to try to rectify the catastrophic consequences.

Sometimes the consequences of environmental damage are not as visible as those images we are currently seeing from the Gulf of Mexico. In many ways, these consequences are even more dangerous. They are slowly poisoning our environment without the global calls for action that we see today. If we do not have a thorough environmental assessment system in place, we have no way to stop these disasters from taking place.

We live in a democratic society, but these provisions erode any notion of accountable government. Environmental assessments will exist only at the whim of the Minister of the Environment.

As the Minister of the Environment is able to dictate the scope of any environmental assessment, the minister can effectively kill any assessment by narrowing, broadening, or changing the scope of the assessment to such a degree as to make the assessment meaningless. The view of anyone who stands opposed to a project can be ruled out of scope, meaning that the government can simply silence the critics of any development.

• (1215)

There is also the worrying provision to move the assessment of energy projects from the Environmental Assessment Agency to the National Energy Board and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. The mandate of the Environmental Assessment Agency is, according to its website, and I quote:

To provide Canadians with high-quality federal environmental assessments that contribute to informed decision making in support of sustainable development.

Why would the government want to move environmental assessments away from an agency whose sole purpose is to carry them out? If the government is worried about duplicating work between agencies and departments, surely it should have the Environmental Assessment Agency, with all the skills, tools, and resources it has, carry out the assessments for the National Energy Board and the Nuclear Safety Commission. Where is the efficiency in trying to duplicate these roles at the National Energy Board and the Nuclear Safety Commission? The only possible explanation I can see for moving these assessments is to weaken them by passing them on to agencies whose mandates are not so explicitly related to environmental assessment.

Looking forward, people can count on Canada's New Democrats to continue working against the false dichotomy that claims that we cannot stimulate the economy while we also protect the environment. After all, \$1 billion invested in Obama-style green infrastructure creates twice as many jobs as \$1 billion spent on tax cuts and injects \$2 billion into the broader economy.

The NDP has long called for investment in renewable energy and support for public transport, policies that would add value to our communities, protect the environment, and create new jobs. However, the government simply is not interested. This is the same shortsighted view of the economy that left the government cutting the eco-energy retrofit program. This program encouraged people to increase the energy efficiency of their homes while it sustained and created new jobs. When we think about the whole economic cycle, these jobs increased the tax base and lowered the amount the government had to pay in social welfare, so the program had a positive effect on the economy as a whole. Yet the program was quietly cancelled just before Easter weekend. The government was clearly hoping that the cancellation would be missed by the media and the Canadian public.

Environmental protection is a duty we owe to future generations. I have two young daughters, Trinity, who is six, and Thea, who is two, and I certainly do not want to have to tell them or their children that I stood by and watched as the government decimated Canada's environmental assessment procedures.

If parliamentarians do not stand up to ensure that this measure does not sneak through in the budget, who will? Rest assured, the New Democrats will continue to do so.

• (1220)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as the member has ably pointed out, Bill C-9 is going to remove the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency from reviewing all the energy projects and will substitute the National Energy Board and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. We know that this is a body, basically, of self-regulation. Not only are six of the board's members long-time veterans of the private oil and gas industry, the board gets all its funding from the companies it regulates. Clearly, it is almost a conflict. Approximately 90% of the National Energy Board's total expenditures are recovered from the companies it regulates. Think of that in terms of what is happening in the Gulf right now, where we are finding that they are almost bereft of any kind of real regulation.

The Conservatives hand-picked 10 of the 12 members of the board. They are hoping to bypass the oversight of major industrial projects, which would have consequences for generations to come. As I indicated, the disaster that is unfolding in the Gulf is clearly tied to the fact that there is not proper oversight and there are not proper regulations in force. The industry is basically self-regulated. This is what happens any time industries regulate themselves.

Does the member have any further comments to make on these points?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to go to New Orleans with my colleague as part of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group. We had a briefing from one of the individuals who was involved with the oil spill that is happening right now in the Gulf of Mexico. One of the things we heard very clearly was that there were not enough of these relief valves being put into place. That was very scary, because as my hon. colleague mentioned, they were policing themselves. What is to say what happens next time? If another unfortunate accident like this happens, we would have two drilled areas gushing oil into the Gulf of Mexico.

That is why it is so important that we ensure that there is an environmental assessment piece here in Canada to ensure that we monitor our Arctic and our beautiful coastlines to ensure that something like that never happens here.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his intervention on Bill C-9. He has articulated very admirably what we see wrong with an omnibus bill that takes a collection of things that really are non-budget related and makes them part of a budget.

I know that he comes from Sudbury, an area that is experiencing a difficult strike at a foreign multinational corporation that does not respect workers.

I wonder what his position would be on whether we should have seen in the budget not only the restoration of the \$57 billion in the EI account, but indeed, as one other private member's bill has called for, employment insurance benefits for those who are involved in prolonged labour disputes. Does he see that if we saw restored in the budget what really is budget money—that \$57 billion from the EI account—it could have helped those workers in Sudbury who have been on strike for nearly a year?

• (1225)

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has asked an important question.

If I look at how my riding specifically is being impacted by this strike, we have 3,000 workers at Vale Inco, which has changed its name to Vale, who have been on strike now for almost a year. Those families are suffering.

We also have one of the best mining supply and services sectors in the world, in my opinion. There are 17,000 people who work in that sector in Sudbury. Many of those people used to have 40-hour-a-week jobs that paid decent wages. Those jobs have now been reduced to 10 hours a week at minimum wage. I have men and women coming into my office crying, because they do not know how they are actually going to make their mortgage payments. They cannot qualify for EI, and there is no money there for some of them.

We actually needed, in this budget, to bring back that \$57 billion to ensure that the money the workers paid to ensure that they had insurance when they needed it was there. Unfortunately, right now, this bill is continuing to move forward and is not bringing forward any transparency or accountability for workers.

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, first, I thank my colleagues in the NDP caucus for speaking out so forcefully and consistently on Bill C-9, the budget implementation bill.

I wish I could say that we are joined by other members of the House as this debate continues, but it looks like we are pretty well alone, which is very unfortunate. I think of the speech that was made by the member for Toronto—Danforth a couple of days ago on Bill C-9 when he appealed to the official opposition and other members to speak out against the bill because it was a travesty. It is an almost 900 page bill. The process of what is unfolding is something, as parliamentarians, we should all be saying that we do not agree with and we are going to ensure that the bill does not go through.

We have seen the government use the 2010 budget to bring in a budget implementation bill. Under that bill, we are calling it the Trojan horse. It rams through all kinds of other significant public policy measures to do with the environment, with taxes, with privatization. The government is using the cover of a budget bill hoping no one will notice. The NDP wants everyone to notice what is taking place because this is an affront to democratic process.

On the bill itself, as many other NDP members have pointed out, we are completely opposed to many of the provisions in the bill. For example, we are opposed to the 50% increase in airline taxes for security. We are also opposed to the fact that the budget bill contains an enormous public policy issue of the divestiture of AECL, which allows for the sale of all or any part of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. It is a major issue that should be before the House in a separate bill and debated. Yet it is being rammed through as part of a budget bill. Once it is gone, it is gone and nothing can be done about it. We should all be up in arms and incredibly concerned about this.

There are other provisions in the bill. Probably one of the most significant ones for us is the tax shift from corporations on to ordinary Canadians.

Today I met with representatives of Food Banks Canada. It is so important to get that sense of reality of what is going on in local communities and what is happening to people across the country. They told me that every month 800,000 Canadians relied on food banks. The percentage of people relying on food banks increased 18% from 2008 to 2009. From 2009 to 2010, it is another 11% increase. They know that about 20% of people who use food banks either work or recently worked.

I bring this forward because it is relevant to this massive shift in taxation from corporations on to ordinary people. Because of the program that the Liberal government started, and now escalated by the Conservative government, we have a massive erosion of corporate taxes.



*Government Orders*

We believe in fair and progressive taxation. We believe everyone should pay their fair share. However, with this tax shift, by 2014, we will see a loss of \$60 billion in revenue. It does not take anyone with a math degree to figure out that the loss of this amount of money will impact the kinds of services that can be provided, whether it is for health care, social programs, EI or whatever it is for the kinds of things we need to do to help unemployed workers. We see people having to rely more and more on food banks, and that is what is at the core of the budget. That is what is so wrong about it.

We also know that over the next four years the Conservative government will take in more than \$19 billion than it needs to deal with EI. We know the employment insurance program is not paid for by the government. It is paid for by employers and employees. The government takes the money through the premiums. What is the government going to do? It is going to rake in billions more than is needed and then use it to pay for the corporate tax cuts. This is an outrage and we strenuously object to it.

• (1230)

There are also provisions in the budget bill that relate to the HST. As someone from British Columbia, there is a sense of outrage about the HST and the way it has been foisted upon the people there. The Conservative government and the Liberal government in British Columbia are working hand in glove with each other to put this on the people of B.C. The response from people has been absolutely incredible.

We have seen the most historic grassroots initiative take place, where people are signing petitions. They are saying, no, that the governments are not going to do this, that they are not going to run roughshod over democratic practice, negotiate a deal a few days after an election, not tell people about it and think they can get away with it.

This part of the budget bill as well as the tax shift is very much related to what is going on in my province. People are so angry over the Liberal and Conservative members of Parliament from B.C. who did absolutely nothing to stand up for their constituents and say that the HST was a bad tax and that it would come at the wrong time.

There are two other issues with which I want to deal. One is on the environment front.

One of the enormous issues in Bill C-9 is the budget is overwhelmingly negative on the environmental front. There are no provisions to fight climate change. There is no plan to create green jobs, something we have advocated for very strongly in our caucus. We have laid out detailed plans about how we need to move to a greener economy. Instead this budget focuses on facilitating and accelerating the extraction of oil and gas.

In a very dramatic move, it guts environmental protection by taking environmental assessments for energy projects away from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and giving that responsibility to the National Energy Board or the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. Both bodies, particularly the National Energy Board, as we just heard from my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona, are very pro-industry. They are loaded with people who have a vested interest in seeing greater extraction of oil and gas.

It is quite shocking to see that this significant policy change on the environment, on regulations, on environmental assessment is in the budget implementation bill. The consequences of that will be felt for years and decades to come. This is one reason for the amendments before us today. We are at report stage of the bill and the proposed amendments would delete all those aspects from it. We think they have no place in a budget bill.

They should be debated separately. Members of the House should be able to look at those provisions in terms of natural resources and energy and how those assessments are done. If the government wants to change and weaken the procedures in place, then let it have the guts and the courage to do it as a separate legislation. Let it be willing to stand the test of putting that legislation before the House and then seeing whether it has the support to get it through. To do it through a budget bill is unconscionable.

I will focus briefly on the issue of housing. I, along with other members, have worked very hard for in my community for this. One thing that disturbs me very deeply is we really saw no provisions for an ongoing housing program in the budget.

Over four million Canadians are living in housing insecurity. Up to 300,000 people are homeless in communities across the country. We would think this would be a major priority. It certainly takes us back to the statistics that I read from Food Banks Canada. Yet there is nothing in the budget that addresses this fundamental human right in our society, the right to safe, appropriate, affordable and accessible housing. I have a bill before the House, Bill C-304, that would compel the government to initiate and develop a national housing strategy.

A core requirement of a budget is to ensure people have adequate housing and incomes, whether it is through increasing the Canada pension plan, the guaranteed income supplement or OAS. Those are the fundamentals. Yet everything in the budget is getting away from that and giving greater breaks to corporations. We find that unacceptable and will vote against it.

• (1235)

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member did an excellent job talking about the deficiencies in this budget and lack of opportunities in terms of the environment and fighting poverty.

In a parallel move, former Prime Minister Paul Martin said:

Ottawa has a responsibility to put global warming and poverty at the top of the G20 agenda because they threaten the stability of the world just as much as economics.

However, the current Prime Minister said that he would stick with his agenda of fighting taxes for big banks and promoting the economic development of big corporations.

Would the hon. member like to comment on the parallels inside and outside of the House?

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Libby Davies:** Madam Speaker, we all feel it is a bit of an embarrassment in terms of what will happen at the G8 and G20. The Prime Minister is running around chasing down and generating support for banks, when his priorities should really be on helping people. It is an embarrassment in terms of what Canada's position is in the international community.

For Paul Martin to suddenly say that he is concerned about what will happen at the G8 and G20 summits and what the priority should be, I point out that as finance minister he orchestrated the demise of housing programs in Canada. Let us not forget that he cut the deficit on the backs of poor people, people who were most vulnerable in our society. It is easy, after the fact, to say that things are not right, but some of the systemic issues we are dealing with, both domestically and internationally, flow from decisions that were made by the Liberal government of which he was very much a part of as finance minister.

We have been very clear on our position on the G8 and G20 and on maternal and child health. We have said that a full range of programs, including family planning and access to safe legal abortions, should be available. We have pushed the government very hard. Unfortunately the Liberals, even within their own ranks, have been unable to maintain a progressive position on this issue.

We are headed to the G8 and G20 and spending \$1 billion in security. We will be no further ahead and yet we still have pressing issues at home that need to be addressed.

• (1240)

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one thing the member talked about in her speech, which was ringing true for me, was the lack of a national housing initiative. In my community of Sudbury, in my previous role before coming to this honourable House, I ran the United Way and saw many of the strategies, because of a lack of funding, to help people who were homeless. It was called couch surfing. It was going from one place to the next and to the next. That was how some organizations had to deal with homelessness. They did not get the funding, they lost their SCPI dollars and national homelessness initiative dollars and tracked people going house to house.

How should the government ensure and what should it include in the budget to see some sort of national housing initiative to help those in our country? Could the member comment on that?

**Ms. Libby Davies:** Madam Speaker, because the member worked with the United Way, he has a very good grounding in what goes on in local communities. Organizations like the United Way end up at the end of the line trying to help people in a band-aid way because they cannot rely on either sustained provincial or federal programs.

The whole notion of a national housing strategy is to ensure that the federal government is providing leadership to develop a national strategy with the provinces, territories, first nations, municipalities and local communities. There is no such plan in Canada.

Since 1995, when all the programs were taken apart and eliminated by the then Liberal government, we have suffered. People are homeless and suffering today because of a lack of housing security due to that public policy decision. We have to reverse that and ensure it is a basic right that is respected.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Madam Speaker, today I have the honour of speaking to our fellow citizens about Bill C-9, and also about the process that brought this omnibus bill, with its range of issues that have absolutely nothing to do with the budget, before the House.

As Montesquieu so aptly put it, the public nature of our laws helps to guarantee our freedoms. But the title of this bill tells people nothing about what it contains. The Conservatives included a series of measures in Bill C-9 because they know perfectly well that the Liberals are now so weak with their current leader that they do not even dare stand up to vote against this bill even though it contains measures that will cripple the environmental assessment process in this country and allow the sale of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited to foreign interests. Measures in this bill will overturn court rulings, such as the one concerning Canada Post.

The title of a bill is part of that bill, and the courts have always said that the people have the right to know what we are doing. Saying that this is a budget bill that deals only with public finances is nothing but a lie. It is a lie to the House and to the people. The government does not have the right to introduce a so-called budget bill that includes all of these other measures, but that is exactly what the Conservatives are doing. The fact that they are a minority government is unusual in our society. This is the third minority government in a row. They are learning how to deal with a situation in which they always need a dance partner.

I want to focus on one aspect of Bill C-9 that is particularly important to me and that really worries me: the environment. I was Quebec's environment minister for several years, and during that time, I realized that one of Canada's biggest problems is its failure to strictly enforce environmental laws.

A team led by David Boyd at the University of Victoria in British Columbia published an excellent book in 2002 or 2003 called *Unnatural Law*. This book clearly demonstrates that what Canada needs is not necessarily new laws or regulations, but the political will to enforce them.

I sometimes surprise environmentalists when I say, based on my experience as environment minister, that the vast majority of businesses obey environmental laws. That is a fact. First, the vast majority of businesses obey the law. Second, the vast majority of businesses care about their image, and the environment is part of that. Third, breaking the law, any law, is very bad for a business's balance sheet, and therefore the shareholders' equity.

So, the trick is not to find lawyers who can get around the law. The trick these days, and we have seen this with BP in the Gulf of Mexico, is to try to change the legislation. How did BP's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico become the worst disaster of all time? Why were there no safety mechanisms in place, even though they are well known and installing them is relatively simple, albeit costly for the business?

British Petroleum managed to convince the environmental and energy regulators in the U.S. to remove the obligation to drill a lateral relief well that would be relieve the main well in the event of an accident. That is the trick for big corporations.

• (1245)

Thus, they stop at nothing to have legislation changed here in Canada. They are going to find it too expensive to drill in the Arctic, the next frontier they have their eyes on. They say it would have cost them too much to drill relief wells off Newfoundland and Labrador, where Chevron is drilling even deeper.

They are making a major gain with Bill C-9, because the bill will give responsibility for environmental assessments to the National Energy Board, which has no experience or expertise in this area. The board of directors of the Calgary-based NEB is made up mainly of people from the oil industry, as we can discover on its website.

In regulation theory, there is an expression used to describe this situation. It is regulatory capture. In other words, the regulatory authority, whose role is ordinarily to enforce strict standards and protect the public and the environment, is part of the sector it is charged with regulating and therefore tends to look at problems in the same way as the companies it is called on to regulate. This is an absolutely classic situation, and it is one of the two major problems in regulation and legislation.

The other problem is regulatory lag, which means that there is always a time lag in regulation. By the time the Goldman Sachs of the world come up with a new financial product and the government figures it out and tries to regulate it, it is too late. The companies are busy coming up with the next product, so that there is always a time lag.

But regulatory capture—being locked into seeing things in a certain way because of the sector one is in—is the mistake the government is making with Bill C-9. It is giving the National Energy Board responsibility for environmental assessment, which is a very important step. This means that from now on, there will be no real environmental assessment per se in Canada. The industry and its cronies at the National Energy Board will be calling the shots. Not only is this a tragedy like the one that is unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico, but it is a tragedy for future generations.

The government stood up with us this week to vote for a motion made by my colleague from Alberta—a very experienced environmental lawyer—calling on the government to ensure that Canada has the strongest rules in the world.

Yesterday, I was very concerned to hear the Minister of Natural Resources say that the work was already being done by the National Energy Board.

That is the situation in Canada. Since the Conservatives came to power, they have scooped \$57 billion from the employment insurance fund to create enough room to give tax cuts to the wealthiest corporations. If a company did not make a profit, it did not pay taxes and therefore a tax cut was of no benefit. Who got the most money? More than \$1 billion went to the banks and several billion dollars went to the oil industry.

### *Government Orders*

A company like EnCana got almost \$1 billion in tax cuts because the Conservatives would rather tax ordinary citizens than ask corporations to pay their fair share. The oil companies and the Conservatives are kindred spirits. It is not pre-Keynesian economics, it is Precambrian economics. The government is even going so far as to say that companies should no longer be taxed at all. Why make companies pay their fair share?

In the meantime, these same companies are on the move. British Petroleum, which has been making headlines lately, has operations in 130 different countries and has more than 3,500 subsidiaries. It does not pay taxes because, like all major corporations, it moves its money around very quickly from one place to another and takes advantage of the different tax rules in each place. In developing countries where BP has operations—and developed ones as well—are losing revenue that could help their development.

• (1250)

Accounting tricks and today's rapidly fluctuating markets around the world make it possible for these companies to avoid paying their taxes.

In environmental, social and economic terms, we are in crisis and that is why this omnibus bill is an abomination. We are going to stand up and vote against it.

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague from Outremont that, like myself and the members for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, La Pointe-de-l'Île and Pontiac, he was a minister in the National Assembly of Quebec, and thus at the service of Quebecers.

I would like to know—and I would have added another “pre” to pre-Keynesian—what he thinks of the Quebec members who are aiding and abetting passage of a bill such as Bill C-9, which he has properly called an omnibus bill.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Madam Speaker, I do find it worrisome that a society where, according to survey after survey, the environment is one of the most important issues, perhaps the most important, is represented by people who have surrendered, bound hand and foot, to the big western oil companies without ever considering the adverse effects in this part of the country.

For example, coal-fired power stations are still operating in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. In Haute-Mauricie, there is such a high concentration of mercury in some lakes that pregnant women cannot eat the fish, even though we believe that we live in one of the most pristine regions. Quebec does absolutely not burn coal. Mercury comes from coal. Everything is interrelated today.

If people truly care about the environment, they should call the Conservative members that have managed to get elected in Quebec and tell them to stop because what they are doing makes no sense and they are being irresponsible.

*Government Orders*

In today's *National Post*, there is an excellent article by John Ivison in which he likens people who vote in that way to cyborgs—creatures that are half human, half robot. They do not even think anymore. Just like automatons, they do exactly what the Prime Minister's office tells them to do. I find that tragic because we are supposed to be here to use our experience and our expertise to take action that will protect the public.

• (1255)

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the government clearly has a bad case of misplaced priorities. We are talking about banks that made \$15 billion in profits during a recession in 2009. We had bank presidents earning \$10.4 million during that same period. What does the government do? It simply takes the air traveller security tax and increases it by 50%, making it the highest tax in the world. It is \$25 for a foreign flight in Canada and \$5 to the United States.

The government is sending Canadian travellers to fly on American airlines. It is helping American airlines at the expense of Canadian airlines. It is forcing people to fly through American airports rather than flying Canadian airlines out of Montreal. Does the member think this is another case of misplaced priorities on the part of the government?

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Madam Speaker, my colleague used exactly the right word. It is a question of priorities. He chooses his example well. Our banks have made \$15 billion in profit since the beginning of the recession. Actually, it is \$19 billion today. For the first six months of this year, the Canadian banks have set aside \$5 billion for bonuses for their executives.

At the same time, the government is always snapping its suspenders on the world stage and saying how great our banks are. In fact, the only reason they are able to make that money is because they have received \$1.3 billion in tax reductions. They are allowed to charge the largest differential that has ever existed between the basic rate and what they are charging on credit cards, on overdrafts, for loans, and especially for mortgages in this country. The spread has never been as great.

Nobody on the government side is reeling in our banks, so for the first six months of this year, the banks have put aside \$5 billion for bonuses. Rather than travelling around the world and talking about what a bunch of geniuses they are, in fact, they are not financial geniuses. All they are doing is profiting from a monopoly situation that the Conservatives are giving to them. The Conservatives never reel them in on ATM fees or interest charges and the gouging that is going on. They allow them to pick people's pockets.

That will mean \$10 billion for this year. For every man, woman and child with a bank account, that will mean about \$1,000 per Canadian just for the bonuses for the bank executives.

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I wish I could say that it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-9, the government's bloated budget implementation bill, but it is of great concern to me. We in the NDP are speaking out regarding Bill C-9. The Liberals are notable in their silence; they are missing in inaction.

This bill is the culmination of a really disturbing trend. It is a trend that previous Liberal governments started and the Conservative government is taking to dizzying new heights. All thoughtful Canadians and all thoughtful parliamentarians should be disturbed by Bill C-9 and the process that surrounds it.

That trend is to American-style junk legislation. Everything including the kitchen sink is stuffed into an omnibus budget bill and then it is rammed through without giving members a chance to deliberate and decide on crucial issues independently and without giving Canadians a chance to see what the government is doing.

There is an entire year's legislative agenda in one massive 902 page omnibus monster. Everything unrelated to the budget is in the bill. Let me go through a list of just a few.

For example, the government is granting itself new powers to gut environmental assessments. Let us be clear on what this is about. It is about granting the Minister of the Environment the unilateral authority to be the judge, jury and executioner of entire ecosystems, to tear down the checks built into our system and scrap assessments so it can steamroll ahead with unscrutinized controversial mines and tar sands expansion projects.

We know this is the plot the Conservatives have cooked up because, to quote from the March 14, 2009 issue of the *Globe and Mail*:

A leaked government document outlining the proposed changes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act indicates [the] Environment Minister...has asked for a bill "overhauling" the legislation as soon as possible.

Under the new system, the government should "expect to capture perhaps 200-300 projects per year," the document states. That would represent a more than 95 per cent drop from the roughly 6,000 federal environmental assessments that currently take place each year.

We have seen this before with the gutting of the Navigable Waters Protection Act last year in Bill C-10. Then the official opposition rolled over on changes that gave the transport minister unprecedented powers to define entire classes of development projects on heritage waterways so they no longer need environmental assessments. These powers are not balanced by any public consultation or by transparent disclosure or by parliamentary review.

We saw this in 2008, when regressive immigration reforms were hidden in the budget, and in the 2009 budget which included provisions that denied women in the public service the right to go to the Human Rights Commission to fight for the pay equity they deserve.

*Government Orders*

Here we are a year later with another bill that goes much, much further in this wrong-headed direction. This bill also introduces an air travel tax as I am sure the hon. member for Elmwood—Transcona is aware. It is not surprising that the government would be hiding the security tax hike any way that it can, including inside this bloated bill. This tax is the highest in the world. It wants to be seen as the government that does not tax people. Is that ever a myth. The truth is it does.

Far beyond this tax on air travel, the government has introduced the hated sales tax this year. The finance minister signed the provinces up for it, buried the legislation for it in the budget, and rammed it through this House in an incredible 48 hours.

Earlier this week I was with first nations constituents in Red Rock, Ontario in my riding of Thunder Bay—Superior North. They are very angry about the HST and the violation of their treaty rights. They were not consulted before it was imposed on everybody, including them. We know that often our first nations communities are among the most disadvantaged in our society, and they are worried about the impact the HST is going to have on them.

