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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Monday, December 5, 2011

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, December 5, 2011

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

CANADA LABOUR CODE

(Bill C-307. On the Order: Private Members' Business:)

October 3, 2011—Second reading of Bill C-307, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (pregnant or nursing employees)—The member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

• (1105)

[*Translation*]

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie is not present to move the order as announced in today's notice paper. Accordingly, the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

The House is suspended until 12 p.m.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11:07 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 12 p.m.)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1200)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP) moved:

That this House urge the government to: (a) play a leadership role in tackling global climate change and ensuring Canadian jobs aren't lost as the rest of the world moves towards a new sustainable energy economy; (b) work in a leadership role at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Durban towards a binding climate change treaty with the goal of limiting average global temperature increases to 2°C; (c) recognize the real, science-based threat of global climate change, as well as respect and adhere to its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol and the Copenhagen Accord; and (d) take immediate action to lower net carbon emissions in Canada and

increase Canadian trade with our major partners in a new sustainable energy economy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending December 10, 2011, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bill.

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bill be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to share my time with the member for Terrebonne—Blainville.

I am very honoured to stand here today and debate this NDP motion on climate change and what is happening in Durban. I am proud to be here with my colleagues in the House who are clear supporters of internationally binding agreements when it comes to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and actually taking action on climate.

In question period a few weeks ago, the Minister of Natural Resources stood and responded to one of my questions. He said:

Mr. Speaker, the NDP members keep talking about the environment.

I would like to thank the minister for that observation. He is absolutely correct. We do stand up for the environment. I am proud to be here today once again standing up and talking about the environment in the House with an NDP opposition day motion that encourages the Canadian government to take a leadership role in tackling global climate change and ensuring that Canadian jobs are not lost as the rest of the world moves on toward a sustainable energy economy.

The minister pointed out that the NDP is always standing up for the environment because in his mind that cannot be done while we are also standing up for the Canadian economy. However, I believe that the environment and the economy absolutely go hand in hand, and we can work on both together.

I think the Conservative government lacks the creativity and vision to create an economic strategy that goes beyond the fossil fuel industry. This lack of creative vision and this attitude cuts short Canada's future economic possibilities and has led to a government that actually advocates and celebrates ecological destruction. We have heard its members applaud it here in the House.

Business of Supply

We in the NDP think that our economic future is also our ecological future. We want to think about the economy for the next 20 or 30 years and recognize that there is more potential for innovation and job creation in a transition to a green economy. That is the end goal.

Before I was elected, I had the opportunity to work with a group of stakeholders on designing ratepayer-funded energy efficiency plans for the province. We were in a situation where the Nova Scotia power utility realized that it was cheaper to invest aggressively in energy efficiency than it was to continue on our path of increased energy use. This was a move that was good for the environment, but it was also really good for the utility's bottom line.

When we were designing these programs, we realized we needed a line item in the budget for training, because we knew that jobs would be created as a result of these programs and we knew that there was not the capacity in the community to actually fill these roles. Therefore, there was a specific line for training to create new jobs in energy efficiency, whether in auditing or doing home retrofits.

These are good-paying jobs that we cannot ship offshore. They are jobs that are not located in one city or one region. They are jobs that are in every community across Canada, and we are missing out on that with our failure to take action on climate change. We can see how the economy and the environment do go hand in hand if we just think strategically and creatively.

The Minister of the Environment has said that Canada will not agree to any international climate commitments unless big emitters such as India and China also follow suit. On the face of it, this sounds like a compelling argument. Of course we all want China and India to come on board, absolutely, and other rapidly industrializing countries should all be included in this international effort. However, I believe that the Conservatives only use this line to confuse and to create more deadlock and delay.

It is noteworthy that this minister calls China to task for not committing to a climate plan, but at the same time threatens the United States with the idea that we will sell our bitumen to China if the U.S. will not expand Keystone. What he is saying is China is a bad country for being a major emitter, but it is a good enough country for us to sell our raw products to. I think we cannot have it both ways.

The government's intentions here are transparent. It is trying to throw a monkey wrench into the good faith negotiations of other countries that want to take action on climate. We all know that if we really want these countries to come on board, the best way to do that is to lead, show good faith and take action domestically.

• (1205)

What the Conservatives are not telling Canadians about China is interesting. China is already aggressively investing in clean energy technology in a way that our own country is not. By failing to invest here in Canada, we are missing out on these economic opportunities. We see the government actively attempting to deadlock negotiations in the international community.

Canada is being left behind because of our failure to take action on the environment. The European commission has recommended a

carbon penalty on our oil. The U.S. has ordered an environmental review of Keystone that takes into account climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. These are some of our strongest trading partners.

Canada is being punished because while other countries are moving ahead on climate, we are doing nothing. We have no plan on how to develop the oil sands. The oil sands are a precious natural resource, a resource we can use to leverage a larger transition to a green economy.

We need to go beyond thinking about the short-term and having that colony mentality, looking for the empire that will save us when we export our raw natural resources. We need to look to the next 20 to 30 years and think about our long-term energy future.

The Conservatives have absolutely no plan to make oil sands development consistent with the GHG or greenhouse gas reductions that we need to make through either technological investments or a diversification of strategy for our energy economy and for the economy of Alberta.