• (1300)

I have heard no end about this hated sales tax from many of my constituents, many of whom have lost their jobs and are struggling with the cost of living as it is. Then Conservatives and Liberals team up to hit them with the HST, one of the largest sales tax hikes in Canadian history and debate is shut down in the House to get it through.

Let us not forget something else that is in Bill C-9, and that is a huge payroll tax increase. Starting at the end of this year, Conservatives are going to hit workers and employers alike with the maximum EI premium hike allowed under the law, and the maximum payroll tax hike the year after that, and again the year after that, and repeated every year for the foreseeable future.

This tax on work is ridiculous when we consider that there was lots of money in the employment insurance fund, over \$57 billion in surplus, way more than enough. But the government raided that money, happily spent it on tax breaks for big oil and big banks and decided to raise payroll taxes to make up for the shortfall. This would cause quite an uproar on its own, but the government is trying to bury it deep inside this huge bill.

Today we are dealing with a motion that would rescind clauses in Bill C-9 dealing with the sale of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and the privatization of Canada Post mail delivery services. Neither of these things has much to do with actual budgetary measures or a budget. They can and must be debated and decisions made on their own merit.

However, the Prime Minister does not believe in debate. He does not believe in discussion. He does not believe in accountability and he does not seem to believe in democracy.

I would like to talk a bit about Canada Post and the provisions concealed in Bill C-9 that continue the deregulation of our national letter carrier. The government knows it would never be able to pass a bill in the House to do that, so it is taking bites out of Canada Post operations using budgetary bills instead.

What the provisions in Bill C-9 do is to remove the exclusive legal privilege of Canada Post to deliver international mail and to allow foreign national postal services and private companies to take over one of the few profitable revenue streams that Canada Post has, a stream on which the company depends to help offset the costs of our local and rural mail delivery.

Canada Post has been fighting this battle for the last 10 years or more. Several companies, many of which are surrogates of national post administrations, have been collecting letter mail in Canada and bringing it to their countries where it is processed and remailed abroad, creating jobs there and not here in Canada.

Canada Post has tried to resolve this issue diplomatically through the Universal Postal Union and by negotiating directly with the violating remailers. When they still would not respect the law, Canada Post took them to court and it won every time.

Our own member for Ottawa Centre, when he was critic for this file in 2006, wrote to the government expressing concern about changes to Canada Post's exclusive privilege without public consultation and asking for a full debate and a real vote in Parliament. Instead of giving us that debate, that discussion and the vote that New Democrats asked for, the government four years later is doing exactly the opposite.

Instead of backing up our national postal service and supporting it, the government has chosen to help foreign remail raiders poach Canadian letter mail instead. Bill C-9 would make that poaching legal forever.

This threatens the long-term viability of Canada Post itself as a universal service to Canadians. By crippling Canada Post's revenue, the government is attempting to achieve through the back door what it knows it cannot achieve through open and transparent debate on the issue.

What do we have here? We have a massive omnibus bill that needs to be split up so that we can have proper debates and allow democracy to function. As it is, parliamentarians are expected to carefully pore through 2,200 legal clauses and debate the ramifications at only seven debate sessions in the House and even fewer in committee. The House finance committee passed all 2,200 clauses without amendment in just one day. Maybe that is just the point: we are not supposed to carefully study Bill C-9's 23 sections and debate over 2,000 clauses.

If the mission of Parliament is to scrutinize the government, doing legislation this way is nothing but a way to avoid scrutiny. It is the so-called accountability government using yet another gimmick to once again avoid accountability.

*Government Orders*

• (1305)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one of our earlier speakers pointed out that we would not be in this situation right now if the Liberals would take a strong stand rather than being doormats for the government.

The member explained the situation regarding Canada Post quite well. We have a budgetary bill that is 880 pages long. Because of the weakness of the opposition, the government saw an opportunity to throw everything into this bill.

The Canada Post part of it is a good example of that. The government introduced Bill C-14 and Bill C-44 over the last couple of years. The government tried to get it through a minority Parliament and could not do it. This has absolutely nothing to do with budget implementation legislation, but the government has thrown it into this bill along with a dozen other things that do not belong and it has driven it to the Liberals who it knows are not going to be here in sufficient numbers to vote to defeat the government. In fact they are not even speaking to this bill. The government is de facto a majority government because of the irresponsible Liberal opposition.

Does the member have any comments on this point?

• (1310)

**Mr. Bruce Hyer:** Madam Speaker, if we are going to move in the direction of U.S.-style omnibus budget bills, why can we not have bills that have some vision? Why can we not have bills that invest in Canada, that invest in infrastructure for municipalities, that invest in passenger rail, that invest in health care and home care, that invest in education, that invest in sustainable community-based forestry, that invest particularly in sustainable energy? Why can we not have bills like that instead of what the government is doing, which is reducing taxes to big oil and big banks to less than half of the United States' corporate tax rate? There is a 36% marginal tax rate for corporate income taxes for large corporations in the United States. It is 18% in this budget and it is moving toward 15% in the next couple of years.

This is a shame.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his interventions and congratulate him for making sure that his private member's bill on climate change and accountability was passed here in this House.

If I were not a suspicious person, it would seem as though because of what we did on this side in passing that bill when the government opposed it unanimously, it is taking other regulations that should be the responsibility of the Government of Canada, that should indeed belong to regulatory agencies, and sliding them off to those who are not accountable to government in a lot of ways and will no longer be responsible to us, allowing them to play fast and loose when it comes to environmental regulations.

But this House spoke. I congratulate the member for his leadership and for his bill and for ensuring that it is on its way to the other place where we hope to see it pass very quickly.

Indeed it seems as though there is a vindictive measure here, in the sense of sliding it back into an omnibus bill, after the House clearly spoke about what we need to do on the environment.

Would the hon. member like to comment on that?

**Mr. Bruce Hyer:** Mr. Speaker, we have a government here which either believes that climate change is not real, or if it is real, we did not do it with our large polluting and successful societies.

No matter which the Conservatives believe, individually or collectively what they clearly do not believe is that we should have open debate, open transparency and move forward across party lines on what clearly needs to be a non-partisan issue to invest in the kinds of changes which would not only help to save the world, but would move us toward green jobs, a green economy, a more sustainable economy and make our lives better, not worse.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I look forward to this chance to speak to Bill C-9, although I must say quite candidly that I find the bill very troubling.

I am proud to speak today to the amendments to this bill brought forward by the member for Hamilton Mountain. It is very clear that this bill must be amended. It is unconscionable that the government would continue to include in its budget implementation bills the kinds of things that are objectionable not just to the members of this House, but to the people of Canada. I welcome the amendments, and I do hope that, despite their incredible silence, members of the opposition will support these amendments.

I want to start with an observation. The Conservative government claims to be the government of accountability, yet it has proven time and time again that it is anything but. Rather than putting forward individual bills dealing with many of the issues that face this country, the government instead elects to hide issues in its bills. We call these poison pills, and there are a number of poison pills in this budget implementation bill.

Before I speak about the poison pills in Bill C-9, I want to take a few minutes to review the poison pills of the past, because in budget after budget we have seen these poison pills.

The first one that I want to speak about is pay equity. The House will remember that the changes to pay equity were slipped into a budget implementation bill. The government, and the government before it, could have and should have used the 2004 pay equity commission report, an incredible and solid report, to create a pay equity bill that actually worked for the women of this country. Instead, the government chose to put in its place the excuse for pay equity that came forward in its budget implementation bill that stripped away the right of women to be considered as worthy of equal pay for work of equal value.

The government called it the equitable compensation bill or something like that, but the truth is that it was far from equitable. It basically told women that they would have to negotiate at the collective bargaining table whether they deserved equal pay for work of equal value. That is not acceptable.

Pay equity is a human right; it is not something that can be negotiated away. In these troubled times when negotiations are very difficult, it only stands to reason that if issues of women in the workforce are not regarded or taken as seriously as some other issues, such as dental benefits or long-term health benefits, that human right could be negotiated away.

*Government Orders*

The government is saying to women across this country that it is lovely that they make up 52% of the population and do contribute to the economy, but when it comes to equal pay for work of equal value, when it comes to their human rights, it is just not interested. The government perpetrated this sham on the women of Canada, and that is not the end of the things it has done to the women of Canada.

The Conservative government cancelled the court challenges program. It removed equality from the mandate of the status of women department. The Conservatives did put back the word, because there was a great outcry across the country, but they did not put back the spirit of equality, because they have continued with their draconian measures against women's groups across this country that advocate for women, that stand up for women in regard to the issues that they and their families face.

The Conservatives have also removed research from the mandate of the status of women department. That research was absolutely integral to providing the kind of intelligent policy that would guide us to real equality. Members may have noticed that I used the term "intelligent policy". That is something that we do not have and are not likely going to see.

● (1315)

Even more to the point, the Conservatives underfunded or defunded groups that were the least bit critical. I am thinking of two: the National Association of Women and the Law and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. Why? Because those two groups had the audacity to hold the government and the previous government to account in regard to our CEDAW obligations.

Members will recall that in 1982 this country signed the covenant on the elimination of discrimination against women. This country signed it and this country pledged that it would do something positive for women. This country would make sure that aboriginal women were given opportunities in regard to education and housing and were protected from violence, and in fact, that all Canadian women were protected from violence and that women had economic security and the opportunity in regard to pay equity, child care and housing.

All of these things are in CEDAW, and this country signed it in 1982. In the nearly 30 years since that agreement was signed, nothing has been done in terms of advancing women. We do not have a universal housing policy. In fact, we have 1.2 million Canadians who are under-housed, homeless or living in unsafe conditions, Canadians who are living in these unsafe and unacceptable conditions with their children.

We have no national child care program. Since 1984, this Parliament in its various incarnations, whether it was the Mulroney government, the Chrétien government or the Martin government, promised the women of this country that there would be a national child care program, but we do not have one. It is 2010 and there is nothing in sight in terms of how we are going to address the real needs of young families in this country, women being the primary caregivers.

These groups that advocated for women had to be shut down and silenced. The women in this country had to be put on the back

burner, as it were, because the government had another agenda. I am saying now and I do believe these words will ring true, the women of Canada will not forget what the government has done to them, nor will they forget that the Liberals aided and abetted in this disgusting behaviour towards the women of Canada.

There were other poison pills, such as immigration changes in Bill C-50. Those immigration changes made it virtually impossible for family reunification. They chose very carefully. They gave the minister the ability to determine who could come into this country. Even if people had been approved, even if they were on a waiting list, if they came from Southeast Asia, if they came from the Middle East, if they came from certain African countries, they were removed from the list because the minister said they were not any longer acceptable. So people who were waiting, who had fulfilled all of their obligations, who would have made wonderful Canadian citizens were told, "Sorry, too bad, you cannot be reunited with your families, because the minister says so".

Imagine that in a democracy. It is absolutely unthinkable. Of course, the list goes on and on, but I want to address some of the issues in Bill C-9 and the fact that it has a number of poison pills too.

First of all, we have the tax grab such as the airline security tax. That is something that is profoundly concerning. The government claims and claims it shrilly, and claims it at every question period and with all kinds of bravado, that they are the government of tax cuts. That is ludicrous. Conservatives are most certainly not the government of tax cuts. If we look at the HST and what is perpetrated against Canadians, they are the government of tax grabs.

Let us go down the list. In regard to the emptying of the employment insurance account, that \$57 billion belongs to the people of this country, who put that money in so that families could be secure in the event of a downturn in the economy. Conservatives are waiving that money and taking it away.

● (1320)

They like to blame it on the Liberals and they are very good at blaming everything on the Liberals, but the truth is that they have done nothing in terms of making sure that Canadian families are safe and secure. They are taking that money away and it is supposed to be for Canadians.

I have much more to say, but I will wait for the questions.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated the overview of the poison pills that indeed have been before us in the House in previous bills and are indeed in Bill C-9. The member is absolutely correct to bring forward the whole sense that this is a deliberate attempt by the government to continually push legislation that it really does not want to have debated as individual bills, that it incorporates into large omnibus sections and then rams them through with, I must admit that my colleague is correct, the help and complicity of the Liberals who either refuse to come or straight out vote for and allow legislation to pass the House that they then complain about after they have let it go.

If we are going to debate legislation in an honest way for all Canadians, we have to have that legislation before us so we can scrutinize it, so we can help perhaps make it better; or perhaps we should defeat it, depending on what it happens to be.

*Government Orders*

At all turns, we should have that opportunity. Legislation that is critical to Canadians should not be lumped together.

I know my hon. colleague ran out of time. She is right that there is so much to do and say about the bill. It is almost 900 pages long and there are pieces in it that need to be debated. Obviously that is what we try to do with our amendments.

I know the member wanted to continue on about the \$57 billion that was absconded with by both the previous Liberal government and the Conservative government and why she thinks it should be given back to workers.

● (1325)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I thank my hon. colleague for the question, because quite simply this is money that employers and employees put into a fund. It used to be called the “unemployment insurance fund”, and I think the key here is insurance. It used to be a way of making sure that families were protected when there was a downturn in the economy and breadwinners lost their jobs.

When I was a kid, which was quite a while ago and we will not go into that, every October or November my dad was laid off because that is the time of year that American corporations clawed back their profits. So every November he was out; he was gone.

Christmas was coming. In Canada, December, January and February are very cold months and there were a lot of times when he and my mum did not know how they were going to manage.

There was employment insurance, but it was very limited. However, it was the only thing we had. It was the only thing that got us through those cold months and through Christmas. I have to say, Christmas could be pretty lean.

Now even that is being eroded away by greedy governments who want to say, “Haven't we solved the deficit problem?” I remember back in 1997 the hon. prime minister of the day said that he had ended the deficit problem. He did it on the backs of workers, just like this one.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I think for days now I have been waiting to ask questions to the government representatives. A couple of weeks ago, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism actually stayed in the House and listened to the debate and asked the first question himself. We thought that was a very important and good change on the part of the government.

Now it is back to its old ways of not even putting forward speakers on a bill that is 880 pages in length. We deserve the right to listen to government members and question the Minister of Finance himself on the provisions of the bill.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, how on earth can the government possibly put forward members to speak on the bill, because this is indefensible.

If we look at the provisions in the bill, one of the things that the government wants to do is sell off the profitable part of the post office. The truth is that the post office in the last 11 years has been profitable.

In 2005 alone, it made \$200 million. That is money that belongs to the Canadian public. It is not money that should be given away to the government's corporate friends. It absolutely astounds me that it has done these things to the people of Canada.

It is no wonder that it is not able to answer for it. Who on earth could stand here and show any kind of sense of shame and speak positively of the bill?

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP):** Madam Speaker, before I begin I would like to assure my two dynamic assistants, Jen and Gina, that I actually am smiling on camera and hopefully they will see that. The problem is that there is not much to smile about.

The whole principle of this bill, taking a number of different categories, lumping them into one and pushing them through with what I would call blackmail, is wrong for democracy. We have heard many of my colleagues over the last day or so mention a number of things in this bill that should be debated separately, such as Canada Post and the HST. We should be looking at these issues and having a good, democratic debate on both. Instead, we see them all lumped together and it is kind of a take it or leave it.

Today I will concentrate my remarks and my speech on Canada Post because this is an issue that has been very close to my heart over the last while, specifically because it does affect our rural communities.

We have seen, for example, in my community of Castlegar and the surrounding communities of Trail and Rossland, that Canada Post offices in Trail and Rossland have now been designated installations, which means that the mail now comes to my community of Castlegar for sorting before it goes back to those communities, which are approximately 30 or 40 kilometres away, for distribution. This has had the effect of cutting back on some hours and of shifting jobs. The ultimate result is that we will see more shutdowns of our rural post offices if we allow this to continue. The fact that they are a major economic driver is something we need to take into consideration.

We have recently had an absurd situation in my community, a situation that we will be seeing now in communities such as Cranbrook, Grand Forks, Nelson, Oliver, Osoyoos, Penticton, Prince George, Quesnel, Vernon and Williams Lake. As of September 1, if anybody mails a letter in Prince George to someone else in Prince George on Friday, that letter will travel all the way to Vancouver for sorting before it comes back to Prince George for distribution. In my community of Castlegar, that represents a move, for one letter, of roughly over 1,200 kilometres before that letter arrives on the doorstep in my community.

When questioned about this, the officials at Canada Post mentioned that it was in the name of efficiency. They said that they had these big machines in Vancouver that they wanted to use and that trucks were going down there anyway so they could do this. After the letters go to Vancouver, maybe we should send them to Toronto for sorting because the machine in Toronto is more efficient. It goes on and on.



*Government Orders*

The point is that when all of this is happening, there is an erosion of our rural way of life and an erosion of Canada Post's ability to provide good quality service with well-paid employees who are contributing to their communities. It is important for the government and Canada Post to understand that if a community of 5,000 people loses two or three positions, that represents fewer people in schools, maybe one less car that will be bought at the car lot and maybe fewer dinners purchased that evening by a family. This has a real effect on our communities.

A disturbing fact that I would like to share with this House is something that I found out in my meeting with Canada Post officials. Not only is Canada Post mandated to make a profit, but it must return a certain amount of that profit to general revenue. Here we have a crown corporation that is not only there to break even or make a profit, but part of that profit must come back to general revenue. No wonder Canada Post is under pressure to make various changes and cuts and is scrambling to be as efficient as possible.

• (1330)

I would like to ask the government to reconsider its whole philosophy. Canada Post is there to serve us and, if anything, we should be assisting it in our federal budget to ensure that we maintain good quality services in rural communities rather than cutting them back in the name of putting money into general revenue, which will be used to ensure that we can give more major corporate tax cuts that will be used to beef up the money that has been spent because of giving these tax cuts. I do not believe that is right and I do not think people in rural communities believe that is right.

I was very pleased to find out that Senator Bob Peterson has introduced legislation in the Senate that calls for a strengthening of Canada Post in rural communities. I will quote from his press release in which he states:

In their haste to cut spending and reduce the scope of the federal government, the Tories are leaving millions of rural Canadians in their wake. The government needs to understand that shutting down a post office means taking away a piece of the community. It goes beyond line items to the very core of rural life.

I applaud the senator for taking that stance. I look forward to meeting with him next week to see how I can support him in his position and how we can work together to ensure that our rural quality of life is maintained with a strong Canadian postal system.

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

According to members of the National Farmers Union, if this part of the bill passes, this will lead to partial deregulation of our post offices and begin a process that will erode both service and affordability, particularly for people living in rural and remote areas.

Allowing international mailers to handle international letters opens the door for further privatization and deregulation of our postal services. Passing part 15 of the bill is likely to accelerate Canada Post's loss of letter mail volumes and revenues to for-profit remailers. This is revenue that our post offices can ill afford to lose. And any further revenue loss will damage service for rural Canadians.

[*English*]

The point is that Canada Post is the backbone of all our rural communities. If we shut down or transfer these services to a large major community or urban community, it makes it difficult for these communities to survive. It is often hard enough for farmers to make a living, to make ends meet and to meet their costs of production. It is hard enough to keep communities going that have an erosion of health care and other services. To take a major economic driver such as Canada Post and depriving it of adequate revenue and consolidating services in major urban communities is simply wrong.

It is important for all of us from all parties who represent rural Canada to come together in a way that we can impress upon the government and Canada Post that we need to retain the services and jobs because this is part of rural life.

[*Translation*]

It is very important that we do not give up, that we continue to fight for our rural communities and that we continue to demand that this service remain in our communities, for my community and for all rural communities in Canada.

[*English*]

I would reiterate that the idea of putting what many have called poison pills or take-it-or-leave-it provisions in this bill is wrong. It is wrong for the principle of a democratic debate and it wrong for democracy. I only hope that members of other political parties will take a strong stance against this bill so we can show the governing party that what it is doing is contrary to what a good democratic institution should be all about and that what would happen to Canada Post in this bill is not right.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, people watching this debate over the last several days want to know where the government and Liberal speakers are on this bill.

As a matter of fact, we have an 880-page grab bag, Bill C-9, an omnibus bill, and we do not have the appropriate minister listening to the debate so we can ask questions. The Minister of State for Democratic Reform was here for Bill C-10. The Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism was here for his bill and, not only did he listen to the debate, but actually asked the first question, which was appreciated by the House.

We want to know where the finance minister is, why he is not listening to the debates and why he is not here to answer questions on this 880-page bill.

• (1340)

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko:** Madam Speaker, I wish I knew for sure why government members are not speaking out against this bill. Why is it that in British Columbia, the only party speaking out against the HST is our party when the majority of British Columbians are saying that they do not want the HST?

*Government Orders*

Why is nobody on that side speaking out to preserve rural Canadian postal service? Why is nobody talking about the airline tax or the changes to employment insurance and the fact that it will be a burden on the majority of Canadians?

That is a good question but I think we have to leave it to that side to answer that question.

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I know the member from B.C. has been a strong advocate for maintaining rural postal services and the delivery of postal services in that part of the country, but he is also profoundly worried about the job losses that the proposed closure will mean for his communities.

I wonder if he may also be interested in commenting on the other part of the budget bill that speaks to the theft of \$57 billion from the EI fund in Canada. The fund had a surplus of \$57 billion but the government legally took the money and put it into the consolidated revenue fund.

This is not the government's money. This is money that was contributed by workers and employers and money that would have made a profoundly positive difference to those workers in communities, such as the one the member represents, where postal services are being shut out, people are losing their jobs and where they desperately need sustainable EI, to ensure those residents do not fall into poverty.

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko:** Madam Speaker, this is what we have come to in our country. We have workers who have paid into the employment insurance fund for years, to a total of \$57 billion, and now, when they have lost their jobs, are not able to collect this money and have to go through loops and hoops to try to make ends meet.

People come to my office and say that they are ineligible for employment insurance and cannot get on welfare because their truck is worth over \$5,000. It is an absurdity. All of us who have worked in the workforce over the years have paid into this fund, a fund that is there to help people in a time of crisis, and now they cannot access it.

This is a shame to our democratic way of life in Canada and on the way we conduct affairs in this country.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is hard to be brief when we are dealing with 880 pages because there is so much to choose from that has gone wrong. I thank my hon. colleague for his intervention and his quite eloquent speech about what is wrong in those 880 pages.

In the agriculture sector, for instance, we really needed folks to see something in the budget. Did we see anything that really went to help farmers in this country?

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko:** Madam Speaker, the bottom line is that we have farmers who are struggling and people who need help from this budget and they have not received it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** Resuming debate. Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

●(1345)

[*Translation*]

The recorded division will also apply to Motion No. 2.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 16. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

The recorded division on motion no. 16 is deferred. The division will also apply to Motions Nos. 17 and 18.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** The next vote is on Motion No. 19. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

*Government Orders*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** In my opinion, the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred. The deferred division will also apply to Motions Nos. 20 to 38.

The next vote is on Motion No. 39. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** In my opinion, the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denis Savoie):** The recorded division on the motion stands deferred. The deferred division will also apply to Motions Nos. 40 to 62.

[English]

I will read the motions in Group No. 2 to the House.

● (1350)

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 3

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 1885.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP)** moved:

Motion No. 4

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2137.

Motion No. 5

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2138.

Motion No. 6

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2139.

Motion No. 7

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2140.

Motion No. 8

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2141.

Motion No. 9

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2142.

Motion No. 10

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2143.

Motion No. 11

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2144.

Motion No. 12

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2145.

Motion No. 13

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2146.

Motion No. 14

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2147.

Motion No. 15

Bill C-9 be amended by deleting Clause 2148.

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Madam Speaker, although amendments are an important part of the legislative process, my amendments today would be superfluous if the government had not dumped a number of non-budget items into Bill C-9. However, it did, so I am moving an amendment to delete all sections from C-9 that deal with Canada Post.

As I said, these clauses should never have been in the bill in the first place, and the government knows that. In fact, it made two previous attempts to pass changes to Canada Post in stand-alone legislation. Neither of those attempts, however, succeeded. Instead of respecting the will of Parliament, the Conservatives buried these changes deep within the almost 900-page budget bill, hoping that no one would notice. Well, New Democrats noticed.

In fact, I was the first person to raise the issue in this House. But more important, the 45,000 member of CUPW and Canadian families noticed, and they have been fighting the issue ever since.

Denis Lemelin, the president of CUPW, appeared before the Standing Committee on Finance and clearly explained the impact the proposed changes would have on postal rates and postal service in this country.

I think it is worth repeating some of the more salient points here, because clearly, the government did not listen the first time.

Mr. Lemelin said:

CUPW would like to urge this committee to give this very small part of Bill C-9 a very large amount of attention as it amounts to partial deregulation of our public post office. In Canada, letter mail is regulated for a reason. Canada Post has an exclusive privilege to handle letters so that it is able to generate enough money to provide affordable postal service to everyone, no matter where they live in our huge country. This privilege includes both domestic and international letters. We believe it will become increasingly difficult for Canada Post to provide universal postal service if the government erodes the very mechanism that funds this service—the exclusive privilege.

Canada Post's exclusive privilege to handle letters has received remarkably little attention over the years. But international mailers, who are currently carrying international letters in violation of the law, have recently taken issue with this privilege and waged a campaign to undermine our post office's right to handle international letters. Canada Post estimates that international mailers siphon off \$60 million to \$80 million per year in business. Its concerns with remailers have grown as the international mail business has grown and as remailers have unfairly competed for international mail by exploiting the two-tier terminal dues system adopted by the Universal Postal Union in 1999.

### Statements by Members

It is our understanding that Canada Post attempted to address its concerns with international mailers through negotiations and finally through legal action against two of the largest companies, Spring and Key Mail. One ruling by the Court of Appeal for Ontario stressed the importance of the exclusive privilege in serving rural and remote communities and noted that international mailers such as Spring Canada are not required to bear the high cost of providing services to the more remote regions of Canada. The corporation won this legal challenge all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

After this victory, a coalition of private Canadian and international mail companies, called the Canadian International Mail Association (CIMA), hired a lobbyist in an attempt to convince parliamentarians to remove international letters from Canada Post's exclusive privilege to handle letters. The government initially defended the importance of the exclusive privilege but it was not long before it started to reconsider its position, presumably because of the CIMA lobby. Nevertheless, the government did promise, in a letter to CUPW, that no changes to Canada Post's exclusive privilege would be considered without thorough policy analysis. We would like to point out that, to date, there has been no serious review or thorough policy analysis of the international mail issue or the impact of removing international letters from Canada Post's exclusive privilege.

The government's recent strategic review of Canada Post did not look at these issues. Unfortunately, this did not stop the review's advisory panel from recommending against deregulation of letter mail, with the exception of international letters. It simply doesn't make sense to be proposing legislation before you look at the relevant issues. The proposed legislation doesn't make much sense either. Canada Post's letter mail volumes declined for the first time in 2008 and again in 2009. The corporation clearly needs international letters as a source of revenue to maintain and improve public postal service. Furthermore, most people in this country are opposed to deregulation of Canada Post. They do not support eroding or eliminating Canada Post's exclusive privilege.

● (1355)

Close to 70% of people oppose postal deregulation according to a 2008 Ipsos Reid poll.

Even the government's strategic review of Canada Post found that there is virtually no support for deregulation. The report from this review states:

There appears to be little public support for the privatization or deregulation of Canada Post, and considerable if not unanimous support for the maintenance of a quality, affordable universal service for all Canadians and communities.

Of course, there is one group that supports partial deregulation of Canada Post, and that group appears to have the ear of the government. International mailers want international letters removed from the corporation's exclusive privilege. They have argued that the English version of the Canada Post Corporation Act currently allows them to handle these letters.

In other words, remailers have argued that the French version of the Canada Post Corporation Act should carry no weight and that the English version should prevail. This argument has been rejected by the courts.

Remailers have also argued that Canada Post's legal action against remailers will effectively kill thousands of Canadian jobs and that they should be allowed to continue to do business to save these jobs. An examination of the evidence indicates that there may be a few hundred jobs at risk, not thousands.

While we take the responsibility of job loss very seriously, we do not think exclusive privilege should be sacrificed to save the jobs of businesses operating in violation of the law, and there may be alternative ways of dealing with the issue of jobs.

Those were the critical points made in the presentation by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers on part 15 of the budget implementation bill.

Our public postal service provides universal and affordable services to all Canadians. It is our role as Canadians and as legislators to preserve this capacity and to prevent the erosion of a service provided to all Canadians, no matter where they live, where they work, or where they do business.

It is precisely because this is an issue of national importance that the Canadian Labour Congress, representing 3.2 million workers in Canada, also intervened on this matter.

Hassan Yussuff, secretary-treasurer of the CLC, appeared before the Standing Committee on Finance and reminded members that as an employer, the postal service offers many job opportunities, many of which are in rural areas and are occupied by women. Canada Post is often one of the few potential employers for women in rural communities. He also said:

To say the least, it is strange for a government to change a law that will have a negative impact on Canadians just because those who are breaking it don't like it and are eager to siphon off even more profits. Don't we count on our governments to enforce our laws?

It is even stranger that the government is attempting to push the legislation through without a thorough review. What's the rush when there is so much at stake?

We do not believe that Canadians want to see the destruction of their postal service. They want a sustainable public post office and reliable, affordable mail delivery. There is no reason to jeopardize a good service that provides good value to Canadians, just because of a desire to satisfy the powerful lobbyists.

We are urging the government to immediately withdraw or sever part 15 of Bill C-9 and reaffirm its support for the exclusive privilege and public ownership of Canada Post.

It is time for members of the House to take a firm stand on this issue. In particular, I hope that the Liberals will find the courage of their convictions. On the one hand, they make eloquent speeches about supporting CUPW in its campaign, but thus far, whenever push has come to shove, they have shown up in insufficient numbers to defeat the government's proposal. It is not too late. I encourage all members to do the right thing and vote in favour of deleting part 15 from Bill C-9.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### CADET MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a young woman from the riding of Random—Burin—St. George's in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Chief Petty Officer First Class Maria Hennebury of Lord's Cove, a rural community of 140 people on the Burin Peninsula, is the coxswain of 289 Corvette Sea Cadet Corps in Lamaline.

I am told by the officers that Maria's sea cadet training and personal evaluation reports at summer training centres have been outstanding. She was recently rewarded for her hard work and dedication with the Cadet Medal of Excellence.

Maria recently participated in a tall ship excursion from Norfolk, Virginia to Halifax, Nova Scotia and performed admirably. Most recently, she was selected to participate in a foreign exchange to South Korea as one of five cadets from across Canada. Maria will represent Atlantic Canada and the Canadian Cadet Movement.

Maria is the daughter of Rosanna and Bob Hennebury.

I ask the members of the House to join me in congratulating Maria on her success and wishing her well.

\* \* \*

● (1400)

#### ORLÉANS FESTIVAL

**Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the people of Ottawa—Orléans have always demonstrated a particular affinity for non-partisan service.

[Translation]

Therefore, my provincial and municipal colleagues, along with many community leaders, will welcome the community this Sunday at the first Orléans Festival.

[English]

This festival is a celebration of all that makes our community great: chefs, artists and artisans. It is the inspiration and hard work of dedicated people like Judith Cane and Nick Aitken, Janet Gray, Anita MacDonald, Louise Michaud, Jennifer Robinson, Don Roy and Christine Tremblay. They truly give selfless service.

[Translation]

This Sunday morning, MPP Phil McNeely and I will welcome the community for a pancake breakfast. This breakfast, in the spirit of federal-provincial co-operation, is free.

[English]

I welcome all members of the House and people from across the national capital region to celebrate with us this Sunday morning at the Shenkman Centre.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### APHASIA WEEK IN QUEBEC

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Madam Speaker, with June 1 marking the end of aphasia week in Quebec, I would like to bring the members' attention to this disorder, which may affect as many as 40,000 Quebecers.

Aphasia is a language disorder that can result in difficulty speaking, understanding, reading or writing. Those with aphasia may be unable to name objects or people or even to respond to a simple question. The disorder is usually the result of a stroke or head injury.

According to the Groupe de relève pour personnes aphasiques des Laurentides, close to 20% of stroke victims will suffer from serious communication disorders.

I would like to pay tribute to the work of organizations such as the Groupe de relève pour personnes aphasiques des Laurentides in my

#### Statements by Members

riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, which offer support, activities and services to those afflicted as well as their families.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### AIDS THUNDER BAY

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to highlight the vital work of a non-profit in my riding of Thunder Bay—Superior North. AIDS Thunder Bay provides important clinical care, counselling, AIDS prevention and runs Mother's Cupboard for emergency food in northwestern Ontario.

I would like to read from a letter from one of their dedicated volunteers, Mr. Wilfred Pott, who writes:

"I am a board member of AIDS Thunder Bay...and a client. I have been HIV positive for over 21 years and have lost many friends to this debilitating virus. Before I moved to this city my life was a total mess...and I lived on the street. I first walked into AIDS Thunder Bay in 2008 and with their advice and direction I have learned new skills and my life now has meaning.

Many of my peers can follow me to a better life because of AIDS Thunder Bay. Please continue funding the Canadian AIDS Society and the AIDS community action program on which we rely".

\* \* \*

#### ELGIN COUNTY

**Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Elgin county is one of a kind and a great example of what southwestern Ontario has to offer the rest of Canada. It is very exciting that many other people are taking notice of what great opportunities Elgin has to offer.

Elgin has been approached by *Today in America* with Terry Bradshaw to participate in the filming of their segment "Best Places to Live, Work and Play". Elgin county caught the eye of the producers because truly it is a place like no other, where the sky meets the water and the water meets the land, where families stay for generations and real people work together to foster a dynamic future for innovative businesses.

This program airs nationally in the United States on FOX Business Network and will be aired nationally in Canada on HGTV.

I am proud of the people of the county of Elgin and wish them all the best as we show the rest of Canada and the United States why we are truly progressive by nature. Elgin county, break a leg.

\* \* \*

● (1405)

#### DOUG HARKNESS

**Hon. Shawn Murphy (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Doug Harkness who for the past 40 years has been a tireless advocate for harness racing throughout Atlantic Canada. Doug died last Friday after a lengthy illness.

*Statements by Members*

For the past 35-plus years, Doug has been the publisher of *Atlantic Post Calls*, harness racing's monthly journal in Atlantic Canada. Besides being publisher, he was also the editor, manager, photographer, advertising salesman and circulation manager. He did it all.

Every summer and fall, Doug would visit every track throughout Atlantic Canada. He would be writing articles, taking pictures and generally promoting the sport. One could say that he was a very unique type of journalist, totally involved and did it all.

Everyone involved in harness racing in Atlantic Canada will miss Doug Harkness. When the starter calls the horses to the starting gate this summer, it just simply will not be the same without Doug Harkness.

Our sympathies go out to his wife, Donna-Jo and her two children.

\* \* \*

**VETERANS**

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Art Campbell of Teulon, Manitoba is an example of what Canadian veterans mean to our country.

Mr. Campbell, who served as a leading aircraftman in the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War II, is here today to visit the Peace Tower Memorial Chamber. This morning he witnessed the turning of the page where his brother's name, James Ambrose Campbell, is written.

James Campbell fought bravely with the Seaforth Highlanders and was killed in Italy in September 1944. He was decorated with the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal and Canadian Volunteer Service Medal.

Earlier this week, Art shared his experience with the Prime Minister.

Today is a day of remembrance for Art Campbell and his family, but it is also a celebration of the service of our veterans to our great country. Art Campbell is a shining example of this service. His wartime experience fuelled a commitment to community involvement which has endured ever since. In March, Art was made an honorary life member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 52 in Stonewall.

For their service past and present, the Campbell brothers are true Canadian heroes. I thank them, and indeed all veterans, for their unselfish service to our country.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**2010 ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD PROGRAM**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 4, the Partners for a Green Hill will honour one of my colleagues, the member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges, with the 2010 environmental award in the team category.

The award honours the member and her whole team for their commitment and dedication to saving the environment in the course of their work.

They found ways to promote the four Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle and rethink—in the workplace, thereby showing environmental leadership on Parliament Hill.

My colleague and her staff also changed and adapted some of their habits in addition to implementing measures to help save the environment.

The entire Bloc Québécois caucus is proud that one of its own teams will be receiving the 2010 environmental award. We heartily congratulate the member for Vaudreuil-Soulanges' team.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has a tradition of ministerial responsibility. It should not surprise anyone that the Liberal leader, a man who once called the United States his country, does not understand the history and traditions of Canada. That means that cabinet ministers are responsible for what happens in their name and to Parliament.

One would not expect a junior employee in a company to account for his or her behaviour. No, one would expect the person in charge to do that. In Parliament that is how it has always been. In fact, the tradition is as old as Canada itself. That is why Conservative cabinet ministers answer questions in question period and that is why they appear before committees to answer for their offices.

However, the Liberal leader wants to do away with this tradition. Instead he wants to import the foreign U.S. committee system that is used as a political weapon to bully, intimidate and to humiliate opponents. The Liberal leader may call himself a citizen of the world, but we call ourselves citizens of Canada and we will respect, defend and abide by our system and traditions of our country.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, during the 2006 census, an anonymous email went around encouraging francophones to say they could not speak English even if they could.

At the time, heads of francophone organizations across the country told their members to respond truthfully and we have every reason to think that they did.

Four years later, the *Ottawa Citizen* is trying to stir up controversy. The face of Canada's francophone population is changing thanks to newcomers whose first official spoken language is French, even though it is not necessarily their mother tongue and they do not speak English.

*Statements by Members*

In response to the *Ottawa Citizen* article, representatives from Statistics Canada have said that they never talked about a conspiracy or suggested that francophones had lied in providing census information. They also suggested that factors other than the anonymous email might explain the decrease in the number of bilingual francophones in the country between 2001 and 2006.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is proposing to cut old age security benefits for serial killers who are serving time in prison. But the Bloc would rather worry about rehabilitating criminals.

In an interview on CTV National News on March 25, 2010, the Bloc leader said that when these people are released after serving their sentence, they have no money and could end up costing the government more than if they had a pension. He added that that this was very bad for rehabilitation.

Does that mean the Bloc leader is more concerned about rehabilitating dangerous criminals than about their victims and those victims' families, whose lives were changed forever?

Only our Conservative government is really concerned about the rights of victims of crime.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a gathering of first nations, business, environment and community leaders that took place in Kitimat, British Columbia this past weekend.

They came together to say no to dangerous supertankers on their coast, no to 12,000 supertankers the size of the Empire State Building plying the waters and no to an 1,100 kilometre pipeline crossing many rivers and more than 50 first nations communities. They know that in Alberta in an average year, 800 failures happen in pipelines.

They said yes to creating a culture and economy based upon a clean environment and wild salmon. They said yes to a plan for building a sustainable future for our communities and yes to first nations taking their rightful place at the table.

The gulf is teaching us all an invaluable lesson. Industry cannot be allowed to self-police. When oil and water mix, the environment and the economy are devastated. The government must stop listening only to its friends in the oil lobby and start listening to the people whose very lives are on the line.

\* \* \*

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Guy Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, constituents expect that democracy will be respected and those elected to Parliament will vote on their behalf. This is why the Liberal leader's decision to whip the vote on the long gun registry is so concerning.

The public safety committee has heard time and time again from provincial ministers, police chiefs and front-line police officers that the long gun registry is wasteful and ineffective. As Yukon's minister of the environment stated at committee, "Our only vote in the Yukon is being jeopardized by a whipped vote by the Liberals".

What will the members who voted for Bill C-391 at second reading do? Will they ignore the voices of their constituents? Will they allow their vote to be whipped by the Liberal leader?

I urge all NDP and Liberal members, who voted for Bill C-391 at second reading, to listen to their constituents and not allow their votes to be determined by the Liberal leader.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the newspapers recently reported that a survey clearly shows that the public wants priority to be given to climate change at the next G8 and G20 summits.

46.2% of Quebecers believe that this issue should be the priority of international summits. However, this has been rejected by the Conservative government, which believes that the environment and climate change are not important.

This pro-oil and obtuse government does not understand that any debate about the economy must necessarily include climate change, poverty and health of the populations most affected, because these issues go hand in hand.

During Canada's Environment Week, the Bloc reminds the Prime Minister that, at international meetings, he must not give priority to issues based on his right-wing ideology—

● (1415)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Don Valley East.

\* \* \*

[English]

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES**

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Canadians were disappointed to see a new low in parliamentary behaviour by the transport minister at the government operations and estimates committee.

### Oral Questions

As chair of that committee, I have witnessed many of the tactics from the Conservatives' book of dirty tricks, but this was unprecedented. Sparked by his government's decision to muzzle its political aides, the transport minister tried to hijack the committee with points of order that, as a witness, he was not permitted to bring forward. His attempt to hijack a committee of the House yesterday was one of the most brazen examples of intimidation and bullying that I have ever witnessed at committee or elsewhere.

Fortunately the minister learned a lesson. We will not be intimidated by his antics. Nor will we allow him to derail the important work of this committee, no matter how hard he tries.

\* \* \*

#### LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

**Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during the last election the Liberal Party campaigned actively on no coalition. Then just days after being overwhelmingly rejected by Canadians at the ballot box, it cut a backroom deal with the Bloc Québécois and the NDP.

Today, Liberal Party president Alfred Apps told the *Toronto Star* that his party should use that coalition strategy again. In fact, he told the *Toronto Star* that between now and the next election, the Liberal leader will tell Canadians "it's absolutely wrong" to talk about a coalition; however, once the election is over and the Liberals have lost, "then we can deal with the issue of coalition".

The last time the Liberals and NDP tried to form a coalition, they specifically included the Bloc Québécois as the glue that held the coalition together. While they are focused on their own political interests, our Conservative government is focusing on helping Canadians by creating jobs and building growth through Canada's economic action plan.

When the Liberal leader continues his hidden coalition agenda, he proves that he is not in it for Canadians. He is just in it for himself.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### G8 AND G20 SUMMITS

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are outraged by the billion dollars that they must pay because of the Conservatives' incompetence. This billion is on top of the Conservative deficit of \$56 billion, the largest in all of Canadian history. And the Conservatives want to add another \$6 billion each year to that deficit by cutting corporate taxes. A billion dollars here, \$56 billion there and another \$6 billion on top of that.

Will they admit that they are incapable of managing public finances?

[English]

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have brought in Canada's economic action plan, designed to encourage job creation, more hope and more opportunity, and the good news is that the plan is working. We have seen the creation of more than 285,000 new jobs

since last summer. That puts us in first place in the industrialized world for job creation and economic growth.

We were the last to come into this global economic downturn, and thanks to the strong leadership of the economic team in this government, we are going to be the first to come out.

[Translation]

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, are they saying that Canadians are wrong to be outraged?

Two months ago, they said that security would cost \$180 million. They told Canadians that it is normal to pay \$180 million for three days. Three months later, they said that \$180 million is not normal and that it would be more like \$1 billion for three days.

Were they wrong in March, are they wrong now, or are they simply incapable of managing a budget?

[English]

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, do not listen to me. Listen to John Kirton, the director of the University of Toronto's G8 research group. This is what he had to say:

If you want to be at the G-8 table, you can't go to the washroom when the bill comes

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.

This is the truth.

Let us be very clear. Who also supported the location of Huntsville for the G8 summit? In fact, it was the Liberal leader.

• (1420)

**Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us look at one example of uncontrolled spending. The industry minister is using \$400,000 in G8 money to restore a vintage steamboat named, wait for it, the *Bigwin*. A vintage steamboat for what, to taxi the leaders from Muskoka to Toronto? Wait, it gets better. The steamboat will not even be in the water until after the G8 is over.

Why are Canadians paying for Steamboat Tony's latest ride?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a lot of hot air on that side of the House.

Let us look at what the Liberal leader said about Muskoka and Huntsville:

We want to make it very clear...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.

He went on to say:

it seems to me since this is a federal event the federal government should take the large majority of any costs.

That was what the Liberal leader said. We are proud to showcase the Muskoka region and proud to showcase Huntsville to the world.



*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when Halifax played host to a very successful G7 summit, it was apparently quite a bargain. The total budget for the event was \$28 million, and that covered everything from staffing to printing and security.

However, a spokesperson for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation at the time thought \$28 million was too costly for a summit. He said:

There are conference facilities available, I'm sure...that could have hosted an event like this without spending several million dollars

Who was that outraged spokesperson? It was none other than the current Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism.

Where is the outrage now?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me very clear. Security costs money. It is expensive. We do not want to spend this money, we have to spend this money.

Since 9/11, we are living in a new environment. A lot has changed in the last 20 years since world leaders went to Halifax. Canada is being open, honest and transparent about its security costs. We will do our job to ensure not just the leaders and the thousands and thousands of delegates are kept safe, but also that people in Muskoka and Toronto can be safe too.

**Mr. Michael Savage (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, they were frothing with outrage over the G7 in Halifax. Of course, we know what they think of Atlantic Canadians over there. The now minister said then that the government “should have chosen a location which wouldn't cost that kind of money”. It was \$28 million for everything. Now it is spending \$20 million on dancers, flowers and meals alone as part of this \$1 billion-plus spendapalooza in Toronto.

With poverty rates rising and food bank usage skyrocketing, how can that morally corrupt government justify over \$1 billion on this summit?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is doing something that is really unprecedented. We are hosting two major international world summits back to back. The costs for the security of these summits are in line with what has happened at previous events. There will be 8,000 delegates, more than 3,000 media and literally thousands of others attending these important summits. We will spend what is necessary and nothing more.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's press secretary, Dimitri Soudas, is still refusing to testify before the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics, even though the committee clerk has sent him a subpoena. What is even more shocking is that the Prime Minister himself, in a letter to the clerk, supported his press secretary's refusal to appear. Any person is required by law to testify before a parliamentary committee when subpoenaed.

Does the government realize that it is giving the Prime Minister's press secretary permission to flout the law?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear on this. It is ministers who have the responsibility to be held accountable for the actions not only of their staff, but also of their departments. Therefore, the ministers themselves will continue to appear before committees and answer questions, as they did as recently as yesterday.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, what is very clear is that everyone must obey the law, even the Conservatives, even the Prime Minister. But what the parliamentary secretary just told us is that he could not care less about the law and that he will not appear even if he is subpoenaed. This government tells us to respect law and order, yet it is doing just the opposite.

Can he tell me from his seat that he is asking all employees to defy the law and not answer subpoenas? If so, then he is not worthy to sit here.

• (1425)

[*English*]

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, to answer my hon. colleague's question, no, I cannot answer his question from my seat. I have to stand in the chamber to do that.

The reality is that we have been extremely clear about this. When we talk about the law, the law is very clear. It is called ministerial accountability. It is the ministers' responsibility to be accountable for their staff. That is what we will continue to do.

While I am on my feet, I would urge all opposition chairs of these committees, rather than conduct kangaroo courts as they have been doing to actually learn the rules.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in your ruling of April 27, 2010, you said, “The Senate and House of Commons have the right...to summon and compel the attendance of all persons...as witnesses”. But the government is already challenging that ruling by prevent ministers' political staff from testifying in committee.

Why is the government, led by the Prime Minister, trying to restrict committees' power of inquiry when that power was reaffirmed a little more than a month ago by the Speaker of the House of Commons?

[*English*]

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is inappropriate and completely unacceptable not only to this government but to parliaments in the past is the tyranny of the majority; in this case, the coalition majority of the three opposition parties that have control of all the standing committees by virtue of the fact that they have the most numbers.

*Oral Questions*

The fact is that we have no intention of allowing our junior staff, our political staff, to be dragged before these committees and these kangaroo courts and subjected to the type of abuse that anybody who views these committee operations can see.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, by preventing his director of communications from testifying before a committee and trying to restrict parliamentary committees' power of inquiry, the Prime Minister is once again running the risk of being found in contempt of Parliament, because he is refusing to obey the law, as you said in your ruling.

Why is the government refusing to work with the parliamentary committees, at the risk of being found in contempt of Parliament? We knew the Conservatives had problems with democracy, but now we have proof.

[*English*]

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, quite to the contrary, in fact, three of my ministerial colleagues appeared yesterday at the government operations committee and after a dispute, they were queried on questions and they answered all the questions that were put to them. Not one, not two, but three ministers appeared at committee to answer the questions, be held accountable to that standing committee and reveal information that the standing committee was requesting. I do not know how we can be more democratic, more accountable, more responsible than that.

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#### OFFSHORE DRILLING

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in an astonishing move, the Conservative government is stating that it is not legally bound to a moratorium on oil drilling off the B.C. coast. Tanker traffic is also prohibited from the B.C. northern coast, but apparently not according to the Conservatives. These moratoriums were put in place in 1972 to protect this pristine part of Canada.

Why is the federal government lifting the freeze on drilling for the big oil companies? Why would the Conservatives put at risk that pristine part of the country?

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a moratorium with respect to oil and gas exploration in the British Columbia offshore and there is no plan to change this.

The government has no plans to reopen the voluntary tanker traffic exclusion zone either.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Is that so, Mr. Speaker? Enbridge is planning to build two pipelines to carry oil from Edmonton to Kitimat. Here is what the company says:

Both the federal and provincial governments, and their respective departments have confirmed that there is no legislated moratorium on oil tankers entering B.C. ports.

Despite the government's position, what we have here is Enbridge's plan setting up probably for a major and costly legal challenge and for ultimate damage to B.C.'s ecosystem.

Why is the government running this risk? Why does it not put legislation in place to ensure that that moratorium is respected?

• (1430)

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just said there is a moratorium with respect to oil and gas exploration in the British Columbia offshore and there is no plan to change this.

The government has no plans to reopen the voluntary tanker traffic exclusion zone.

The Minister of the Environment has referred the northern gateway pipeline project to a joint review panel. A decision on the proposed project will not be made until the joint review panel completes its review.

**Hon. Jack Layton (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a moratorium should not be voluntary; it should be compulsory in law.

[*Translation*]

Under the Conservatives, Natural Resources Canada changed its mind and issued a memo stating that the moratorium on the west coast does not apply to the oil companies.

Worse yet, Natural Resources Canada confirmed that the orders in council have expired, and that the door is wide open to exploration and extraction.

When will the minister introduce a bill to make the moratorium official? It is absolutely necessary.

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while he was in government in British Columbia, this NDP member did not introduce such a bill. I repeat, there is a moratorium with respect to oil and gas exploration in the British Columbia offshore. There is no plan to change this. The government has no plans to reopen the voluntary tanker traffic exclusion zone either.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### ETHICS

**Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Brian Mulroney was repeatedly asked under oath, "Did you maintain contact with Schreiber after you ceased being prime minister?" Each time he failed to disclose the cash payments he received from Schreiber.

The attorney general of the day told a House of Commons committee that if the government had known about these payments, it would have had a tremendous impact on the civil litigation and the resulting \$2.1 million settlement.

Why are Conservatives still defending Brian Mulroney and not getting Canadians back their money?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we just received the report of Justice Oliphant and as you know, a great deal of work went into that. It covers hundreds of pages. Interestingly enough, it was opposition parties that called for a public inquiry. I thought they were very supportive of that.

Those recommendations are now being reviewed by proper authorities and the government will act on those recommendations.

**Hon. Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we know the Department of Justice was studying legal avenues to get the \$2.1 million back when it first learned of the payments from Schreiber, but someone shut down the department. The government has had only two ministers of justice: the former PC minister from Manitoba and the former PC minister who was a member of Mulroney's caucus for nine years. Which one of those two shut down the Department of Justice to prevent Canadians from getting back their money?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, the government has taken a very responsible position on this. There has been a very extensive study done by Justice Oliphant. I point out to the hon. member and to the House that the questions Justice Oliphant studied, had a look at and made recommendations on were devised by an independent individual. Again, those recommendations are now with the appropriate authorities.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendes (Brossard—La Prairie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, after denying it for months, the former public works minister finally admitted yesterday that he fast-tracked a request for funding from his friend Rahim Jaffer after speaking to him on a cell phone. Within minutes, his staff set to work to organize a meeting with Jaffer and fast-track his request for funding.

Would the minister give his cell phone number to all Canadians, so they may have the same privileged access to him as Rahim Jaffer?

[*English*]

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I say very directly to the member opposite, nothing was fast-tracked and no funding was given to any of these projects. The government acted responsibly and it reacted well.

• (1435)

**Ms. Siobhan Coady (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Conflict of Interest Act prohibits public office holders from using their position to further the private interests of a friend. However, the former minister of public works admitted that he discussed his friend Rahim Jaffer's business proposal which the department then fast-tracked. Compliance with the act is a condition of a person's employment as a public office holder.

Will the Prime Minister explain the consequences for his minister's serious ethics violation?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member is making totally outrageous allegations. Let me be very clear. Nothing was fast-tracked and no funding was given to any of the projects in question.

[*Translation*]

**SECURITIES**

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary does not have the support for the securities issue that he claims to have.

In Quebec, the Bloc's position on this has the support of the National Assembly, the Conseil du patronat, the labour funds, Molson, Canam, Cascades, Couche-Tard, Jean Coutu, Power Corporation, Quebecor, Transat, Transcontinental, Industrielle Alliance, the SSQ and La Capitale.

Why destroy a system that, in the words of Michael Sabia, president and CEO of the Caisse de dépôt, is working quite well?

[*English*]

If it is not broken, why fix it?

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for once again asking a very obvious question. He lists off a whole number of organizations that he says support the passport system, but we have a much larger list of people who support the voluntary system which is a Canadian system that protects Canadians. I have a list so long I do not think I can do it in 35 seconds, but if he asks another question, I will start the list. It is many organizations both national and international.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let him give us his list from Quebec and then we will talk.

A columnist from the *Financial Post* points out the absurdity of this plan. He said, "Canada is the only developed country without a national regulator and the only country not to be burned by the global financial crisis, therefore Canada will create a national regulator".

It is ridiculous. It is not broken, but they want to fix it.

The OECD, the World Bank and the IMF all support our passport system and say it is superior to that of the U.S., Britain and—

**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, obviously the member is mistaken in some of his suggestions that the OECD supports the passport system. I read out a quote just the other day that says the OECD supports a Canadian single securities regulator. But who is more important than a list of corporations? Those victims of Earl Jones, those Canadians who lost money. I will quote Joey Davis, "We support the idea of a single national regulatory body overseeing financial organizations".

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**YOUNG OFFENDERS**

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the National Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing Bill C-4. The conclusion of the resolution reads as follows:

That the National Assembly reaffirm the validity and the importance of maintaining the Quebec model for treating young offenders, which has been unanimously accepted in Quebec and has allowed Quebec to achieve one of the lowest rates of youth crime in America in the past 25 years.

Does the Minister of Justice also acknowledge that Quebec has one of the lowest rates of youth crime in America?

[English]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are responding to concerns that we have heard right across this country. Changes to the Youth Criminal Justice Act are as a result of extensive consultations, including with the Province of Quebec.

If the hon. member were to take a reasonable and impassioned look at this, I think he would realize that these are very reasonable steps that we are taking and should be supported by every member of the House.

[Translation]

**Mr. Serge Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I believe that the minister avoided answering my question. However, his refusal or inability to answer are nonetheless significant.

In addition to the National Assembly, the Association des centres jeunesse du Québec, the Barreau du Québec, the Canadian Bar Association, the Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes and many other witnesses have indicated that Bill C-4 would undermine the Quebec method, which gives such good results.

Will the Minister of Justice, who says he cares about the victims, agree to amendments to his law in order to avoid this risk?

• (1440)

[English]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the amendments that we are proposing in no way impede provincial jurisdiction and management of this file.

The member was good enough to mention a number of organizations. He perhaps forgot to mention that the Quebec provincial police association and many victims in Quebec are very interested and very supportive of this. However, I am sure at his next opportunity he will want to acknowledge all the support that we are getting from the Province of Quebec.

\* \* \*

**OFFSHORE DRILLING**

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have all seen the devastation that is taking place off the coast of Louisiana but our government has failed to articulate any emergency response plan to address an oil spill catastrophe if it were

to occur on our shores. The fact that we do not have a plan is beyond irresponsible. It is actually downright negligent.

When will the government show all Canadians its plan to prevent an oil drilling catastrophe, as well as its emergency response plan, and what will it do if an oil spill occurs in our waters?

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government has been clear from the very beginning. We expect Canada's regulators to enforce this country's strong environmental standards across the board.

In the case of offshore drilling, Canada's regulators are doing the prudent thing by conducting reviews and putting special oversight measures in place following the incident in the Gulf of Mexico. For example, the NEB is carrying out a comprehensive review of its drilling requirements, which will be open to the Canadian public, and incorporate information from other regulators, as well as the ongoing U.S. investigation.

**Hon. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, reviewing something and doing something are two entirely different things. This House and Canadians want to see a plan as soon as possible.

My other question relates to oil tanker traffic off the coast of northern B.C. The minister was correct when he said that there was a moratorium, but Canadians want to know when he will ban oil tanker traffic off the pristine and ecologically sensitive waters of northern British Columbia.

**Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again, there is a moratorium with respect to oil and gas exploration in British Columbia and there is no plan to change this. The government has no plans to reopen the voluntary tanker traffic zone.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TAXATION**

**Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the parliamentary secretary said that the opposition intends to increase the GST—which is untrue—and increase corporate tax rates—which is also untrue. He completely overlooked the fact that it is the Conservatives who are increasing employment insurance premiums, which will result in a loss of 200,000 jobs.

Why?

[English]

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is in *Hansard* now. The Liberals want to raise corporate taxes. We understand, by a report just this week, that it would cost 233,000 jobs.

We have it in *Hansard* that the Liberals want to raise the GST by two percentage points, another 162,000 jobs. I guess it is on the record. We wonder if the rest of the coalition is supportive of that.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, he still does not get it. No opposition party wants to raise the GST. No opposition party wants to raise the corporate tax rate. What is clear is that the only major tax plan that is actually happening is that the Conservatives are raising EI premiums, thereby destroying 200,000 jobs. In reality, that is the only tax measure.

Will the member stand in his place and just acknowledge that is the basic truth?

**Mr. Ted Menzies (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** The basic truth, Mr. Speaker, is that not only do we have it in *Hansard*, we have it on the record all across the country. The leader of the Liberal Party, who we assume will be the leader of the coalition, said, “Federal taxes must go up and we will have to raise taxes”. I do not know how much clearer that can be.

We have cut taxes in every way possible. Since we came to power, we have cut taxes for an average family of four by \$3,000.

\* \* \*

•(1445)

**SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's shipbuilding industry plays an important part in several Canadian communities.

Today the Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women made a very important announcement about our national shipbuilding procurement strategy.

Would the minister tell the House more about this important announcement?

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today the government made a historic commitment to Canada's shipbuilding industry by committing to build the ships for the navy and Coast Guard right here in Canada. This will result in more than 75 million person hours of work and will inject \$35 billion into the Canadian shipbuilding industry. It will reinvigorate and rebuild the industry while using Canadian sources to meet Canadian needs of the shipbuilding industry.

Our government is buying smarter and maximizing value—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

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**COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have been reading through the government's latest copyright bill and I do not see anywhere in the legislation where it is okay to rip off songs from copyright holders to use in commercials.

The industry minister starred in a commercial for Lord & Partners in which two songs were used but apparently neither of these songs was cleared for commercial licence, which meant that these songs were pirated for commercial gain with the endorsement of a crown minister.

It is not just a question of copyright. It is a question of ethics.

Does the government not understand that having a ShamWow minister in the role of the Minister of Industry undermines what little credibility the government has on key files?

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will answer the serious part of the question, which is that we are very proud to announce that we have tabled Bill C-32, Canada's efforts to modernize Canada's copyright laws.

This is important legislation. It means jobs, it means protecting consumers and it means modernizing Canada's copyright legislation that is long overdue. This has been well received by a broad cross-section of groups across the country.

As my colleague might be interested to know, the Canadian Independent Music Association said, “Thank you for protecting the rights of artists to earn a living from their work”.

This is in the best interest of all Canadians.

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**G8 AND G20 SUMMITS**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that another minister does not know the difference between right and wrong. It is a government that promised to do things differently.

Let us look at the G8. Canadians are justifiably outraged that our tax dollars are being blown by drunken sailors on a binge. Now we know where the money is going. The industry minister has been siphoning off money to build gazebos at rural intersections in his riding under the pretense of G8 infrastructure.

Will the minister explain why the billion dollar boondoggle is picking up the tab for pork-barrel projects for ShamWow Tony?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it will not surprise the member opposite but I do not agree with the premise of his question.

We will have literally thousands of journalists and thousands of delegates from around the world visiting one of the most beautiful places in Canada, the Muskoka region. They will fan out in the entire region, and not just in Huntsville. We are spending some resources on public infrastructure to help spruce up the area so that a beautiful part of Canada will be that much nicer.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**COPYRIGHT**

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government's Bill C-32, which is supposed to protect copyright, will allow people to copy any legitimately acquired work onto the device of their choice for personal use, without fear of repercussions. However, the ADISQ, UDA, Canadian Private Copying Collective and SPACQ would have preferred a levy on digital players like the one on blank CDs, which a House majority recently voted for.

Why is the government refusing to ensure that creators receive fair compensation?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the real question is this: why is the Bloc Québécois against updating the Copyright Act? We have to update our laws for artists and industries across the country.

The Retail Council of Canada said it was “encouraged by the proposed Copyright Act amendments... [They] are a positive step towards modernizing...copyright laws”.

The Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec said, “C-32 is a critical measure that will help maintain a stable and competitive business environment in Canada and Quebec”.

• (1450)

**Mrs. Carole Lavallée (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Chair of the Canadian Private Copying Collective, Annie Morin, pointed out that, “By not allowing for a levy on MP3 players, the government is effectively saying that an artist’s work is of no value. But without the music, it is the MP3 player that has no value”.

This bill contains no provision to compensate artists for their work. Why is this government refusing to compensate artists fairly?

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Recording Industry Association and the Canadian Independent Music Association said, “[Canadian artists] need better protection from online piracy to build a successful digital music market. We thank the government for taking this step to protect the right of artists”.

That is the response to an effective and responsible Conservative bill. It is a good bill and deserves the support of every party in the House.

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**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is winging it on an issue that is vital to Canada’s economy and to the survival of our ecosystems. The Munk School of Global Affairs just informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that his Bill C-26 is ineffective. This bill claimed to stop exports of water to the United States, but in reality, the bill is just a sieve.

Why not simply pass my Bill C-228, which reflects the recommendations from the Munk School, and which would save the government additional drafting costs?

[English]

**Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question but he is quite wrong.

Our government is standing up for Canadians by protecting our bulk water supply and the strengthened provisions found in Bill C-26 are complementary to existing freshwater protections at both the federal and provincial levels.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is all over the map on the issue of bulk water exports.

On March 29, the environment minister said that there was no need for legislation to ban bulk water exports. A couple of weeks

later, the Minister of Foreign Affairs tabled legislation that he wrongly claimed would protect Canada’s water from being exported to the U.S. Do the two ministers ever speak to each other or does the Prime Minister forbid that?

Yesterday, the country’s most renowned water experts politely told the minister that his bill was useless and even drew him a pictogram to explain why.

Why will the minister not take the bill I have already written for him and get on with it?

**Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure my hon. colleague that Canadian water is not for sale.

I am also correcting him in that Bill C-26 is a complementary bill to existing legislation. It would strengthen and clarify the bill and provide for complementary measures in both the federal and provincial bulk water areas.

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[Translation]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government has decided to muzzle its parliamentary employees by preventing them from testifying in committee. It is sad to see that some ministers are acting like clowns in an effort to distract everyone from the real issues and turning committees into a circus.

We remember the Conservative guidebook on how to create chaos in committee, and now we see how it works. When the circus shows up on the news, it is a disgrace to all politicians. Whether we are in the House or in committee, decorum must be respected.

When will the Conservative government put an end to this circus and start respecting Parliament and all of its elected officials?

[English]

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we will continue to have our ministers appear at committee because we respect Parliament, we respect the concept and the principle of ministerial accountability and responsibility. Therefore, our ministers, as they did yesterday, will continue to appear before committee and defend the actions of not only themselves, but their staff, our government and their departments.

As for the hon. member’s contention that the standing committees have become a circus, I remind him that the coalition has the majority on committees. If they end up with a—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

•(1455)

### ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today the Conservatives are trying to stop a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal from hearing allegations that the government discriminates against first nations children.

According to its documents, the government does not provide equitable funding to deal with the problems contributing to the increase in first nations children ending up in state care. This has led to first nations children being six to eight times more likely than non-first nations children to end up in foster care.

Why is the government continuing to discriminate against first nations children and why is it trying to derail the tribunal?

**Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal is not the correct venue. We simply fund child and family services and the provinces and first nations organizations run the services. We will present our position at the hearing.

However, since we came to office four years ago, we have taken multiple actions. We have signed tripartite agreements with five provinces. We have taken a proactive and preventive position with child and family services. Our funding has jumped to \$550 million, the highest ever for this area.

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### FIREARMS REGISTRY

**Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that criminals do not register their guns. Those Liberal and NDP members who voted in favour of Bill C-391 at second reading also know this.

The Liberal and NDP members who voted in favour of Bill C-391 at second reading owe it to their constituents to listen to them, not the Liberal leader, and vote to scrap the long gun registry.

Could the parliamentary secretary tell Canadians how our government is continuing to stand up for law-abiding Canadians?

**Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his strong support for Bill C-391 and his hard work to scrap the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

The Liberal leader has chosen to whip his MPs into voting to keep the long gun registry. Why will the Liberal leader not let his MPs consider what the ministers from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Yukon have to say?

The choice is clear for all MPs, especially those Liberal and NDP members who have voted for the bill at second reading. They either vote to scrap the long gun registry or keep the long gun registry.

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### SYDNEY HARBOUR

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today the vice-president of Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation announced that the federal government would not help support the

### Oral Questions

dredging project in Sydney harbour. He stated that it was an unbudgeted item.

Nobody in our community ever expected this to come out of ECBC funds. This is an infrastructure project and it is one that should be supported by the government.

I ask the minister of infrastructure today to stand with the people of Cape Breton, not turn his back on them and walk away from this project, and tell us that he will support this vital project for our community.

**Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of National Revenue, Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned many times in the House, this is a complicated file, an expensive file and one that we are looking at in conjunction with Cape Breton Island. If we have something to announce, we will make that announcement.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as the Canadian navy celebrates its 100th anniversary, francophones have nothing to celebrate. It is still difficult, if not impossible, to work in French on Canadian naval ships. Moreover, just one ship out of 33 is bilingual. Only 15% of navy personnel are French-speaking, compared to 32% in the army.

There is a lack of political will to correct this situation, and does this not show that, for the Conservatives, French is just a second-class language?

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. In 2006, the Minister of National Defence began changing his approach towards official languages, and tremendous progress has been made since that time. The Commissioner of Official Languages, Graham Fraser, said that the Canadian Forces were extremely co-operative throughout the audit and had expressed a sincere desire to find long-term solutions.

\* \* \*

[English]

### AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, every year, millions of animals are shipped across Canada. Many are diseased or even die along the way and still end up on our plates. The Conservatives know this and are not doing enough to stop it.

Currently, there is only one inspector for every one million animals going through the system. Even when dead or diseased animals are detected, transporters are let off with a warning or a slap on the wrist.

*Business of the House*

With barbecue season starting, could the minister assure Canadians that diseased animals will not end up on their grills this summer?

• (1500)

**Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, absolutely. The member opposite would be better served if he did not read these ridiculous articles that sometimes appear in magazines. Of course we question the numbers.

CFIA people are on site in these operations on a daily basis. They do a tremendous job. We have given them new moneys to work with and new compatriots to help them on those lines. Every time we intend to move forward with the CFIA to cover these types of situations, the NDP votes against it.

\* \* \*

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of State for Science and Technology tell the House about this year's recipient of the Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering?

**Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was a privilege to announce that Gilles Brassard from the University of Montreal has won the Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering. Brassard is an internationally acclaimed researcher in quantum cryptography and quantum teleportation.

This is another example of our government recognizing research excellence, ensuring that Canada attracts top researchers and that new researchers push the boundaries of innovation and discovery.

I congratulate Dr. Brassard, even though he gets no support from the Liberals.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Hon. Helena Guergis (Simcoe—Grey, Ind. Cons.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told Canadians he was aware of serious criminal allegations against me and he called in the RCMP. His chief of staff, Guy Giorno, wrote a letter to the Ethics Commissioner outlining these specific allegations. The ethics office spoke with Derek Snowdy, read him the letter and he denied having said these things.

Snowdy testified under oath before a committee that he provided no information about any illegal or inappropriate actions on my part and called the party lawyer to complain about this misrepresentation.

If the Prime Minister is so confident that the party lawyer outlined these allegations to me, will he table this letter in the House?

**Hon. John Baird (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government has forwarded the serious allegations to the relevant independent authorities and to the member. We will let those independent authorities do their work.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, with respect to the business before the House, I wonder if the government House leader would lay out the plan that he has in mind to carry the business of the House through until Friday of next week, at least.

Second, we have two more supply days to be designated in this parliamentary semester. I wonder if the minister is in a position to designate which days those will be.

I also understand that he may be giving some consideration to the matter of a possible take note debate with respect to the important issues surrounding multiple sclerosis. I wonder if he is in a position to specify when that matter might be coming before the House.

Finally, on this issue of witnesses appearing before committees, the minister has made the point that the government is making ministers available to committees and that is fine insofar as it goes. However, that is not a justification for blocking other people from coming to the committees. I wonder if the minister could indicate what legal authority he or the government has for what appears to be a double standard. Any other Canadian called before a committee would be required to appear. What is the legal authority for insisting that ministerial assistants will not appear?

**Hon. Jay Hill (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is quite a number of questions and I hope I have them all. My hon. colleague, the opposition House leader, says they are good questions. Indeed, they are very good questions and I appreciate him posing those questions today. I will go first to the business before the House and then I will get to his other questions.

We will continue today debating the report stage of Bill C-9, the jobs and economic growth act. As I said on Tuesday, Canadians are expecting this bill to pass before we rise for the summer.

I pointed out some of the consequences of not adopting Bill C-9 by the summer. Payments would not be authorized for over \$500 million in transfer protection to our provinces. Bill C-9 also authorizes appropriation of \$75 million for Genome Canada, \$20 million for Pathways to Education Canada to provide support for 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.

This process, I would remind the House, began on March 3, some three months ago, when the Minister of Finance delivered his budget. We debated the budget on March 5, 8, 9 and 10. On March 24, we adopted the ways and means motion required to introduce the jobs and economic growth act.



*Business of the House*

The bill was introduced on March 29. It was debated for five days at second reading and finally referred to the Standing Committee on Finance on April 19. The committee reported it back on May 14 without amendment. The opposition had almost a month to offer up amendments but reported the bill back without amendments.

This is the fourth sitting day that we have been debating report stage. The opposition and particularly, I would contend, the NDP have had the opportunity to raise their concerns. However, I want to point out a Speaker's ruling from April 14, 1987 in which he addressed this issue. He stated:

It is essential to our democratic system that controversial issues should be debated at reasonable length so that every reasonable opportunity shall be available to hear the arguments pro and con and that reasonable delaying tactics should be permissible to enable opponents of a measure to enlist public support for their point of view. Sooner or later every issue must be decided and the decision will be taken

I would also like to quote *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, at page 210, which states:

it remains true that parliamentary procedure is intended to ensure that there is a balance between the government's need to get its business through the House, and the opposition's responsibility to debate that business without completely immobilizing the proceedings of the House.

Following Bill C-9 today, we will call Bill C-10, Senate term limits, and Bill S-2, the sex offender registry legislation.

Beginning tomorrow, if necessary, we will continue with Bill C-9, followed by Bill C-2, the Canada-Colombia free trade agreement.

Next week we will continue with the business from this week, with priority given to Bill C-9 and Bill C-2. In addition to the bills just mentioned, the government will call for debate on Bill C-22, protecting children from online sexual exploitation, Bill C-23, eliminating pardons for serious crime, and Bill C-24, first nations certainty of title. As usual, the government will give priority consideration to any bills reported back from committee or received from the Senate.

Thursday, June 10, shall be an allotted day. That was an additional question that my hon. colleague, the official opposition House leader, asked during his customary Thursday question.

The other thing he noted was a date for an important take note debate dealing with multiple sclerosis. That date has not been set yet, but there have been consultations between myself and my counterparts, the House leaders from all three opposition parties, and I am sure that we can arrive at a suitable date in the very near future.

On the issue of committee witnesses and that we are blocking other people, I would be interested to know who those other people are that we are blocking. I am not aware of any. I have said repeatedly in the House of Commons over the last week or so that we intend to uphold the principle of fundamental value of Parliament, which is ministerial accountability.

● (1505)

Our ministers have been appearing and will continue to appear at the standing committees. It is my contention and I would ask any Canadian who is interested in viewing, and in some cases where there is no video record, reading the Hansard of standing committees to see the types of questions and antics that the combined opposition coalition is resorting to.

In most cases, we had our very junior people. These are young people. They are people who are probably about the same age or perhaps even younger than my children. These young people are dragged before the standing committees. The opposition subjects them to abuse and intimidation tactics.

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

**Hon. Jay Hill:** My colleagues are saying that is insulting. They do get insulted on a regular basis, and quite simply, we have no intention of allowing that type of abuse of our staff to continue.

We attempted to work with the opposition. Very recently, the chief of staff to the Prime Minister appeared voluntarily. He did not need to be subpoenaed. He went voluntarily to committee and defended the staff from his office.

We tried to work with the opposition, but it was all for naught, unfortunately. The environment at some of the standing committees has quite simply become toxic, with opposition-chaired committees in particular not respecting the standard rules under which our committees operate. They resort to kangaroo court antics and we are not going to allow that. We will continue as we have done as recently as yesterday where, as I said during question period, not one, not two, but three ministers appeared at the government operations committee to answer questions.

There was quite a bit of turmoil, because the opposition chair at the committee did not want to allow them to testify or allow questions to be posed. Finally, after a considerable length of time, there were questions posed to all three of my colleagues. I was not there, but my understanding is that they answered the questions openly, truthfully and honestly. Hopefully that will satisfy that committee and there will be no need to continue down the road they appeared to wish to travel, which is the road of charging some junior staff person with contempt.

I would contend that if that is the intention of the opposition, they should charge the ministers with contempt. It is they who are responsible. It is we in the cabinet of the government who are responsible, and we will continue to hold ourselves responsible and accountable by appearing at committees to defend the actions of our staff, our government and our departments.

I will let it go at that. I know one of my colleagues is looking to rise on a point of order and perhaps there are other colleagues who wish to do something like that, so I will take my leave.

● (1510)

**The Speaker:** I will just remind hon. members that question period ended at 3 o'clock. We have a question on Thursday about House business, not about committee business. We appear to have drifted a little off the usual thing.

I know members are interested in the answers that the government House leader gave to the questions asked by the opposition House leader, but those could be asked in question period rather than as a way of continuing the matter of question period. I would urge members to bear that in mind. There is a strong tradition about the Thursday question and it does deal with House business, not committee business. I stress that.

The hon. member for Wascana has a second question.

*Business of the House*

**Hon. Ralph Goodale:** Mr. Speaker, it really is a point of order arising from the remarks of the government House leader. He took the occasion of responding to my question to deal with an important issue about the proper conduct of House business and committee business and decorum in all the dimensions of what we do in this place.

I would draw to his attention, in respect of the point he has made, the expert advice that is contained in O'Brien and Bosc at page 974 that has to do with the ability to call witnesses. It would appear to be that power on the part of the House and committees is an unlimited power, quite analogous to the issue we dealt with on documents.

The point is this: I wonder, in light of the clear position in the Standing Orders and in O'Brien and Bosc, and in light of the remarks just made by the government House leader, if he would be interested in engaging in dialogue among House leaders and whips to see if the impasse that the House seems to be headed toward can be headed off in a constructive way in the interest of the proper functioning of parliamentary democracy. He obviously has some concerns about what—

• (1515)

**The Speaker:** Order, order. The member for Wascana and the government House leader have regular meetings, I know, as House leaders. This question could be asked there. He appears to be asking a question and is prepared to discuss these matters. I do not think it is a question for the floor of the House after question period, with all respect.

The tradition on Thursday is to have one question about House business and then move on. The question dealt with more than House business and we got an earful back. This is the way these things sometimes happen.

I was tempted to stand up and rule the question out of order, but I let it go. We have had enough on this. What we need to do now is move on to the next item.

The House leaders can have a discussion in their meeting as to whether they want to have discussions to try to resolve this matter. Of course, I encourage that. House leaders can have meetings regularly and I encourage that, because it will lead to greater progress, usually, with House business in one way or another. However, I do not think we need to discuss it here on the floor of the House.

The hon. Minister of the Environment has submissions to make on a question of privilege that was raised yesterday. I will hear him now. The hon. Minister of the Environment.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Jim Prentice (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order relating to allegations made in this House by the member for Outremont during question period on June 1, 2010.

During question period, the member for Outremont posed a question. I will not repeat the entirety of the question, but he concluded by saying:

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?

I rose to respond to that question, and I said, just for reference, if I might:

[E]very year for the last 10 years the premiers and The Council of the Federation—

I began. At that point, the member for Outremont began yelling words that were taken to be:

Liar. I was one of those ministers. You're lying.

I carried on to say:

[The Council of the Federation] have called for a streamlining of the federal environmental assessment process. The External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation called for the same changes

And I carried on to quote from the Commissioner of the Environment.

The member for Outremont, when asked by the Speaker to withdraw his remarks, replied:

I withdraw the words, but I will repeat them outside of this chamber, because what I said is true: he misled the House.

I want the record to be absolutely clear, and I think in response to the submissions I am making it is appropriate to ask the hon. member to completely withdraw the comments that he made.

If I might be generous in my comments, it would seem that he felt I was implying that he had in some way, as a former minister of a provincial government, voted in favour of changing our environmental assessment.

That is absolutely not what I said. In fact, I did not make any reference to the member for Outremont in relation to this issue in the House, or anywhere else for that matter.

What I said and what is the fact is that the premiers and the Council of the Federation have called for a streamlining of the federal environmental assessment process. The point that I was making to the House was that over the last decade, premiers, the Council of the Federation, have consistently made recommendations to the federal government to make changes to the federal environmental assessment process.

This is fully substantiated by a host of documents, which I am prepared to table in both official languages, in the House here today. I would be happy to take the step of doing that.

I refer, first, to an April 2000 report, which is 10 years ago, entitled the "Canadian Environmental Assessment Act Five Year Review—Provincial and Territorial Input", recommendations for "changes to certain provisions and aspects of the implementation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act", including "cooperative scoping" and "delegation to the province".

I will table that in the House.

I will also table an excerpted portion of the September 2004 report of the External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation. I will not quote from that at this point, but I will table that document.

I will table a document of October 2006, a letter from the Council of the Federation chair, Premier Williams, to the Prime Minister, requesting, substantially, these changes.

I will table a letter from October 2006 from the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, their official communiqué asking for these changes.

I will table an August 2007 Council of the Federation shared vision document, which identified deficiencies and called for changes.

I will table a January 2009 first ministers communiqué, asking for the cutting of red tape on infrastructure projects.

I will table a June 2009 western premiers communiqué, which said substantially the same thing.

I will table the fall of 2009 report of the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability.

And in closing, I will table the October 2009 Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment communiqué and the January 2010 letter from Premier Campbell to the Prime Minister advocating these changes.

All of these substantiate precisely what I said in question period, that there have been requests from premiers and from the Council of the Federation, from the smart regulator, and from the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to make the very changes that have been incorporated into the budget implementation act.

I ask the hon. member to withdraw his comment.

• (1520)

**The Speaker:** I should advise the minister that as recorded at page 3272 of *Hansard* on June 1, the hon. member for Outremont did make a withdrawal. He said:

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 matter has been withdrawn. The hon. member for Outremont may wish to respond to this point of order but I hope it will be brief.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, knowing your profound sense of equity, my remarks will be as brief as the remarks of the minister.

Mr. Speaker, you correctly hold that the long-standing tradition in Parliament of not using the word “liar” is to be maintained and I respect that. That is why I withdrew the term. But there is a question of equivocation.

It is interesting that the minister referred to his answer of June 1 and not his answer of May 31. He should read both. Furthermore, in both of those answers, no doubt in an élan of enthusiasm, he had the unmitigated gall to tell this House that for 10 years all of the premiers had been asking for these changes.

### *Privilege*

It is interesting to parse his sentences in the House today. He keeps using conditioning words like “substantially”. He no longer refers to the premiers of the provinces individually. I was indeed one of the ministers of the environment who was there during those 10 years. As you noted in his speech in the House just now, Mr. Speaker, almost everything he referred to happened after that, so it is not true to say that it was during those 10 years that people were asking for it.

Furthermore, no one ever asked him to remove the environmental assessment provisions as they now stand. He is incapable of producing anything. He keeps saying it is substantially this that they were looking for. He keeps saying that this is in the order of what was being sought. No one has ever sought that.

I threw back the keys to the limo on a question of principle with regard to the environment. I will not let one of the Harper-Cons stand in this House and tell me that I or my government ever did anything to request that we reduce the protection of the environment. I am going to be able to look my grandchildren in the eye and say I did everything I could to protect the environment. He will not be able to.

**The Speaker:** I would remind the hon. member that the use of member's names is improper. I think he did use a member's name. I would ask him to refrain from such conduct in the House. It is unnecessary.

**Mr. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, I invite the Minister of the Environment to come out in the hallway with me in front of the microphones now or any other time and we will deal with it there.

\* \* \*

### PRIVILEGE

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Lee Richardson (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this morning in the House, the member for Burnaby—New Westminster raised a question of privilege regarding his participation as a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade. As chair of that committee, I would like the opportunity to respond briefly and add some additional comments.

First, I am not aware of any report from the committee in this regard. The portion of the meeting to which the member refers occurred in camera. It would be unparliamentary for me or any member, frankly, to speak on matters that may or may not have occurred in camera.

I can say that all meetings of the House committee on international trade are conducted fairly and with the advice of the committee clerk and with the utmost fairness and balance.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that this meeting was conducted by the book, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, O'Brien and Bosc.

I am disappointed the member has taken this position after years of praise for the balance of our committee and the fairness of the chair. In fact, it was the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster who graciously moved to re-elect me as chair of the committee based on previous performance in this Parliament, so that is a bit disappointing.

### Government Orders

I think as a committee we have collectively taken some pride as a positive example of how committees can function with civility. And we are not alone. Just this week in a Montreal *Gazette* article critical of the comportment of House committees, eminent journalist and parliamentary scholar, L. Ian Macdonald, wrote:

Not all committees are...dysfunctional—

That quote is so good I want to repeat it.

For example, the House [of Commons] Finance Committee, under [the member for Edmonton—Leduc] is a serious place.

He further stated:

The public interest, and the public process, were well served. The International Trade Committee, under the genial chair of [the member for Calgary Centre] is a collegial exception to the toxic tone of most House committees.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on in that regard. I would like an opportunity to refer to the specific answers and should you wish to pursue this, I would like to provide more information. One, on the question of being in camera, the member complained that he was not advised that we came out of in camera. I think his exact quote is, “The meeting was held in camera at first. At 4:30, shortly after the committee started clause by clause, we came out of in camera. The chair did not notify members of the committee as to the move to a public meeting”.

Obviously, the member is not aware of the rules. We simply cannot vote in camera, so we automatically come out of in camera when we are about to vote.

He indicates we did proceed to clause by clause and so, of course, when we proceed to clause by clause, we are no longer in camera and the members were aware of that.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I will not take more of your time at this point, but should you wish to pursue this, I would be pleased to respond, specifically, to the member's points.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1525)

[English]

### JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH ACT

#### BILL C-9—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

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

That in relation to Bill C-9, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 4, 2010 and other measures, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage of the bill and one sitting day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the said bill and, fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government business on the day allotted to the consideration of the report stage and on the day allotted to the third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

• (1530)

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period.

[English]

I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their places so the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

We will start with the hon. member for Mississauga South.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to Bill C-9, the issue for many Canadians and certainly many members of the House is that the bill incorporates a number of legislative items which were not in the budget speech and not in the budget document itself but now appear in the budget implementation bill. I would note, for instance, the matter to do with AECL, the matter to do with the environmental assessment act, the matter to do with the air travellers security charge and some other items that have been raised in debate.

How does the minister explain to Canadians that there would be legislation slipped into a budget implementation bill which, had the items been dealt with separately, there would have been the appropriate level of due diligence able to be conducted by members of Parliament?

**Hon. Stockwell Day (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is important that we put this in context. My hon. friend mentioned that Canadians expect certain things and we definitely live up to that expectation.

Bill C-9 was introduced on March 29 for review by Parliament. It has already been in this chamber for 70 days. There have been over 50 speeches, which we appreciate. Finance committee has already had 10 meetings on this bill. It has heard from over 50 witnesses, but we are here and we are still debating it.

It is also important to remember that there are reasons, very important reasons, this legislation needs to move through and become law by June 30. We have to recall that once we are through the process here in the House of Commons then the bill also goes through the same legislative process in the Senate: second reading, referral to the Senate national finance committee, report stage, third reading. This bill still has a considerable distance to go and yet it is being delayed.

Canadians need to know what is at stake here. On one item alone, there are amendments that are required in order to put in place regulations to implement reforms that were announced by the government in October 2009, that were targeted at Canadians who are members of pension plans. These amendments require, for instance, an employer to fully fund benefits if the whole of the pension plan is terminated. They establish a distressed pension plan workout scheme and allow the Superintendent of Financial Institutions to replace an actuary. These have to come into force and royal assent given by June 30 because actuarial evaluations for federally regulated pension plans are required to be filed within six months of the end of the year. That makes it June 30 for those to be filed by December 31. Pension plans are at stake.

*Government Orders*

I will conclude by saying it is not uncommon at all to use this process of bringing in other legislation. Just one of many examples is that in 2005, the previous Liberal government in its last budget bill, Bill C-43, had over 20 different parts and legislation as varied as the Auditor General of Canada Act, the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada Act, the Broadcasting Act, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador Additional Fiscal Equalization Offset Payments Act, Canadian Environmental Protection Act, Department of Public Works Act, Canada Post Corporation Act, Employment Insurance Act. I could on and on.

I do not want to use the word “hypocrisy” and I will not, but that member supported that bill in 2005 which had a whole lot of important legislation integrated into it. That is what we are asking for here and not to put pension plans of Canadians at risk right across the country.

• (1535)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It is my understanding there are about a dozen members who have indicated an interest in asking a question, so I would like members to keep their questions to about a minute and for the minister to keep his answers to about a minute in response.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister a question. Bill C-9 is what is known as an omnibus bill. They have included measures that were presented to the House of Commons in bills, but these bills were not passed.

They have plundered more than \$57 billion from the employment insurance fund, and Bill C-9 would erase that debt. How can the minister tell Quebeckers that the employment insurance fund will accumulate billions more in surpluses over the coming years and still oppose measures—measures such as eliminating the waiting period and establishing the number of hours worked at 360—that would improve the employment insurance system? And in the meantime 50% of people who need employment insurance are not eligible?

How can the minister vote against these measures and, at the same time, plunder more than \$57 billion from the employment insurance fund? They will erase the debt and continue to raid the employment insurance fund for years to come. I would like to hear the minister's comments on that.

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, it is not unheard of for a budget implementation bill to include something on employment insurance, for example. We have another example and there are many more. In 2005, under the Liberals, there were employment insurance measures included in the budget implementation bill.

It should also be pointed out that we have increased benefits for workers. In a time of global recession, we have increased these benefits significantly throughout the country, especially in Quebec. And we will continue to do so.

[*English*]

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, let us indeed put this in context, as the minister responsible for the Treasury Board said.

The context here is that the government is going to extraordinary lengths to ram through a bill that is quite clearly and factually much

more than a budget bill. It is a bill that has almost 900 pages and has many other provisions in terms of deregulation, privatization and many major significant public policy issues.

I am proud of the fact that New Democrats have tried to hold up this bill. We are prepared to debate a budget bill but we are not prepared to have a bill that becomes a Trojan horse for many other issues that the Conservative government does not have the guts to put forward in legislation on its own merit that we can debate in this House.

We have had 60 amendments to this bill to delete those clauses that we believe are beyond the scope of what a budget implementation bill should be about. I would like to ask the minister why the government does not have the courage to actually deal with all of these other matters, such as environmental regulations and assessment or privatization, as individual legislation, as it should be, so it can be the proper debate in this House, as opposed to ramming through this massive bill under the guise that it is budget implementation.

If there are provisions in there that the government says have deadlines, then it could have ensured that this bill was truly a budget implementation bill and we would have considered that and ensured that it had a timely passage. However, it has set this environment for this bill, which is why it is now being held up.

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, as always, we are open to debate but I would encourage my hon. friend to add factuality to the debate. That would help and it would help people understand it, instead of using the types of words that she is using, trying to indicate that there is some kind of unsolicited or unrequired velocity to this moving through.

Bill C-9 has been before the chamber for 70 days. We have heard 50 speeches and the finance committee had nearly 10 meetings on it with over 50 witnesses.

The member said that she was proud of the fact that the NDP are holding the bill up. Is she proud of the fact that her party is holding up important revisions to people's pensions and proud of the fact that it is holding up transfers to Nova Scotia of \$250 million, to New Brunswick of \$80 million, to Newfoundland and Labrador of \$8.4 million? How about pathways to education, an important \$20 million program for disadvantaged youth? Is she proud that her party is holding up those programs?

She talked about 60 amendments. Members of her party did not bring one of those amendments to committee, so she can say 6,000. What does that say about a party when its members think they are bringing forward something salient for people to consider and they did not bring one of those amendments to committee?

*Government Orders*

•(1540)

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-  
sor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very intently to the minister's comments. I would like to go back to one of the points he made several years ago in 2005 when we were in government. He talked about the payments that were to be made to both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador at that time.

He talked about the fact that the Liberals had done that before. However, if we are going to talk about hypocrisy, let us look at the facts. I distinctly remember that the Atlantic accord at the time was couched within the budget and the Conservatives vehemently opposed it. This brought language to the House, and I remember the words, that this was done under cover of night, that it was a stealth operation and that it was very irresponsible to do it this way.

Today, however, we find ourselves in the last few weeks in the same situation. The implementation of the budget in 2005 did not go near all the topics being covered in this particular bill, Bill C-9, an implementation bill.

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's partial recall but total recall would be a little more helpful.

What happened in 2005, unlike the litany of witnesses, meetings and the number of speeches that have taken place already on Bill C-9, was that the finance committee only considered the Liberal budget bill for two meetings and only one non-governmental witness appeared before the bill passed without amendment.

Yes, there was a pretty good reason for some concerns to be raised but this bill at this time has had 70 days of consideration, 50 speeches and many witnesses at the finance committee meetings. That is very different from how the Liberals rammed through their bill in 2005.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in other parliaments, and likely in this Parliament as well, that is known as a gag. The government says that it has had enough, it has heard enough from us, and it sends us home so that it can take a holiday. That is a heavy-handed sort of procedure, almost as heavy as the bill itself.

They take 2,208 clauses and off they go. That's it, that's all. We asked questions of the parliamentary secretary and finance department employees, but we did not get any answers. They said they could not answer. That sort of thing does not happen in a democracy. It is unthinkable. It is improbable. It is impossible. The government has no respect for our democracy.

[English]

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, even my hon. colleague is laughing as he sits down. He realizes the hilarious situation that he has just tried to present.

Increase of volume never makes up for lack of argument, and that is what we just witnessed here. Any time one begins to lose a debate, even high school debaters are instructed to not start to shout and throw stuff around because it exposes the fact you have utterly lost the debate.

In this particular situation there has been a lot of time given to these particular items and to this particular budget. As I have said before, there have been over 50 speeches here and 70 days for members to make their point.

There are things at risk here.

[Translation]

There are things at risk for the people of Quebec. They could lose their jobs and their pensions. They could lose their transfer payments. The people of Quebec, the men and women all across Quebec, could lose things if the opposition keeps on putting up obstacles without making reasonable arguments, as they have been doing.

•(1545)

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the smoking gun in this 880-page budget implementation bill is the removal of the Canada Post legal monopoly on outgoing international letters.

The government tried over the last two years to introduce this bill as Bill C-14 and then again as Bill C-44. However, no matter how hard it tried, it could not get the bill through the House of Commons. It sees an opportunity to throw it in this soup and try to get it through.

There is also the sale of AECL. It is a huge undertaking to sell AECL. The government knows that if it were to bring it in as a separate bill, it would not make it through the House without thorough questioning and an assessment. By putting it in this omnibus bill, it can avoid all the scrutiny and questions that should be given to it.

Just because the Liberals had an omnibus bill five or six years ago is no reason for the government to continue this abhorrent practice, and bringing closure in the House is no way to deal with Parliament.

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, there are some important things to point out.

My friend from the Bloc Québécois also made mention of the thickness of the bill. Just the item that deals with benefits for the manufacturing sector alone accounts for 52% of that bill, just one item alone. Let us not exaggerate and measure a bill by its thickness, just like one does not measure a book by its cover.

There have been many examples of omnibus legislation before in the chamber. I simply cited one of the more recent ones in 2005.

My friend just mentioned his concern about AECL. If he is really concerned about it, he knows it is essential that Bill C-9 be passed as quickly as possible to give some certainty to Canada's nuclear industry. I have a quote by Neil Alexander, president of the Organization of CANDU Industries, a fairly significant and well-renowned person in the nuclear industry. He stated, "we support the language in Bill C-9 and encourage all parties to ensure that AECL is restructured as quickly as possible".

If he is being serious and he is concerned about AECL, there is AECL asking that we please move this through. Therefore, please do it.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Malo (Verchères—Les Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, not all that long ago, we in the Bloc Québécois were showing Quebecers that the leader of the Liberal Party and the leader of the Conservative Party had of course two views, but one and the same vision. The President of the Treasury Board has demonstrated this once again this afternoon by saying that in 2005, the Liberals had included all kinds of measures that had nothing to do with the budget in their budget implementation bill and that he has no problem doing the same thing today, because the Liberals did it in the past.

Even though it was wrong in the past, does that mean it can be justified here today? That seems to be what the President of the Treasury Board is saying. What he is also saying is that we have had 70 days to debate it and that he thinks that is long enough. As a minister of the Crown, he believes that parliamentarians in the House of Commons have debated it long enough. Based on his elevated status as a minister, he can declare that Parliament has discussed a bill long enough, and an omnibus bill at that.

I have a question for the minister. Instead of trying to blame everyone else, and since he knows very well why the bill does not have the support of Parliament—because all kinds of other measures have been thrown into this budget bill—did he listen to any of the arguments made during all these debates and did he find, or try to find, other solutions to break the impasse, instead of trying to shut down Parliament?

• (1550)

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague when he mentions the 2005 bill. I said that it was an example of a budgetary bill that included other very important items. Nonetheless, I agree with him. I was against the bill in 2005 because we only had two days to debate it. We have already been debating the current bill for 70 days.

The hon. member asked me why Parliament does not agree with this bill. Let him tell me. I do not know why he is against transfer payments to Nova Scotia, against increasing and improving pensions for men and women across Canada. I do not know why he is against these measures. It is up to him to explain it to us. It is not up to me to explain why he is against the bill.

**Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are hearing a lot of nonsense this afternoon and I find that my colleagues in the opposition parties have a short memory. Our economy was in recession not so long ago. In the last quarter, we saw 6.1% growth thanks to the economic action plan, the strength of our financial system and the entrepreneurship of our businesses. However, this recovery is fragile and the opposition is currently playing a dangerous game by compromising it.

We are talking about creating jobs in Quebec. In the past year, we have created 100,000 jobs in Quebec and the unemployment rate in Quebec is 7.9%, which is less than the national average. Economic prosperity is being restored in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

My question is clear. Will the opposition's current irresponsible behaviour compromise Quebec's and Canada's economic growth?

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank my Quebec colleague and the other Quebec Conservative member because they

have mentioned many issues that are important to the people of Quebec. Our Quebec MPs were the ones to raise the safety of men and women in aircraft throughout Canada, for example. They worked on softwood lumber and its related issues.

They are very concerned about transfer payments to the provinces. It is our Conservative MPs who constantly mentioned that such a bill was absolutely necessary. They were the ones to raise the issues of crime, Canada Post and the National Energy Board. They raised these issues.

They want improvements, but the Bloc wants to prevent any improvements for the province of Quebec.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting to watch the Conservatives try to move an omnibus bill in the House without thinking that the opposition would remind them that there was a time in this House when a certain Reform Party, a certain Alliance Party, and a certain Conservative Party would object to anything that would invoke closure 58 times.

I have been an MP for 13 years. It was my anniversary yesterday.

I watched the Liberals bring closure 58 times, and 58 times I heard the Reformers, the Conservatives, and the Alliance Party members scream like wild hyenas about the Liberals invoking closure. They were right to scream like that about closure. Now we have closure being brought to us by the exact same party.

How does the remailing and the post office and the sale of AECL have anything to do with budgetary items? The fact is, the Conservatives know that those two items standing alone would never be passed through bills. They have tried on the post office twice, and have they failed. Now they lump it into a finance bill, knowing very well that the Liberals have no backbone to stand up to them.

If the Liberals will not do it, we in the NDP will do it.

Why do the Conservatives throw all this other so-called junk legislation into a finance bill in order to rush it through the House without fair and proper debate?

• (1555)

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept what the member said about fair debate. We have had 70 days of debate here. I will not go through the list of all the items already talked about, but I refer him to that.

I am really glad he talked about Canada Post, because finally, he is showing the NDP's position on Canada Post. Those members have used this as their partisan punching bag with respect to the provisions that allow competition in the ongoing international marketplace. What are they doing? They are putting Canadian jobs at risk.

Barry Sikora, a small businessman from British Columbia, had a simple and clear message for the finance committee. He asked us to please pass this bill. He said:

*Government Orders*

My company employed 31 people. We're not a huge corporation; we're an average business in the printing industry. Now, because of this situation, we're down to 17 employees. Many of our customers have left us.... [T]hey have taken their business to another country. They have forced our industry to lay off long-time employees, and that's not a pleasant thing to do.... Already we've lost a significant amount of business. We're hoping that it will come back....If this doesn't pass, I'm out of business.

The NDP do not care about these jobs being lost.

These are important issues. These are economic issues. These are jobs for Canadians that literally are being lost, because the NDP is trying to delay this, and it is going to put people out of work.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The hon. member for Shefford has the floor for the last question.

**Mr. Robert Vincent (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I speak on behalf of all Quebeckers and Canadians who work in factories and who paid into the employment insurance fund, as well as on behalf of all employers, when I say that I find it incredible and ridiculous that the government wants to implement a budget and provide the funds for that budget—because we were talking about transfer of funds earlier—on the backs of the people who work so hard every day.

This government could have taken a portion of the \$55 billion saved and paid by these workers into the employment insurance fund to implement measures such as the older worker assistance program or the 360 hour measure.

They are now being told to move on, to forget about it, that all the money put into the fund will be taken out, that the workers will get nothing, that the money will be put towards the budget because they are unable to draw up an appropriate budget and because we have a deficit of \$54 billion.

Furthermore, the big show in Toronto will cost \$1 billion, even though they do not have the money to pay for it. I think that citizens have the right to know why \$57 billion was pillaged from the employment insurance fund.

**Hon. Stockwell Day:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to have a debate in the House. That is why we have been debating this bill for over 70 days already. However, it is important to present the facts, because the truth is so very important.

First of all, I agree with my friend. I was against the Liberals taking money from the employment insurance fund. But my colleague is ignoring the fact that we have improved employment insurance for workers who have lost their jobs. We passed a bill and created regulations to help workers and to provide training. There is a plan and a program for older workers, a plan for workers who want to work together during the recession. We have improved things. This is worth mentioning, and the member should consider his position.

• (1600)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith all questions necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** In my opinion, the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Call in the members.

• (1640)

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

(*Division No. 55*)

**YEAS**

Members

Ablonczy	Aglukkaq
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambrose
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Baird
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blackburn
Blaney	Block
Boucher	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Cadman	Calkins
Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country)	Carrie
Chong	Clarke
Cummins	Davidson
Day	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fast	Finley
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Généreux
Glover	Goodyear
Grewal	Guergis
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hiebert
Hill	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
Jean	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mayes
McLeod	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	O'Neill-Gordon
Oda	Paradis
Payne	Petit
Poillievre	Prentice
Preston	Raït
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Richards
Richardson	Rickford
Ritz	Saxton



*Government Orders*

Scheer  
Shea  
Shory  
Storseth  
Thompson  
Trost  
Uppal  
Vellacott  
Wallace  
Watson  
Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Woodworth  
Young— 123

Schellenberger  
Shipley  
Stanton  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Tweed  
Van Kesteren  
Verner  
Warawa  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to  
Wong  
Yelich

March 4, 2010 and other measures, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 2.

**Mr. Daniel Paillé (Hochelaga, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, they are trying to gag us with an undemocratic vote. We on this side of the House will stand firm until the last minute, and we will make sure that this bill does not pass. Despite the fact that some members opposite are behaving like clowns, we will remain serious and ensure that this unbelievable omnibus bill, Bill C-9, that they have unjustifiably tried to put everything into, does not pass.

Earlier, when we were examining the motion to limit debate, I said that what was happening was undemocratic. This bill contains more than 2,200 clauses and close to 800 pages. Earlier, we tried to delete part 3 because it was, for all intents and purposes, a tax increase disguised as an air travellers security charge. I hope that there will be enough members from the official opposition in the House to delete part 3 when we vote on Group No. 1. They claim to be against this bill, but they are not present when we vote.

Group No. 1 deals with the funding program for the National Energy Board. However, there is no mention of it in the budget. This group also deals with part 20, which covers amendments to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. Earlier, we were told that it has nothing to do with the budget. Members from the Bloc and NDP easily demonstrated that this boiled down to a stalling tactic.

Finally, it is shameful to see that one part of Bill C-9, with its amendments to the Employment Insurance Act, deals with a portion of the budget that merely confirms the theft of more than \$50 billion by the official opposition when it was in power. Today, there are not enough of these members to ensure that the majority in the House and voters from Quebec and the other provinces are able to assert their rights. Not enough Liberals showed up to allow us to continue debating amendments to the Employment Insurance Act.

The government is condoning the fact that some \$50 billion was siphoned out of the employment insurance fund. At the same time, Bill C-9 condones the planned theft, over the next four years, of employee and employer contributions amounting to nearly \$20 billion. They are going to take money out every year, just like the official opposition did when it was in power.

The amendments in Group No. 2 concern parts 15 and 18 of Bill C-9, whose scope, thickness and weight we saw earlier. Part 15 would restrict Canada Post's exclusive privilege. The government is using this omnibus bill to withdraw a crown corporation's exclusive privilege to a monopoly in its sector. That kind of thing should not be introduced in an omnibus bill. An accountable and courageous government would have the courage to stand up and tell people that it plans to restrict the Canada Post Corporation's privilege. The Conservatives have the right to think they are right, and we have the right to think they are not.

● (1645)

But the main reason we are against this kind of omnibus bill is that the government is using the budget bill as a disguise and saying that, by the way, it wants to take away the Canada Post Corporation's exclusive privilege.

## NAYS

## Members

Allen (Welland)  
Andrews  
Atamanenko  
Bélangier  
Bevilacqua  
Bigras  
Brisson  
Cardin  
Chow  
Coady  
Crombie  
Cuzner  
DeBellefeuille  
Desnoyers  
Dhalla  
Dufour  
Easter  
Foote  
Gaudet  
Gravelle  
Hughes  
Jennings  
Kennedy  
Laframboise  
Layton  
Lemay  
Lévesque  
Maloway  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
McGuinty  
Ménard  
Mourani  
Nadeau  
Ouellet  
Paquette  
Pomerleau  
Rodriguez  
Scarpaleggia  
Siksay  
Simms  
Szabo  
Vincent  
Wrzesnewskyj— 85

André  
Ashton  
Beaudin  
Bellavance  
Bevington  
Bonsant  
Brunelle  
Carrier  
Christopherson  
Comartin  
Crowder  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Deschamps  
Dhaliwal  
Dorion  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Folco  
Garneau  
Goodale  
Guay  
Hyer  
Kania  
Laforest  
Lavallée  
LeBlanc  
Lessard  
Malo  
Marston  
Martin (Winnipeg Centre)  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Mendes  
Murphy (Charlottetown)  
Neville  
Paillé (Hochelaga)  
Plamondon  
Proulx  
Savoie  
Sgro  
Silva  
St-Cyr  
Thibeault  
Volpe

## PAIRED

Nil

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

[*English*]

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 Welland, Food Safety; the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan, Aboriginal Affairs; the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas, Nuclear Non-Proliferation.

[*Translation*]

## REPORT STAGE

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-9, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on

*Government Orders*

I would rather have a calm discussion—which is my usual way of doing things—in the House with parliamentarians about whether or not we should take away one of the Canada Post Corporation's exclusive privileges. That is something we need to talk about. In fact, we are here in Parliament to talk about things and then vote on them. In the current situation, if parliamentarians have the courage of their convictions and oppose something, it will not usually pass. But that is not what is happening now, because they are trying to ram this through. They are telling us that we had better accept it or else. They are trying to move it through as though it were a letter in the mail.

The second item in Group No. 2 that we want to remove from Bill C-9—and we agree with our NDP colleagues on this—is the privatization of Atomic Energy of Canada. That kind of thing is way out of bounds in terms of parliamentary procedure. Privatizing a company is a major and serious issue. This involves industrial and science policy because it is about Atomic Energy of Canada. That is something we need to talk about.

Once again, it should be debated openly. We should know why the department and the corporation have hired financial advisors, how much privatization will cost, what they hope to achieve by privatizing the corporation, how Atomic Energy of Canada has performed and how the privatized entity is expected to perform. The government has the right to privatize, but it should first have the House's consent. It has the right to say that we have an asset. Nowhere does it say that we have to keep an asset forever. The government can set economic policy or, in this case, scientific policy and say that this is where we are at. It may be a good idea, but we do not know.

The committee had the opportunity—I know because I was there—to meet with people from the department, not people from the corporation, and ask them what was going on. They answered us in bureaucratese of the finest quality. The people were very eloquent and used big words, but said nothing. They said it will be the policy of the government. The public servants who were there were very good at their jobs, because their job was to say nothing. They were very good at talking a lot, yet saying nothing.

As a new parliamentarian, I would like to come here and talk with the president of the corporation, the board and the Minister of Finance so that they can tell us that they are thinking of selling the corporation, that in return they will receive shares and money and that the money will help pay down the deficit or will be directed elsewhere. But we are being kept in the dark. I cannot ask these questions. Yet for anyone who has ever sold assets, it is interesting to know how the new entity will perform, what the future will hold and what will happen to the corporation's research and contracts. Will the contracts be sold? Will they be liquidated? What will happen to them?

That is why we on this side of the House will be voting in favour of our NDP colleagues' motions in Group No. 2, which would delete parts of Bill C-9.

• (1650)

We hope the Liberals will all be here to vote as a block with us.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we welcome the Bloc member's participation in the debate today on Bill C-9 and we decry the government's attempt at closure when it is clearly incorrect in its analysis of where the Canadian people are at. The Canadian people will never accept the idea that it should be able to throw everything in the kitchen sink into a budget implementation bill, including things like the post office remailers, which have nothing to do with it.

I want to draw attention again to the air travellers security charge. While the government is reducing corporation taxes to the big banks and other profitable corporations to 15%, as it says, to be competitive to with the Americans, it is increasing the air travellers security charge by 50%, making ours the highest in the world. This will continue to drive Canadian passengers to American carriers.

What does the member think the government is trying to do in supporting American carriers over Canadian carriers?

• (1655)

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are trying to hide everything in this omnibus bill, which is very thick and has over 2,200 clauses. We think there must be something in this bill. So they are afraid. In my opinion, a government that does this must be afraid to confront us and tell us exactly what is in this bill. It is afraid to tell it like it is.

Basically, they are a bunch of cowards. They do not want to tell us what is in the bill. So they try to sneak in some things and hope that no one in the opposition will see them. Well, it is our job to flush those things out and make sure that the NDP, the Bloc and the Liberal Party stand up and vote together in favour of the amendments.

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to speak on behalf of a whole bunch of my constituents, since the AECL offices in the Sheridan research centre are a couple hundred yards behind my home. I know a lot of these people. I am sure the member will appreciate that when we talk about the changes to AECL and the possible privatization of certain aspects of it, it will mean jobs.

I hear about the shovel-ready infrastructure projects, et cetera and all the jobs we will have. Yet for the government to throw into the budget implementation bill something that was not in the throne speech or in the budget document is really an affront to Parliament. If we had a stand-alone bill to deal with AECL in terms of partitioning it and privatizing aspects of it, there would have been very substantial public hearings and expertise on this matter because it is so important to Canada.

Why does the government feel that it is appropriate? Why would it think it could simply throw this summarily into the pool and not provide the due diligence and scrutiny that members of Parliament are supposed to give important decisions, when we say our prayer to make good laws and wise decisions?

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Paillé:** Mr. Speaker, regarding what our colleague just said, my impression is that the government's behaviour is not so different from that of the members on this side of the House that do not show up to vote. It is exactly the same thing.

I am very happy to see that people are standing up and saying that they do not agree and that they will not hide. The member is quite right to say that the Conservatives are hiding behind an omnibus bill. And they deserve to be called the same thing we could and will call those who do not show up to vote when they said they will vote against something. It is no different.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my party to denounce the government's actions on Bill C-9 and what it tries to do.

Let me provide a bit of historical background. I know you are fairly new member of Parliament, Mr. Speaker, but there are some members of Parliament on the Conservative side that have memories of this place.

I remember in 1997 when Preston Manning and the Reform Party said that under no circumstances would they invoke closure on government legislation if they were in government. The Liberals, from 1997 until 2006, brought in closure on important debate 58 times.

Every time, the Conservatives, led by members like Monte Solberg, stood in their places and went absolutely bananas on the Liberal Party. Mr. Solberg was right. Mr. Solberg and the Reform Party of Canada were absolutely correct in their objection to closure on such important legislation. What do we get today? We get closure from the same party that said it would never do that.

We heard the President of the Treasury Board say that we had 17 days of debate on this legislation. It is over 800 pages. I guarantee the President of the Treasury Board has not read all 800 pages because not one member of Parliament in the House can honestly say he or she has read the entire legislation.

However, I can assure everyone of this much. I have tried for five years to get a one-page bill on national tartan day through the House with no success. Yet the government wants to rush through 800 pages of complicated legislation in 17 days.

My hon. colleague from the Liberal Party who just spoke is absolutely correct. The subject of AECL is of such grave importance to the Canadian people that this should be a stand-alone debate so there can be proper debate in the House and in committee with proper witnesses, as well as a complete and fair analysis of what this would mean.

It is so typical of the Conservatives, who have learned very well from the Liberal Party, to throw all the junk into one pile. I am surprised they did not include their dry cleaning in the bill because literally everything else is in it. I am sure when the Auditor General gets her chance, she will review their dry cleaning expenditures.

We fear that AECL will be sold for a song to some private enterprise. Years from now, heaven forbid, if something happens at

AECL, who will be left holding the bag? It is certainly not the company. It is going to run away and hide. It will people of Canada who will have to clean up this mess. This is the type of debate we should have on a stand-alone basis.

Then there is Canada Post. My father was a proud letter carrier in Division L in Marpole in Vancouver for many years. He was proud to be a letter carrier. I know many people across the country who work for Canada Post and treat their careers very well. Canada Post is one of the last vestiges we have of Canada from coast to coast to coast.

I have had the opportunity of living in British Columbia, Yukon and now in Nova Scotia and one thing is clear. Canada Post is in most communities across the country. The issue of remailings will take millions of dollars from Canada Post revenue. By the way, it has been mandated that any profits have to be returned to general revenues. We have known this for many years.

This will put a death knell in the Canada Post operations and eventually lead to the privatization of Canada Post, which I never thought in my life I would ever see. Eventually, so typical of their philosophy, Conservatives will privatize anything that has "Canada" on it.

Where did the Conservatives learn to do this? The Liberal Party of Canada. If flight services can be privatized into NAV Canada, then literally anything else can be privatized. What is next? Will Parks Canada will be privatized? Will Correctional Service Canada be privatized? Will the supply chain to the military be privatized? What is left?

**Mr. Jim Maloway:** CBC.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Is CBC gone next? What do we have left of Canadiana in our country that the people over there want to get rid of?

• (1700)

I guarantee that if the Conservatives ever have a majority government, we can kiss Canada goodbye, the way they are going. They make it more expensive to live in Canada. They talk about tax reductions, but the reality is that not one Conservative will stand in his or her place and say very clearly that on January 1, employees and employers in this country will have to pay more in income tax in terms of payroll deductions for EI and CPP. That is a fact. They refuse to admit that.

My hon. colleague from Elmwood—Transcona has said very clearly that the airport travellers security charge is now the highest in the world. The Conservatives do not like to say that, because they are the so-called tax-reduction party, but the reality is that they are the tax-increase party.

I will let the House know a little bit of history. Can any member name me the one party in Canada that brought us the two taxes most hated by Canadians? Robert Borden of the Conservative Party during World War I brought us income tax so that we could pay for World War I. The last hero of World War I recently passed away. I think it is fair to say that we have paid for World War I already, but we still have the tax.

*Government Orders*

What other tax do we all hate? Oh yes, it is the goods and services tax, which is now being brought in as a combination in Ontario and British Columbia. The Conservatives like to say that this is a provincial decision. It was an easy to decision to make when they were bribed with billions of Canadian tax dollars. It is amazing. Again, who brought in that tax? It was the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. God love these guys. They refuse to revisit their history.

What did the NDP bring us? Let me give the House a few things. It was the only party to stand up against Japanese repatriation to the interior of British Columbia and Alberta. It was the only party to stand up and say that it was wrong to intern Japanese-Canadian citizens and take all their possessions away, steal from them, and give them nothing when they returned. It was only the CCF, under Angus MacInnis, J.S. Woodsworth, and Tommy Douglas that had the courage and the fortitude to make the political decision to stand up and say that it was wrong. Forty something years later, this House had to apologize for that.

The NDP also brought us health care. It brought us medicare. It also brought us pensions for veterans and the Canadian people. That is what the New Democratic Party has brought to this House. That is what we have brought to Canadians. We do not bring the huge tax increases in income tax, the GST, and all kinds of levies on services that these Conservatives continue to bring us time in and time out.

The fact is that they throw all this junk legislation into one bill and say that we have had 17 days to read an 800-page legal, technical, difficult document to understand. Then they say that we have had enough debate and that Canadians already understand it. They tell us that they are okay and to trust them, because they are Conservatives. The most dangerous thing Canadians can ever do is trust the Conservatives.

However, I will say this. There are many Conservatives who on an individual basis I happen to like. In fact, there is not one of them I would not want as my neighbour, but I have to watch out for my wallet, my pocketbook, and my job if I continue to look at these Conservatives in any kind of way.

I would encourage all Canadians to take the ten-tonne challenge. What is the ten-tonne challenge? It is the combined weight of all the Conservatives together, and it equals ten tonnes.

I recommend that all Canadians in the next election, which I hope is tomorrow, take the ten-tonne challenge and vote for anyone but Conservatives. We will be able to sleep better at night knowing that Canadians and many corporations we have in this country, especially the Crown corporations, will have positive long-term jobs.

• (1705)

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is a little competition in this House about who can speak loudest and most eloquently, and I think the member for Sackville—Eastern Shore is in the running.

I know that he actually read, unlike everybody else on the government side, the 880 pages of the bill. I would like him to use some of his experience, some of his expertise, to help the government members opposite answer one very simple question,

lest they fall prey to the accusation that he suggested already, which is that the government side is a group of tax-and-squander members.

Will he tell us, to help the Conservatives out, because they are in need of assistance, what page in the government's action plan and budget includes the \$3.2 billion tax on air travellers in this country?

Second, will he also refer them to the page in that action plan/budget plan, Bill C-9, that shows where the \$550 million bribe to the State of Michigan Legislature is located so that we can know how the bridge is going to be built?

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Speaker, I happen to have Bill C-9 right here. It is over 800 pages long.

**An. hon. member:** It is 880.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** It is 880 pages long, to be exact, Mr. Speaker.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, that not one member of Parliament has read every single page in this book, because it is literally impossible to follow a document this thick. One would need a team of Toronto Bay Street lawyers, along with a bunch from Halifax, by the way, who are very good, to fully comprehend this complete book.

My hon. colleague, a long-time member of Parliament, is absolutely correct. The Conservatives are the tax-and-squander party. I just mentioned \$1 billion on a couple of gazebos in the Minister of Industry's riding and for Toronto. It is \$1 billion, while London did it for \$30 million. The member should check it out.

• (1710)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy André (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with our colleague. It is a rather thick document.

I would like to ask him a question. This is the second time, since I arrived here in 2004, that the budget implementation bill is an omnibus bill.

In 2005, the Liberals had included a number of measures in their budget in an attempt to hide the bitter pill. The Conservatives are now doing the same thing in 2010. With Bill C-9, the Liberals and the Conservatives are attacking Canada Post. They want to privatize Canada Post, which turns a profit. They are privatizing it and leaving the deficits to the public sector.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

[*English*]

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely correct. The reason a government would throw a bunch of junk into an omnibus bill like this is that there are always a couple of good things within a budget. Obviously, if we vote against the budget, months later the government can say that we voted against this or we voted against that. At the end of the day, this is a confidence vote.

We are telling the Conservatives very clearly that we in this corner of this side of the House have absolutely no confidence in the governance of this country by the Conservative Party of Canada.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-9.

I have before me this bill, which is called a bill to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 4, 2010 and other measures. I have it in hand and I know that everyone is familiar with it.

It is a very large bill with 880 pages and more than 2,200 clauses. Those who are watching us might think that such a large bill is meant to improve things for Canadians in terms of taxes. It is called a budget implementation bill, but on the contrary, it is a Conservative scheme for pushing through a significant portion of their policies—their right-wing philosophy of which I will provide some examples—knowing full well that the official opposition, the Liberal Party, will back down. Thus, we already know that some members will be absent. They say they are against the bill when they take part in the debate, but when the time comes to vote, they will back down. The Conservatives know this very well. That is why they decided, after four years as a minority government, to seek passage of unpopular measures in bulk that they could not get passed in separate bills.

It is important that Quebeckers and Canadians watching us understand this: the Conservative Party has included unpopular measures in this bill, measures that would otherwise not get passed.

I will take as an example part 15 of the bill, on the Canada Post Corporation Act, on page 568. Clause 1885 has one paragraph:

1885. Section 15 of the Canada Post Corporation Act is amended by adding the following after subsection (2):

(3) The exclusive privilege referred to in subsection 14(1) does not apply to letters intended for delivery to an addressee outside Canada.

This change was part of Bill C-44, introduced by the Conservative government on June 17, 2009. That bill went to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, of which I am a member. The debates were so serious that, after prorogation, the Conservatives decided not to bring back this bill, which would have made changes to the Canada Post Corporation. The Conservatives decided not to bring it back, because changes in the exclusive privilege of Canada Post will reduce its revenues.

As a Quebec sovereignist, I believe that one day, we will have our own country. We will control our postal service, but until that happens, there is one agency, the Canada Post Corporation, that delivers mail in all regions of Canada. Not a single member in this House would dare say that postal services are not important. It is the only service that the Government of Canada provides to the public through a crown corporation, Canada Post. It affects every single citizen, and these services are provided every day. It is the only service left for the public, simply because the remaining public services are provided by other levels of government. Municipalities provide a significant number, as do the provinces. The only service that the Government of Canada provides to the public is the postal service.

When the revenues of Canada Post are cut, its services are also cut. That is what we heard in committee, even before the first version of the bill, when remailers came up with an idea, and lost their case in the courts. These remailers were, and still are, operating.

● (1715)

When they lost in court, they brought their request to us. The president of Canada Post came to tell us why the corporation was suing the remailing companies it had tolerated for 20 years. It was because Canada Post lost approximately \$80 million in 2007, and the losses were not stopping.

It is important that Quebeckers and Canadians, and even members of the House, fully understand what remailing is. Companies offer to collect a large business's mail and send it to clients overseas, outside of Canada. Canada Post has tolerated remailing for a long time. Obviously, these companies have grown and are continuing to grow. They have found all sorts of ways to collect mail here and send it from elsewhere. They ship mail in containers and then mail it from overseas, in countries where the costs are significantly lower than in Canada, which leads to financial losses for Canada Post.

Remailing companies came to realize that as long as they were collecting international mail from businesses, they could suggest to these businesses that they collect and send all of their mail. When Canada Post realized that remailing companies were signing mail collection contracts with all of the large organizations—universities and all of the major health networks—it realized that it was losing significant revenue.

In order to stay afloat, Canada Post has to cut services. There is a reason why, in the past three or four years, Canada Post has been closing post offices, trying to reduce the number of rural routes and installing group mailboxes instead of offering home delivery.

I do not think that a single member of this House would dare debate this issue. The Conservatives have decided to hide this measure in their omnibus bill, Bill C-9. We must never forget that Canada Post was the first major Canadian corporation. The famous Royal Mail has always been delivered ever since there was mail. The largest union in Canada is the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. It makes sense because the corporation delivers mail to every home.

The Conservative Party is destroying this service. This bill will take away its exclusive privilege. Canada Post won in court because the onus was on the companies to prove that they were obeying the law. Bill C-9 will take away that exclusive privilege and remailers will be able to collect mail.

What the government and the minister are telling us is that remailers will only be able to collect mail destined for foreign countries. If they collect mail distributed in Canada, it will be up to Canada Post to prove it. We can imagine the money Canada Post will have to spend to prove that private businesses are not collecting only international mail.

*Government Orders*

The companies knew what they were doing when they asked for the end of the exclusive privilege. Their problem was that they had to prove in court that they were not collecting mail. Now, Canada Post will have to prove it. What does that mean? I can say right now that Canada Post plans on cutting its spending by \$250 million over the next two years. That means that services will be cut in rural areas in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

With the Bloc Québécois, I will be voting against Bill C-9 because I do not want to be responsible for ending the provision of service to the entire population. Every citizen pays taxes, whether they live in a rural or urban area. Everyone has the right to postal service in all parts of Quebec and Canada. I do not want to be the one to vote to eliminate postal service in rural areas.

● (1720)

[English]

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for a very good dissertation on the whole issue of remailers. He has described it very accurately and has raised the spectre of serious consequences, certainly to Canada Post as a corporation but also in another area that concerns me. We had the same kinds of issues with regard to airlines when they were talking about whether they would get rid of Air Canada and things like this.

If we wanted to run a business as a private, for profit business, we would eliminate, in terms of airlines, the unprofitable routes and just deal with the most lucrative ones and maximize our profits. However, when we think of CBC and Canada Post, these are the anchors that communicate and connect this country together.

I am a little concerned, I do not know if the member is, that withdrawing the kind of essential services to rural Canadians is really contemptuous of the vision of the country, the importance of keeping people connected and that we are all created equally in terms having access to essential services.

I would be interested if the member is aware of any other potential—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Order, please. The hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel.

[Translation]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise:** Mr. Speaker, this gives me the opportunity to tell my hon. colleague that it goes much further, since it affects all urban environments. My colleague does not understand what Canada Post is doing at this time. There is a moratorium on post office closures in rural areas, but not in urban areas.

So in urban environments, they are trying to give contracts to private enterprise. Of course, when the time comes to renegotiate the contracts, since Canada Post has lower revenues, fees are not increased, nor what is paid to dealers for providing the service. More and more dealers in urban areas are not interested in the service.

Now Canada Post is forced to centralize in post offices that are further away because there are no more dealers, all because Canada Post is broke, and all urban areas are going to be affected.

The members of this House believe that the measure they are taking is a minor, short-term measure and that Canada Post will

recover, but Canada Post will not recover. In order to provide the service, Canada Post will have to rely more and more on dealers in urban areas, for instance, and yet will have a much harder time paying the dealers. So dealers—obliged to provide a certain amount of space, but not paid for the space they are providing even though dealers have rent to pay to the owners of locations—will no longer be able to sign contracts with Canada Post. Worse still, in Montreal, at this very moment, fewer contracts are being signed.

Dealers even say they no longer want to provide the service because it is not worth it. Once again, this does affect rural areas, but hold on to your hats, because it is also going to affect urban areas pretty soon.

● (1725)

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, clearly, the Canada Post remailer issue is a smoking gun in Bill C-9 because it, like the sale of AECL, especially does not belong in Bill C-9. The evidence of that is the fact that the government itself introduced the remailer issue in Bill C-14 and Bill C-44 in the last couple of years.

I applaud the member for his analysis of the bill. I want to ask him why he thinks the Liberals should be able to claim that they are sympathetic to this issue, when in fact they will not be supporting it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise:** Mr. Speaker, I was quite surprised to see the NDP member from Outremont try to add a new measure on oil or oil drilling to the bill in an attempt to entice the Liberals to vote in favour of the bill. This quite simply means that with such a measure, the NDP would also be prepared to support Bill C-9, knowing full well that some of the measures are unacceptable.

I did not understand what the deputy leader of the New Democratic Party, the hon. member for Outremont, was trying to do. He wanted to add a measure, apparently to try to mollify the Liberals to get Bill C-9 passed. I am trying to understand, but I still do not get it.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-9 and to the Group No. 2 deletions that the NDP alone has been attempting to have deleted from the bill.

To answer the Bloc member's question, we in the NDP recognize that we cannot effect changes to legislation in Parliament without the co-operation of the other two opposition parties. Therefore, it makes sense that if it takes a proposal or an amendment to get the Liberals to support it, we would be prepared to do that.

However, having said that, we have no intention of voting for the bill even if we were to get the deletions that we were looking for because, once again, the bill is not an honest attempt at a budget implementation bill. It is well-known that if we want to implement the provisions of the budget, as the member for Mississauga South has indicated, we should at least talk about the budget or at least mention it in the throne speech.

What the Conservatives have done here, recognizing that the Liberals are the weak link in the chain here, is decided in a minority situation to ram all this stuff into a bill that is basically like vegetable soup and throw in the issue of the remainders, the issue of selling AECL and the environmental issues and serve it up in an 880-page omnibus bill and hope for the best. They are basically challenging the Liberals to vote against them and have an election over it. That is not the way we should be running Parliament.

The Conservatives presented the post office remainders as a government bill on two occasions and they ran into a wall. Even the Liberals said no when they brought in the remainder issue on Bill C-14 and Bill C-44 over the last couple of years. The brain trust of the Conservative government saw a way to get the budget implementation bill through so it threw in a bunch of things that did not apply.

Now we have the government's very weak defence today of saying that we have had so many days to discuss the bill and that it brought in an omnibus bill because the Liberals did it before. In other words, two wrongs make a right. Just because the Conservatives can point to and attack the member for Mississauga South on the basis that he was in the House when the Liberal Party was in power and it did the same thing that—

● (1730)

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### PROACTIVE ENFORCEMENT AND DEFECT ACCOUNTABILITY LEGISLATION (PEDAL) ACT

**Hon. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-511, An Act respecting the reporting of motor vehicle information and to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act (improving public safety), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to move the bill in the House. One might ask why Bill C-511, which I refer to as the PEDAL act, the proactive enforcement and defect accountability legislation, would it be so necessary today.

Many of us can speak eloquently about the logistical issues associated with any bill, all the finances associated with them, all the technology, all the procedural reasons for them. However, there is really only one reason and that is consumer safety, the safety of all the citizens who use the roadways that are filled by vehicles, produced by manufacturers in Canada and abroad, re-imported here, sold here and in part supplied by auto parts manufacturers here. Every one of those men and women deserves the comfort and the knowledge of assurance that comes with the fact that there would be laws compel such providers of vehicles to put on the marketplace a vehicle that would be safe for operation.

I have to reflect a little on this. A lot of the issues we have seen over the course of the last six to seven months have to deal with one

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particular company, but in fact we are talking about all automobile manufacturers. We are talking about the reasons why people have gone to the extreme levels of going to congressional hearings in the United States, other congressional hearings around the world and even parliamentary hearings in Canada. They want to get some satisfaction and some answers from the manufacturers that have put vehicles on the market that have proven to be defective in such a fashion that they have put the lives and safety of the users and those who share the road with them at risk.

Perhaps this would make it a little too personal, but it struck me very seriously the other day, even though I presented the bill many weeks ago. I was a very proud grandfather a couple of days ago when my daughter-in-law, Maccarena, my grandson and my son Massimo brought a second baby into the world, Leandro. He made Amedeo an older brother. I thought about all those kids like my two grandsons. If the House will allow this digression, one is watching this on television right now. He name is Matteo and he is 17 months old. He is looking at his other cousins, all of them under the age of 7, Isabella, Alessandro, Tazio, Gianluca and Stefano.

I am a legislator and I look at these grandchildren. They are so completely vulnerable, so completely dependent on what a driver might do on the road. Imagine the parents of all children, including those of my policy adviser who helped shape the bill. Simon and Leo are at home watching to see whether dad's member of Parliament is thinking about them when we are talking about vehicle safety and well they should as should all of us. Everything we do here has an implication and a consequence for those who are most vulnerable.

The reason we were motivated to come forward with this legislation was during our study of what was going on worldwide and in Canada with motor vehicles, it struck us that perhaps we had not given it that human touch. This human touch dictated something that had been going on since 2002. We are partisan. We talk about one government party doing one thing and another government party doing another, but in 2002 the Liberal Party initiated a study of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act because automobiles had changed so drastically since the last time the act had been amended.

● (1735)

Some people say that these vehicles on the roads are almost like rolling robots. They are completely computerized. They go beyond the ability of most drivers to determine anything that they can do. Other than pressing an accelerator, pressing a brake pedal and steering, there is very little else that can happen. There are computerized mechanisms inside the vehicle that will act in fashions that our drivers may be unable to handle.

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Therefore, we decided to look at this Motor Vehicle Safety Act. We did not want to vilify Toyota even though it had been in the middle of hearings in the United States, here and worldwide and accepted to pay fines on the basis of the findings of the American congressional hearings. We wanted to see if we could bring manufacturers to the table to do what would be right for their customers, the consumers. We wanted to ensure that consumers would be protected against those who were indifferent to the issues in an aftermarket environment. In other words, once the vehicle is sold and it is in the hands of the drivers, companies walk away. Everything is a complaint, it is a quality issue, it is not a safety defect related issue, but some are.

What we propose to do is ensure that we bring into legislation a couple of very basic elements. The first is to give the Minister of Transport, who is the regulator of these vehicles, the legislative authority to call for, to receive, to analyze, to digest and then to act on the information associated with any one of these vehicles, whether they be in Canada or abroad. If they are a part of a company's fleet and there are complaints associated with those vehicles and they are safety-related, then they need to be reported to the Minister of Transport for action.

We lay out in the legislation a very thorough and specific methodology. We do not ask the minister to be willy-nilly, whimsical in his or her approach to what the complaints might be. However, we require a quarterly reporting mechanism by the manufacturers, through their dealer networks, to Transport Canada. Through this proposed legislation, we give the minister the authority to analyze these in the context of safety-related defects.

The second feature of the legislation is we provide a definition for "safety-related defect" that goes specifically to whether the problem is incurred while driving, or not, is associated with a preventable situation or an anticipated situation by the driver. If it is not, then it has nothing to do with the driver or the quality of the vehicle. It has everything to do with safety-related issues.

Having analyzed the information, and maybe requiring more, the minister can then, under the legislation, initiate a recall to get those vehicles off the road until such time as the manufacturer comes up with a solution to the problem and addresses it vigorously and in a timely fashion.

These two innovations do not currently exist in the Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

The Minister of Transport a little while ago said, in respect to Toyota specifically, that the Motor Vehicle Safety Act had a lot of good teeth and clubs in it and if the department found that a company was not compliant, it could engage in criminal proceedings. It seems that part was rhetorical. The Government of Canada and no minister can direct a criminal investigation. They can, if they have the will, ask some of the law enforcement authorities to investigate. We have seen that with the Prime Minister.

● (1740)

The government has not done that with Toyota or anyone else, in part because the legislation does not give the minister the authority that we think the minister ought to have. Right now, the minister and his department can attempt to influence a company to comply, to

provide information and to provide other issues to give them a history of the vehicle's performance.

However, they cannot ask for anything. They cannot ask for the lists of the complaints received by the dealerships or by the company centrally. They cannot ask for accident reports, the nature of the injuries or the deaths that might have occurred. They cannot even talk about the level of the property damage. None of these things are currently inherent in the legislation. However, under the PEDAL act, the minister can demand those and more information if so required and then, through a very methodical process, initiate the recall.

Today, the minister has to hope that a company or manufacturer will accede to his request and influence to issue a recall or some such notice. One company has a very unique euphemism for a recall. It is called a voluntary product improvement notification. It essentially says, "You have a bad vehicle. We do not know what the problem is, but next time we call you, we will bring you in and we will solve the problem. Happy motoring".

That company is now facing 100 class action suits in the United States alone. Fifty-nine deaths are attributed to the safety defects associated with the vehicles and entire fleets have been recalled. We want to get beyond that point. We wanted to make a very positive, immediate amendment related to technology in the legislation. The amendment involves the brake override system for all of those vehicles that have an electronically controlled throttle.

These are new terms and technologies. In the generation of cars that we had when I was much younger, we could become our own mechanics and fix our own vehicles, but we cannot override the commands in a computer-driven automobile. With the proposed legislation, we ensure that every manufacturer, as of a particular date, builds that into every vehicle that they put on the market. Some of them are already doing it voluntarily. Others are a little more recalcitrant and slower. We are telling them that, as of a particular date, they have to do that.

I know that you, Madam Speaker, will want to encourage all colleagues in the House to support legislation that is really proactive, because that is what this is. It does not say that the government must spend X number of dollars to do anything. It establishes a regime that gives the minister authority to call in the manufacturers, to demand information, to utilize that information, to urge them to do their recall and, if not, to issue a recall himself or herself.

It really gives the regulators a proactive role. It gives them the substance they need to ensure our roads are safe. It gives them the authority they need to ensure that consumers are well protected when they purchase vehicles in which they will trust their lives and the lives of their children and dependents. It goes further. It tells the manufacturers that this is coming down the road. It tells them to get ready for it, to be prepared and to be compliant.



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Finally, it provides everybody with the parameters of what does not exist in the current Motor Vehicle Safety Act, and that is a definition for a safety-related defect. The legislation is very specific. It outlines what it is. It gives everybody the parameters under which to operate. Everybody can and ought to, in this instance, obey the law, especially the Minister of Transport.

• (1745)

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my good friend in the Liberal Party for bringing forward his bill.

I am fairly sure that he would agree with me that the mat issue, while it may have provided some of the problem, is not the real problem here. People who have had the mats replaced have found that sudden acceleration still does occur.

I received some information from the American hearings and I am not sure whether the member is aware of it. It is important insurance information from State Farm. It indicates that when electronic throttle controls were first brought in on Camrys in 2002, the number of sudden acceleration cases just skyrocketed. In terms of the Toyota Corolla, when the electronic throttle was introduced in the 2005 model, once again the chart shows that sudden acceleration claims skyrocketed at that time.

I think I heard the member at least once or twice in the past make reference to the fact that he did not believe mats were the sole cause and that the electronic throttle control was really the issue. I think that is borne out by the fact that his bill would require a brake override. He is probably aware that, 20 years ago, Audi solved a similar problem by bringing in a brake override system, but that was before electronic throttle controls existed.

I wonder if the member has any comments on these points.

**Hon. Joseph Volpe:** Madam Speaker, I had indicated that I did not want to talk about a specific company. However, because the member has given us an indication of a very specific issue, yes, I have said in the past that I quite frankly do not believe this business of floor mats and sticky pedals, et cetera.

What is important in all of those issues is that there was an opportunity for companies to be preventive. They knew the problem was there. They saw the problem coming forward. My legislation, or hopefully our legislation, would indicate to everybody an early warning system where the company would have to go ahead and provide the information to the regulator quarterly so that there could be an objective assessment of the problems. Subject to assessment in a lab, in an environment where there could be scientific assessment of what is going on, the regulator could then make a judgment on whether the vehicle ought to be recalled and for what reason.

I think this is a winning situation for everybody. It would solve a lot of the litigation that could take place, that would take place, that is already taking place in many other areas, but most importantly, it would lead to safer vehicles, safer roads and greater safety for our consumers.

• (1750)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel has time to ask a very quick question.

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, in his bill, my colleague talks about brake override systems and wanting to add new measures. Brakes were a problem for Toyota. How did Toyota's problems influence my colleague's decision to introduce this bill?

[*English*]

**Hon. Joseph Volpe:** Madam Speaker, I do not want to be a consultant or adviser to Toyota. I want to make sure that Toyota and other manufacturers will comply with the legislation that is available.

The measure to which my colleague refers is an interim one, to act as a flag for everybody. As the member for Elmwood—Transcona pointed out, it has been noticed for the last 20 years, and as vehicles become more and more computerized, that this is one of the things that needs to be done. There has to be a brake override system so that in the event of unintended, uncontrolled acceleration, a mechanism will stop the vehicle.

Some of the examples we have seen through the email traffic between Transport Canada and Toyota suggest that not only were all the other excuses simply that, excuses, but a brake override system might have solved the problem. This is one suggestion. The other one, as I said, is the constant reporting.

**Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would first like to congratulate the previous speaker, the member for Eglinton—Lawrence, on the birth of another grandchild. I know he is very much a family man. He has indicated that many times in committee. Not only is he a very hard-working MP, but I know that he holds his family very close in his mind all the time when he is here. My congratulations to him.

My congratulations in relation to his proposal on this particular act. The Motor Vehicle Safety Act first came into effect some time ago, in 1971. It established comprehensive minimum safety standards for the design and performance of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment manufactured or imported for use in Canada.

It also invoked a regime of self-governance on the part of vehicle and equipment manufacturers that was very similar to the motor vehicle safety act in the United States. Obviously our borders are connected, our manufacturers are connected, and many citizens of both countries intermingle. As a result of that, this regime works well.

The regime itself is commonly called “self-certification” and was harmonized from the beginning with the United States in recognition especially of our close trading relationship and of the many manufacturing jobs we have producing motor vehicles in this country, especially in the province of Ontario.

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This actually reduces the cost, ultimately, to Canadian consumers as a result of this intermingling and the need not to retool or to rejig particular items on vehicles, and we can make sure that the safety remains consistent because the roadways, quite frankly, connect.

Notwithstanding this self-certification regime, the act also requires an oversight audit and enforcement function provided by a government body, which was delegated by Parliament to Transport Canada.

Transport Canada has been effective in ensuring that companies remedy safety-related defects or non-compliances with safety standards under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act through well-established audit and enforcement protocols. This is important because it shows that Transport Canada's obligation is to follow up on these things and to make sure that an audit is being done regarding the issues.

The safety enforcement regime established under the act actually consists of investigation of defects and collisions, compliance audits and testing, enforcement, and oversight on notification of defects. So it is quite inclusive.

To date, the biggest recall in Canada was actually not the recent recall, but the recall on the ignition switch on Ford models, years 1988 to 1993. This recall actually involved 834,368 vehicles. This recall was necessary because a short circuit could have developed in the ignition switch, and as a result, could have led to overheating and ultimately a fire, and actually a fire right in the steering column itself. So it was a very important recall.

The second biggest recall is again not this one, but involved a seat belt manufactured by Takata. If we add up all of the vehicles that use that particular seat belt, over 770,000 units were involved in that recall.

The ABS plastic front seat belt button actually could have broken, allowing pieces to fall within the assembly. Then, as we can imagine, when someone tried to get out of the assembly, if those plastic pieces were in there, they would actually jam the mechanism and would not allow the person out, or indeed would not allow it to click in place, in the first place.

There were some real serious problems with that, because it could have led to personal injury or even death in the case of water being involved or fire. That was the second biggest recall.

The third biggest recall involved almost 500,000 Ford vehicles affected by a speed control deactivation switch potential failure, very similar to the case at hand here, at least in terms of the speed and the inability, we have discovered, in relation to some cases where the accelerator will actually stick. The switch could have overheated, smoked or burned, potentially resulting in an under-hood fire in that particular case.

Those are the top three that have happened in Canada.

● (1755)

It is also important to note that Transport Canada in these particular cases was the leader in North America. As a result of these investigations and ensuing conversations, Transport Canada actually pressed the manufacturers to launch recall campaigns and those

recalls were later extended to our American friends to the south where millions of vehicles were involved. Transport Canada has been the lead on many of these recalls in North America and has been quite effective in keeping Canadians safe.

The overwhelming majority of Transport Canada's defect investigations, it should be noted, are based on consumer complaints. In times past, as mentioned by the previous speaker, if a manufacturer detected a safety-related defect, it had a legal obligation under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act to notify Transport Canada and consumers of the defect. That is right, not just the regulator but the people who own or bought the car. Manufacturers have the obligation to notify them.

Transport Canada receives complaints concerning all makes and models of vehicles, Toyota and all others, and reviews the complaints for potential safety issues that may affect various vehicle systems. Likewise, we have records of acceleration problems for a very large number of makes, brands and models of vehicles, and the frequency of incidents relating to Toyota specifically, which is, of course, what brings us here today with this bill, is very typical of that industry as a whole.

It is interesting to recognize that Toyota's safety recalls and the complaints of sudden acceleration are no different proportionally than for other car manufacturers that currently do business in Canada. In 2009, Transport Canada received 1,300 complaints on all issues.

Transport Canada also communicates regularly with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to determine if it is studying issues similar to those we might be investigating. We work well with our neighbours to make sure that we do not duplicate efforts and actually work together to get to the bottom of the issue, which is to keep road users and vehicle users in North America safe. Ours, of course, is to keep Canadians safe.

Transport Canada, as I said, has received a number of consumer complaints regarding acceleration issues and was already investigating the floor mat issue when the floor mat recall was announced by Toyota. It already was in the middle of investigating that to determine exactly what was taking place.

Transport Canada first heard about the sticking accelerator pedal issue from Toyota on January 21, 2010. That is right, January 21, 2010, was the first time that Transport Canada was advised by Toyota that it would be recalling certain models to correct the defect, which it indicated at that time to Transport Canada there was.

In the past four years, one acceleration-related Toyota case was brought to Transport Canada's attention by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In fact, Transport Canada officials continue to gather information on this particular case on a priority basis to assess whether Toyota Canada's actions with respect to the sticking gas pedal recall are compliant with Motor Vehicle Safety Act requirements.

Failure by Toyota to issue the notice would mean the company did not meet its obligations under the act. This could expose the company to the penalties contained within the act. Whether the delay was unreasonable in Toyota notifying the regulator, of course, would be up to a court.

*Private Members' Business*

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Laframboise (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-511, which I have read.

We have an interest in this bill introduced by our Liberal colleague. We will have to work hard on this bill in committee. The current situation in the automobile industry is very complex. There are laws that apply, which the parliamentary secretary mentioned. Transport Canada reviews the complaints it receives from the public. Under current legislation, when a manufacturer finds a defect that could put the safety of the driver or the passengers at risk, the manufacturer is required to report that to Transport Canada. That is where delays can occur.

The Toyota example has been mentioned, but it could apply to any other company. Toyota still has an excellent reputation. Polls show that people who own a Toyota are very satisfied. Some of them are probably watching us. I do not think the future of Toyota is in danger.

Toyota knew about the defect in October and Transport Canada became aware of it in January. There was a delay there. Toyota says it was three months, but it is closer to four months. Whatever the number, there was still a significant delay from the time that Toyota received complaints from owners and the time that Transport Canada became aware of the defect. The majority of the owners' complaints were not sent to Transport Canada but to the dealerships that sold the vehicle.

The parliamentary secretary said that it was a case of self-regulation. Self-regulation means that the dealership must check for defects. If that is the case, it must be reported to Transport Canada. If there is no defect, the dealership can deal with any issues without informing Transport Canada and without a recall.

Toyota is based in Japan, where it has a research centre. Toyota Canada, which is an independent company, makes recommendations, receives a complaint, forwards it to senior management in North America and then passes it on to Japan. The company told us that it waits to see whether or not there are any similar complaints, which takes a few weeks.

In committee, I wondered why the company did not send all the complaints it received to Transport Canada. When we asked Transport Canada, we were told that there were 5,000 vehicle manufacturers, importers and distributors. We tend to think there are only a few companies that sell vehicles, but that is not true. There are all sorts of vehicles. Some have right-hand drive, others, left-hand drive, and so on. Transport Canada is responsible for all these vehicles. Self-regulation means that when these companies know that there is a problem, a defect, they are required to notify Transport Canada.

With new technologies, this takes time. Toyota's problem had to do with its electronic braking technology. It took several months for Toyota to discover the defect and make the famous recalls.

If I were logical and I asked every distributor and dealer to send Transport Canada a copy of the complaints it received, Transport

Canada would need to have enough staff to analyze those complaints. Knowing that Toyota's research centres in Canada and the United States are not up to snuff and that the company has to refer the problem to its high-tech research centre in Japan, we can understand the time lag.

I do not mean to blame Toyota. There are also companies in Korea and other countries; the automotive industry is a global one. American companies that sell cars in other countries are going to go through the same thing.

• (1805)

How can we create a bill guaranteeing owners that the problem will be detected quickly and recalls issued accordingly?

Toyota said that it undertook a corporate reorganization. The process will be easier and faster as a result, but as the company president said, Toyota cannot guarantee that we will get an answer in a week. These analyses have to be done. Section 10 reads as follows:

A company that manufactures, sells or imports...shall, on becoming aware of a defect...that affects or is likely to affect...safety...cause notice of the defect to be given in the prescribed manner to...the Minister—

The company has to notify Transport Canada. The bill retains “safety-related defect” and provides a definition of “safety-related defect” in clause 3. This is the defect principle. There has to be a defect before the company notifies Transport Canada and issues recalls.

Transport Canada told us that the United States has another way of doing things. The company is required to report all defects, not just defects found in the United States. They have to report all defects in all of their models around the world. That is a requirement. We do not have that in Canada. I do not see any such measure in this bill. If all defects found in a particular make of car in other countries were reported to Transport Canada, we would be more aware of what is going on in Canada and could launch investigations. Such measures are not in this bill.

That is why we agree with the bill in principle. However, the committee needs to study it. We have to bring in experts and figure out our own way to protect Quebeckers and Canadians, who trust their automakers. They love their cars. Many have bought the same make for years. They do not switch to another make just because an issue pops up once.

However, it is important to point out that we have been lucky that nobody has died. People in the United States were not so lucky; some people there died. We cannot let this kind of situation go on knowing that it can take over 90 days to report a defect. Transport Canada has to intervene more quickly.

Naturally, I would like all defects in a given company's products or in a particular make of car to be reported to Transport Canada. I would like that to be a requirement, as it is in the United States. Transport Canada will definitely receive more reports. We have to ensure that Transport Canada has the tools and human resources it needs.

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Transport Canada openly stated that it is the expert when it comes to analyzing driving systems in winter conditions. That is great. We are good at that, but I think the department should also be an expert when it comes to summer driving, when the temperature rises. The same applies to spring and fall, when it rains. That is what makes this so complex.

Sometimes we try to solve problems by using good measures, but passing legislation is not always enough. Laws were in place, and yet this still happened. We must ensure that Transport Canada has all the necessary personnel and equipment. I can understand why self-regulation began in 1971. It is the companies themselves that have the technology and the know-how to discover defects. If a government had to have the same technology as every automotive manufacturer, just imagine the research centre that the Canadian government would need. It could build its own cars and start a new line. A balance must be struck.

I thank my hon. colleague from Eglinton—Lawrence for introducing this bill. We would like to see it improved in committee, as usual, although I hope it will not be like today, because that was awful.

• (1810)

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to follow my colleague, the member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel. He and the member for Eglinton—Lawrence do an excellent job on the transport committee.

Having read the comments from the minister today basically encouraging all members to come forward with ideas, I am encouraged that we could perhaps have a compromise on a bill.

I have some observations that might be at variance with the members. As early as November of last year, when Phil Edmonston brought out his book entitled *Lemon-Aid Car Guide*, I was first at the store to buy it. I was very shocked to find that Toyota, which had basically five star recommendations on almost its whole line, although occasionally a car would drop to the four star rating, all its cars were dropped in November to four star with warnings about the company's performance and complaints. There was a warning sign as well at that time. We found out later on that there had been recalls in England on this very case.

The member for the Bloc may not be aware of this, but we became aware that NHTSA in the United States shrunk under the eight years of the George Bush administration. Since the Democrats came into power in the United States, it has yet to increase the money that was going into NHTSA.

What we essentially had was a series of regulatory authorities asleep at the switch. I think the member for Eglinton—Lawrence can agree with that, because it is not only peculiar to the auto industry, it is just generally the case that after a while regulatory agencies seem to be influenced by the people they are attempting to regulate.

Let us look for a moment at what happened in the United States. It did not take long before Toyota discovered that there was some merit in hiring one of the NHTSA investigators who used to investigate it. Toyota did that, not once, but it hired two or three people from NHTSA, the very same people who were working on its files. If that

is not a conflict for the people who were hired, I do not know what is. However, at the end of the day it appears that hiring those people was a smart move on the part of Toyota because it managed to keep the issue under wraps for that much longer. However, at the end of the day, events got ahead of themselves and Toyota was called before the United States Congress.

I just happened to be there at the time as part of a delegation from this Parliament attending the governors conference, so I had the opportunity to sit in on some of the hearings. I do not know of a time or an incident where Transport Canada has ever been in front of the problem. At least in the case of NHTSA in the United States, it has a history of at least, if it is not in front of the problem, it catches up to the problem fairly quickly. That certainly is not the case with Transport Canada.

Let us look for a moment at what happened very quickly in the United States. As soon as the international president of Toyota was called to appear before Congress, things started to happen. The event data recorders, which people who are familiar with General Motors know that General Motors has had those recorders and the readers for a number of years, did not exist in Toyota. There were no readers on North American soil as of February of this year. Since Toyota got dragged before the hearings, readers appeared within 30 days. Even Transport Canada got its first reader just a week or so after a number of us here went to a briefing at Transport Canada.

• (1815)

None of this inspired a lot of confidence, from me anyway, that the Canadian group was on top of the issue.

We set about developing our own bill while the hearings were going on here in Parliament. We took into account what the Bloc critic had to say, and he makes some very good points, and what the member for Eglinton—Lawrence had to say. The result of it is, of course, that the member for Eglinton—Lawrence has introduced Bill C-511, and I have introduced Bill C-513. The member for Eglinton—Lawrence's bill is on the priority list and is coming before us. Our party is supportive of the member for Eglinton—Lawrence's bill. We would hope that when we get the bill to committee, we will be in a position to take some of the elements from my bill and will hopefully be able to introduce them as amendments to that bill.

Perhaps the Bloc members will also be able to introduce some amendments to the bill. One in particular that the Bloc member has mentioned is a bit at variance with what the member for Eglinton—Lawrence actually has in his bill, but the Bloc member, I believe, seems to understand that we have to have safety information sent off to Transport Canada. What I mean is that we are proposing in Bill C-513 that safety information, in terms of written complaints from consumers to the manufacturer, has to end up on the manufacturer's website and on Transport Canada's website.

More important is the next category, which is service bulletins. These are scientific bulletins from the car companies themselves. Anybody who buys or reads *Lemon-Aid* will know that one of the selling points of *Lemon-Aid* is that the publishers manage to obtain service bulletins. These are technical bulletins from the companies about fixing problems that are given to the car dealers. Often, the service bulletin says to not tell the car owners; simply fix the problem. These particular bulletins are very helpful to people in Canada who want to find out about their cars. I can tell members that every couple of years, I save a lot of money by reading the service bulletins. I find one that applies to a car that I am driving. I go down to the GM dealership, and I point out that there is a service bulletin from General Motors, and bingo, they have to fix the problem.

We are suggesting in our bill that these service bulletins, from now on, will have to be sent to Transport Canada. Anybody in Canada who wants to access the website of Transport Canada will be able to see all these service bulletins.

We are not just talking about safety-related complaints that have to be sent along. We are talking about service bulletins from the manufacturers. That is a key difference between what the member is proposing and what is in our bill. I think the member from the Bloc understands that, and I think he supports that part, but time will tell.

We also suggest that information regarding the recall of any vehicle and equipment in Canada or outside Canada would have to be reported.

I am sorry, Madam Speaker, but I am just shocked at how short a timeframe we have to deal with issues. I have much more to talk about in terms of this particular issue. However, I want to applaud the member for taking the initiative. He has some very interesting points. The issue of requiring the brake override is a very crucial one. We have a provision that the information on the black box is owned by the owners of the car and has to be provided to them in a readable manner.

• (1820)

**Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am delighted to rise today in the House to debate Bill C-511, the proactive enforcement and defect accountability legislation act, also known as the PEDAL act.

The bill was authored by my hon. Liberal colleague from Eglinton—Lawrence in direct response to the federal legislative shortcomings that resulted in the consequences related to the Toyota recall. My colleague recognized that there were major holes in the legislation. These shortcomings prevented the government from doing what we expect from it, which is protect Canadians.

Currently, all responsibility is vested in the companies. They determine whether they have a safety related defect, and they determine whether they will issue a recall.

Information about their products is provided to the government, but only if specifically asked, and they determine what the government sees or does not see.

We need to take the responsibility to ensure that the safety of vehicles and Canadians is transferred to where it belongs, which is with the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. The

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PEDAL act will accomplish comprehensive improvements to the Motor Vehicle Safety Act. It will provide the Minister of Transport and his department with the information, tools, and legislative authority to protect Canadians.

The PEDAL act would mandate four major changes to the Motor Vehicle Safety Act, and I would like to summarize them briefly.

The first change deals with the definition of a safety-related defect. Presently, there is no specific definition for a safety-related defect, and therefore, manufacturers can avoid initiating a recall by claiming that the defect is not safety related. The PEDAL act will provide, once and for all, the definition of a safety-related defect to eliminate this ambiguity. This change, incidentally, was previously recommended when a review of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act was undertaken by the Department of Transport under the Liberals.

The second change to the act will create an early warning detection system that will require manufacturers to provide the minister with quarterly reports that contain domestic and foreign data related to potential safety related defects. With this information, the Department of Transport will have data that will allow it to monitor trends and complaints with a view toward addressing potential defects.

Currently, Transport Canada's intelligence is based on customer complaints addressed to the department. It receives, on average, 1,000 complaints a year, but it does not see the tens of thousands of complaints the dealers receive. This data, once compiled and analyzed, will give the department invaluable intelligence and will transform it from a reactive agency to a proactive guardian of safety. I think we would all agree that this is a desirable state of affairs.

The third major modernization the PEDAL act will introduce is new authority for the minister to order a recall. This is groundbreaking.

It comes as a surprise to many Canadians that this provision does not exist already. Yet under the current Motor Vehicle Safety Act, recalls can only be initiated by the manufacturer on a voluntary basis. We have all heard of recalls from various different companies for various different models at different times.

The fourth and final amendment of the PEDAL act proposes the installation of a brake override system on vehicles that use electronic throttle control. This system ensures that engine power is cut when the brakes are pressed, even if the accelerator pedal is stuck.

• (1825)

Bill C-511 is good legislation. All parties should support this bill. It is good public policy. If there is a way to make our laws stronger and safer, we need to act. As the Liberal critic, I support this bill and recommend that it be sent to committee for study to perhaps address some of the points that have been brought up by other hon. members.

If enacted, this bill will give the government the legislative tools it needs to better protect Canadian consumers. It will also make Canadian roads safer. I would like to congratulate my colleague for his diligent work on this issue and particularly for his focus on consumer safety.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

**Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC):** Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Bill C-511, which proposes requirements for the reporting and sharing of motor vehicle information and proposes to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act to reflect those requirements.

The safety of Canadian motorists is a top priority for the minister and for Transport Canada. The Government of Canada will work to ensure that all legal measures and the full force of Canadian law are used and that all measures are taken to ensure that Canadians are safe. We expect all vehicle manufacturers, including Toyota, to be fully accountable and transparent in identifying problems with their vehicles and to take all immediate actions necessary to ensure the safety of consumers.

In addition to sharing information, the department feels that it is important for Canadians to be able to contact us to get specific information or to express concerns. To this end, Transport Canada provides a toll-free line to Canadians who have questions about road safety, vehicles, and vehicle equipment. The department receives approximately 35,000 calls on this line annually. In addition, those Canadians who have questions or concerns about safety-related defects may contact a safety-defect investigator to ask their questions and discuss their concerns. There is an additional toll-free line to facilitate this process.

Bill C-511 is proposing changes to the Motor Vehicle Safety Act to increase the availability of information for the Canadian public on potential and current safety-related defects. The spirit of Bill C-511 is consistent with the government's belief in open communication with the public. The government values Canadians' right to have information that could potentially protect them from harm, while at the same time, it upholds the values in the Privacy Act, by which the confidential information of Canadians is protected at all times.

• (1830)

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The hon. member will be able to conclude her remarks when this comes up for debate again.

[*Translation*]

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.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

### FOOD SAFETY

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, during question period, I asked the Minister of Agriculture a couple of questions concerning the number of inspectors the CFIA had committed to hiring in a very rapid period of time. According to the CFIA vice-president, 35 are hired, which means they are in some sort of process but are not necessarily in the field inspecting, and an

additional 35 are going to be hired over the next two years. That was announced on March 23, 2010.

In the House, the minister had said that 170 people were going to be hired quite quickly. There are 35 in some sort of process, 35 to be hired over the next two years and money to hire an additional 100, but there is no mention of when exactly that will happen. Clearly, we were told that the CFIA intended to get 170 people out into the field in meat inspection and ready-to-eat meat plants.

Are the 35 that we know are in the system being trained? Are they indeed working in ready-to-eat meat plants? Are they doing that work? What kind of progress is being made on the 35 that are supposed to be hired, albeit over the next two years? What about the additional 100?

If we are talking about 35 in process, 35 to be hired over the next two years and an additional 100 beyond that, when are we going to see the total of 170 inspectors? Considering the timeframe that the CFIA vice-president has given and the rate at which the CFIA is hiring people, the 170 should materialize sometime around 2014.

That is hardly an immediate response to a need the minister identified. He said that they were on top of this and that they intended to make sure the situation was cleared up. He said the CFIA would have boots on the ground to do the inspection that needs to get done. That is not going to happen in the timeframe it is talking about.

Even the CFIA's own website as of this week shows there has been no progress on hiring the additional 35 inspectors. The CFIA is still out there looking for them. It is some sort of hiring process. There is no indication that it has hired folks and is going through the process of training them. None of those things have materialized.

Where is the commitment that the government says it has to food safety when it cannot get people hired and cannot get them through the process? If it intends to actually do this, it is incumbent upon the government to have people who will do the inspection. That has not happened.

I ask the minister again, can he clarify as to when we are going to see the inspection process at meat plants which the government said it is committed to? The money is there but there are no people. Money cannot inspect plants. Money cannot inspect food. The only thing that can inspect food are people and the CFIA has not been able to hire the people.

Either people do not want to work for the CFIA or perhaps it is just not a priority for the government because it is not actually out there recruiting people as well as it should. At the end of the day, it is about making sure there are folks on the ground who will ensure that the inspection process will be completed.

**Mr. Brian Jean (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, CPC):** Madam Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to discuss this very important issue to Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Before I get into the substance of the question, I would like to remind the hon. member across the way that if he wants more inspectors hired, he has to change his methodology. He stands in the House and asks why more inspectors are not hired. One cannot hire inspectors without money and one cannot receive money from the Government of Canada without the House agreeing to spend money.

The member and his party, the NDP, continually vote against all of this government's initiatives for food safety. He voted against our food safety agenda outlined in the Speech from the Throne. He voted against budget 2010 which provided \$13 million to hire 100 new inspectors. He wants new inspectors, yet he voted against the money authorizing this government to hire them. He voted against supplementary estimates (C) which provided the first \$8 million out of the \$75 million for the CFIA related to the Weatherill recommendations. Despite all those votes against hiring more inspectors, he is here today saying to hire more inspectors.

The good news is that this government has hired more inspectors. The government is continuing to improve Canada's food safety system. In fact, since 2006, the CFIA's inspection staff has increased by a net total of 538. That is right, CFIA's inspection staff has increased by a net total of 538 since 2006.

Additionally, our Conservative government committed to implementing all 57 recommendations of the Weatherill report. Many of the commitments required from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency have already been met by this government.

Actions taken to date have focused on prevention, on surveillance, on detection and better responses including: strengthening the CFIA's directives regarding the control of listeria in federally registered ready-to-eat meat processing plants; equipping CFIA inspectors with better tools, better technology such as laptops, cell phones and even faster network connectivity so they can get their job done better and more effectively and efficiently to keep Canada's food supply safe; updating federal-provincial-territorial protocols for managing food-borne illness outbreaks; and enhancing laboratory capacity and research into the development of rapid test methods.

The CFIA and Health Canada have also developed a brand new screening method for listeria in meat which allows for a more rapid response during food safety investigations.

Furthermore, we have launched a food safety portal on the web. This government has invested a great deal into bringing Internet connectivity, bringing the web across this country. In this case, it provides Canadians with comprehensive food safety and food-borne illness information immediately. This is good news.

Our government's record on food safety speaks for itself. The question I have for the member opposite and all of the NDP members is will they vote against the \$22 million in the estimate votes we having coming up in the House? Will he this time support food safety in Canada?

● (1835)

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Madam Speaker, this hon. member always votes for food safety for Canadians and I think that has been abundantly clear.

There is money to hire the first 70 inspectors; that is actually last year's money. That has been approved. The bottom line is the government does not have the 70 yet and the government has not done the compliance verification system, the CVS, that Ms. Weatherill said was the absolute critical component of all the things it needed to do. The commitment by the minister last fall was to have it done by January. In March it was to be done by May. In May, according to the CFIA's website and its report to the minister, we might get it by September.

Without the CVS actually being done and completed and making sure we know what it is, there is no way to know how many inspectors we actually need. The 170 may be a lowball number. We might need 207. Unless the Conservatives do the very thing that they hired the administrator to do who told them this is what they should do, and they have paid for that already, they will never know how many they need.

As for the actual number of 538, the agreement between Ms. Weatherill and the CFIA is that 170 are needed in meat inspection alone, not out there checking on cross-pollination of some sort of plant that has come from Southeast Asia, or some sort of insect that showed up in a cargo van. That is what they do, important tasks. We need 170 meat inspectors but they are not out there. There is money for at least 70 without the estimates, but the government has not been able to get it done.

My question clearly is, where is the member in getting the next 35 applicants?

● (1840)

**Mr. Brian Jean:** I can tell the member where I am, Madam Speaker. I am on my feet voting for food safety in this country when that member is sitting down. When it comes time for food safety to be voted on, I am on my feet with the other Conservative members.

Let us look at an opinion by an outsider. The OECD just ranked the food safety systems in the world. Where does Canada sit? Under the performance of this Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and this government, the OECD states that Canada is one of the best-performing countries in the 2010 Food Safety Performance World Ranking study. Its overall grade was superior. It further states that Canada is ahead of its nearest federal state neighbour, the United States, in providing national food safety programs. Again, because the CFIA provides above-average food recall services and is clear about its requirements and procedures, Canada earned a progressive grade in 2010.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I want to see the member on his feet next time it comes to voting for food safety.

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am rising on a question that I raised in the House on April 19 to do with aboriginal financial institutions.

I asked the minister why aboriginal financial institutions were not part of the loan loss reserve program. When the minister replied, he acknowledged that aboriginal financial institutions are tremendously important and went on to talk about his obvious support for the AFIs.

There is a small pilot program called the loan loss reserve, which is a financial instrument that offsets a portion of commercial lenders' potential losses and creates an incentive for the financial institutions to provide loans to businesses that would otherwise fall below the lender's standard for acceptable risk. This pilot makes this loan loss available to five financial institutions but excludes the aboriginal financial institutions.

I am raising this issue because these aboriginal financial institutions were created as a result of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. There are currently 57 aboriginal financiers providing loans to on-reserve enterprises that cannot obtain funds from regular banks. This emanates from a report that was done by APTN.

This same report talks about the fact that aboriginal banks issued over 100 million dollars' worth of loans in 2008-09. In 2009 81% of the loans were reported as current. They have been in business now for 20 years.

Alan Park, the CEO of Tribal Wi-Chi-Way-Win Capital Corporation, said that aboriginal lenders had become a success story, turning the initial \$200 million injected by the federal government into 1.3 billion dollars' worth of investments.

Part of the argument around it going out to the major banks and credit unions was that they would be able to lend more money because they have a different financial base. In fact, there have only been five loans to date by private lenders through the loan loss reserve program, only one of which has been outside the long-standing AFI mandate.

That single loan was for \$2 million, with the four remaining between \$250,000 and \$375,000, which are all well within the limits of the AFIs. Therefore, 80% of those loans provided under the loan loss reserve program were within the standard AFI loan practices.

It is clear that the \$15.5 million that was provided as loan loss guarantees to these five other lending institutions is not reaching the targeted market that the loan loss reserve program was initially set up for.

According to a report by Jorge Barrera of APTN National News, while \$15.5 million was given to the loan loss reserve program within the last year, only a little over \$3.2 million was delivered in client loans.

Not only are they lending within a group that is already available through the AFIs, they only lent out a small fraction of the money that was available to them.

The article goes on to state that this poor market penetration reflects conventional lenders' lack of motivation and the undesirability of conventional lenders to the client base. In the same period AFIs provided 1,250 loans totalling in excess of \$100 million.

It is very clear that these organizations have a very good track record. I would ask the government why there has not been an adequate answer as to why the AFIs were excluded from the loan loss reserve program.

● (1845)

**Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting, because earlier today at the aboriginal affairs committee we had Mr. Martell from the First Nations Bank of Canada.

Mr. Martell and I had a discussion about the fact that First Nations Bank was one of the five charter banks that received money under the pilot program from the government on this loan loss reserve pilot project that we are talking about here today.

Access to capital is one of the most persistent impediments to the growth of aboriginal businesses, especially on reserve. The banks, particularly the larger commercial banks, have been reluctant to lend to aboriginal businesses for a number of reasons, including section 89 of the Indian Act and the perceived lack of track record and higher risk.

A key partner in helping address this impediment is the network of aboriginal financial institutions which has played such an important role over the past 20 years. Yes, indeed, it has advanced more than 33,000 loans, totalling \$1.4 billion to aboriginal businesses. Over this period, the federal government has invested approximately \$240 million in this network to capitalize and support start-up in initial operations.

Through the financial institutions program and the access to capital program, we continue to provide approximately \$10 million every year to support these institutions and their national association, The National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association. Last year, these aboriginal financial institutions provided \$88 million in loans to 1,200 aboriginal businesses.

As the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan is aware, the loan loss reserve complements our existing programs that support the network of aboriginal financial institutions that provide smaller loans to smaller businesses.

The loan loss reserve program that we are talking about here was a pilot program that was set up to attract the larger commercial banks to what we think is the enormous potential of some of the larger aboriginal economic development opportunities. We have first nations from Membertou to Osoyoos that are embarking on impressive business and community development opportunities, and they need significant capital to make these happen.



In June of last year, our government released a new federal framework for aboriginal economic development to underline our commitment to economic development. This new framework represents a fundamental change. It reflects the significant real and growing opportunities for aboriginal people to take an unprecedented step toward becoming full participants in the economy as entrepreneurs, employers and employees.

In the coming months, we will be engaging with our partners, including the network of aboriginal financial institutions and others, to ensure that all of our programs are aligned with the framework, consistent with the Government of Canada's policy on transfer payments, and they meet the needs of aboriginal businesses and communities. In fact, officials met recently with the National Aboriginal Capital Corporate Association and have begun to discuss how the government and the network can work together to best address these needs.

Time and again, our government has reaffirmed its commitment to work with aboriginal communities to make a real difference. From infrastructure to employment to health services, we are working in partnership.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Madam Speaker, nobody is disputing the fact that it is important that capital is available to aboriginal businesses.

The parliamentary secretary said that the loan loss reserve pilot program was to enable these other major institutions to provide these larger loans. In fact, 80% of the loans they have given out to date have been well within the limits of what the AFIs themselves could provide.

What we have here, according to this article, is that:

...AFI's are being selectively disadvantaged in the marketplace through offers of loan guarantees to non-aboriginal institutions. To further add insult to injury, INAC is using aboriginal money to provide this double standard.

It goes on to say that it is difficult, if not impossible to find any true and valid justification for why the AFIs were excluded from the loan loss reserve program.

Nobody is disputing that the First Nations Bank does a very good job and is an important lending source for aboriginal enterprises, but the AFIs should have been allowed to be part of this process. They were not consulted or included and were not able to actually put their names forward on the loan loss reserve program.

I think they are just asking for a very clear and simple explanation about why they were excluded from this process. They have a track record. A number of their lending institutions are members of the AFIs and they are able to provide loans greater than \$250,000. So, why were they excluded from the loan loss reserve pilot program?

• (1850)

**Mr. John Duncan:** Madam Speaker, this was a pilot project set up by the government. It provided loan loss reserve provisions for five participants. There are 30 aboriginal financial institutions across the country. Those numbers speak for themselves.

The loan loss reserve initiative complements other activities, such as our government's support for aboriginal financial institutions which are focused more on improving access to capital for smaller aboriginal businesses.

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

The Government of Canada continues to support aboriginal financial institutions in their efforts by providing, last year and ongoing, \$88 million in loans to 1,200 aboriginal businesses each year. We will continue to work in a progressive way in this direction.

### NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

**Mr. Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Madam Speaker, back on April 23, just prior to the start of the five year review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the United Nations, I asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs the following question:

...there is a treaty banning chemical weapons and one banning biological weapons. However, so far, no similar effort has been successful to ban nuclear weapons. The danger they pose cannot be under-estimated.

Over 500 members of the Order of Canada continue to press the government in their campaign for the elimination of nuclear weapons. They have joined the UN Secretary-General in calling for the negotiation of a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

Will Canada support a nuclear weapons convention? Better still, will Canada seek a leadership position in its negotiation?

I have to say that I was disappointed in the minister's response, which ignored the key point of the question. The minister said:

...Canada indeed has played a leadership role. In fact, last week the Prime Minister was at the nuclear summit that was convened by the President of the United States in which Canada played an important role. We will also be participating quite actively in the nuclear non-proliferation discussions that will take place in a short time at the United Nations. This is the five year review plan.

Canada indeed has assumed its responsibility. I am very proud to see that we are taking that leadership role about which the member is talking.

The question that I posed remained unanswered. What is Canada's position on the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention banning all nuclear weapons?

If we look for clues as to Canada's position on this issue, we can look to the now concluded Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference .

Canadian observers at the conference, including Ernie Regehr and Douglas Roche, noted that Canada played a modest role. Perhaps they were being generous. Canada did apparently make an important suggestion for institutional reforms to the NPT process, which was opposed by the United States and which was eventually limited to the approval of a dedicated staff officer to organize NPT meetings, a small step when we consider that this important treaty has no office of its own.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

However, Canada made little reference to disarmament and no reference to the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention in its statements or work at the NPT Review Conference. While the convention was, for the first time, a subject of discussion, it did not make it into the action plan arising out of the meeting. Canada addressed two of the three pillars of the NPT in its opening statement, barely mentioning the third and key pillar of disarmament.

It should be noted that one of the key decisions arising from the NPT Review Conference was a commitment to a Middle East nuclear weapons-free zone conference in 2012. This recognizes the great success of the nuclear weapons-free zone movement around the world. Sixty-seven per cent of the world is currently covered by nuclear weapons-free zones.

Sadly, Canada is a laggard in this aspect of the disarmament movement. Canada is one of only two members of the Francophonie that is not party to a nuclear weapons-free zone, France being the other, and one of only two countries in the Americas, north, south and central America, the U.S. being the other, not party to a nuclear weapons-free zone. Canada could begin to rectify this situation by starting talks on an Arctic nuclear weapons-free zone.

There was a time when Canada was seen as a leader on questions of nuclear disarmament. Canada's decision to not develop nuclear weapons, when we clearly had the capacity, put us clearly at the forefront of this movement.

In the past, Canada's ambassadors for disarmament played prominent advocacy roles on this issue here at home and around the world. Sadly, their mandate has been diminished. Canada is now seen as making only modest contributions to this process. Perhaps that is why Canada's assessment of this year's NPT Review Conference was that it was a modest proposal.

The question remains: Does the Government of Canada have any enthusiasm for this important project, the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention?

• (1855)

**Mr. John Duncan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Canada has played a leadership role on nuclear non-proliferation, particularly through our G8 presidency this year and through our collaboration with the United States and other countries at President Obama's nuclear security summit.

On March 29 and 30, the Minister of Foreign Affairs hosted the G8 foreign ministers' meeting in Gatineau. Nuclear non-proliferation was a prominent agenda item. The minister led the negotiation of a G8 "Foreign Ministers' Statement on Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Disarmament, and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy: A Contribution to the 2010 NPT Review Conference".

The Minister of Foreign Affairs also led Canada's delegation and delivered Canada's statement at the opening of this important conference.

Canada's G8 statement helped to set the framework for discussions and to build bridges toward a clear, renewed commitment of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The review conference concluded successfully on May 28, in New York,

with consensus on a final document, including an action plan with 64 steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Among the key elements, the non-proliferation treaty commits each of its parties to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. The final document of the review conference reaffirms the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapons states to pursue nuclear disarmament and commits them to implement this undertaking.

We have seen major progress recently on disarmament. For example, the U.S. and Russia agreed to a new strategic arms reduction treaty. We know this as START. This treaty limits both sides to a maximum of 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads. This is a sharp reduction from a limit of 6,000 under the predecessor treaty. Canada commends this concrete process, which will foster a more constructive atmosphere at the non-proliferation conference.

These efforts, complemented by the entry into force of the comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are, in our view, concrete actions that will take us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

I would like to highlight the leadership of the Prime Minister on nuclear non-proliferation issues.

On April 12 and 13, the Prime Minister joined 46 leaders from other countries at President Obama's nuclear security summit.

Canada's objectives at the summit were to: underscore the seriousness of the nuclear terrorist threat; encourage states to strengthen their national nuclear security measures to enhance physical protection measures applied to nuclear material and facilities; increase international co-operation on nuclear security; endorse and contribute to President Obama's four year effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material worldwide; and, finally, ensure that the summit supports broader non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

Canada achieved its objectives at this summit. Among the specific outcomes, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico reached agreement to work together, along with the International Atomic Energy Agency, to convert the fuel in Mexico's research reactor from highly-enriched uranium to low-enriched uranium. This will enable the elimination of all the remaining highly-enriched uranium from Mexico and is an important step in advancing security and supporting Mexico's nuclear energy development.

• (1900)

**Mr. Bill Siksay:** Madam Speaker, the question still remains. What is Canada's position on the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention, a convention that would ban outright nuclear weapons?

We have done this before. We have done it in terms of a chemical weapons convention. We have done it in terms of a biological weapons convention. Both of those conventions presented significant challenges. Both of them saw other measures taken before the conventions were adopted. However, we still managed, as an international community, through multilateral negotiations, to come up with conventions that banned both chemical and biological weapons outright.

Sadly, we are not taking the same path toward banning nuclear weapons. We know that there are over 23,000 nuclear weapons on our planet today and that those constitute a significant threat to human life, that they can result in, as the NPT conference talked about, catastrophic human consequences.

The only way to secure human safety and security is to find a way to ban outright all of those nuclear weapons.

Sadly, it appears that Canada is not willing to play a role in that process. Canada could be a leader in all of this and yet it has not endorsed the secretary-general's five-point plan and it has not endorsed the model treaty that is currently in circulation. Canada could do more.

#### *Adjournment Proceedings*

**Mr. John Duncan:** Madam Speaker, Canada has done a lot. Our stature in the world is a lot greater than it was several years ago, and President Obama actually recognized that at the nuclear summit. After the tripartite arrangement with Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, the President commended this co-operation, noting:

I welcome this critical step forward, which is a signal of our strong trilateral partnership, and our shared commitment to nuclear security in North America.

Canada will continue to build on our successes at the conference on non-proliferation and at the summit to reinforce non-proliferation.

The final document represents progress toward the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. The government is moving in a direction to reduce the stockpile of all types of nuclear weapons, to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security policies and to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons, all of which will reduce the accidental use of nuclear weapons.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Denise Savoie):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:03 p.m.)

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