We need to diversify our energy economy. We need to invest equally in wind, solar and tidal energies. We need to think about how Canadian natural resources can benefit Canadians first. We need to invest aggressively in energy efficiency. We need an environment minister who understands that he is the Minister of the Environment and we need a Minister of Natural Resources who understands that he needs to advocate for all of our natural resources, not just one.

We have some mixed media reports coming out of Durban today, just an hour or so ago. Some reports say the minister has announced that Canada will formally withdraw from Kyoto and other reports say that is not in fact what he said, that what he said was that we are not going to recommit to Kyoto 2 or Kyoto plus, the next stage.

I just came from a meeting with the South African high commissioner where she laid out so eloquently what is happening on the world stage around Kyoto and Canada's involvement, Canada's active sabotaging of these international agreements.

It was eloquent and moving, and it made me quite sad to hear her first-hand account of what it is that Canada is doing and how we are failing on the national stage. She said that the worse thing that could happen in Durban is that Kyoto fails to exist, and with Canada passively sitting by and not doing anything, and with reports that Canada is actually pulling out, it just makes things worse.

She talked about how it would have been better for members and parties to the Kyoto protocol to drag their feet and maybe not even quite live up to the expectations than to have people pulling out altogether.

She talked about the equity involved internationally and how this is not something we can leave to developing countries or countries in the global south. They are not historic emitters. Countries like Canada are, so we need fair and equal but differentiated targets when it comes to countries around the world entering into these agreements if we are to have any success at all.

Business of Supply

I am proud to have brought this motion forward today. I am saddened to see Canada's international reputation on this issue, but I am hopeful that the Conservatives are listening to this today and that they will take heed because there is always time to do the right thing.

• (1210)

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad my colleague mentioned one thing that is key to this entire debate, and that is real action on climate change and Canada's actual leadership, being a leader in climate change mitigation and climate change strategy.

As someone who has worked with clean energy technologies for numerous years, I find it deeply disappointing that my colleague is not recognizing Canada's role in being a leader in developing clean energy technologies which are shared around the world.

When we talk about action, we should be talking about things like the billions and billions of dollars that our country has invested both industrially and through governments to support clean energy technologies. We are a leader in this areas.

It is very disappointing that the hon. member denigrates our country's reputation by listening to things that are not action focused and only rhetoric.

My question to her is this. After our government has spent billions of dollars on clean energy tech, after we have reduced our greenhouse gas emissions, after we are known internationally as a leader, three-quarters of our electricity production is produced by forces that do not produce greenhouse gas emissions. What is real action in her mind that will not damage our economy?

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for her question, but I would like to correct her. We have not reduced our greenhouse gas emissions. They have, in fact, gone up.

I do not think that the Minister of the Environment needs any more help denigrating Canada's good name from me. There is a full page ad in *The Globe and Mail* from South African leaders stating that, in the past, Canada was a leader that came to South Africa and dealt with apartheid. However, in 2011, Canada comes to South Africa and actually tries to disrupt the negotiations that are happening on climate change. I hope the Conservatives are not taking something like that lightly. It was an incredible move for them to point out to us what we are doing.

When it comes to the investments that the Conservatives say they are putting into green technologies, it is a shell game. We are not meeting our greenhouse gas emission reductions. The Commissioner of the Environment has said as much. It is all smoke and mirrors with the them.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that while the government allocated \$9.2 billion in funds, it actually reduced its greenhouse gas emission targets by 90%.

I want to point out what is at stake.

Climate change means more extreme weather and impacts on people. It was a year of extremes in the United States as well as in

southern Canada with 14 separate weather events which caused losses of \$1 billion or more each. Extreme drought affected parts of the southern United States. The drought region made an exceptional summer for Texas, with a mean temperature 3°C above the long-term average and the highest temperature recorded for any state. This had impacts on agriculture, water, wildfires and dust storms. In a marked contrast, January to October was the wettest period in the northeast of the U.S. and the province of Quebec.

Climate change means more extreme events and more impacts on people.

• (1215)

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, my colleague pointed out some important information that I was not able to cover in my speech. Also, she is right to point out that we have reduced our greenhouse gas emission goals by 90%, but we are not going to meet them.

The member also talked about extreme weather. I have a friend, Sheila Zurbrigg, who is a professor at the medical school in Dalhousie University. She does the history of famine, which is a very interesting topic. She started to look at projections of what climate change would do to our planet when it comes to famine. When she talks about it, one can see in her eyes how urgent it is. She talks about an entirely new paradigm for this planet when it comes to famine because of the extreme weather. She knows how urgent it is. If they could hear the passion in her voice, the Conservatives would start to understand as well.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Charmaine Borg (Terrebonne—Blainville, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in this House to represent young Canadians, who seem to have been forgotten by this government. I am proud to talk about issues that are close to my heart and to the hearts of my constituents. These issues are already affecting our communities and are threatening our future.

For over 30 years, hundreds of publications have been highlighting the various consequences of our ancestors' choices. For over 30 years, an international movement has been organized around the idea of improving our living conditions to give future generations the gift of a balanced and healthy environment. A number of national and international initiatives have been presented, approved and ratified by previous governments, which has enabled Canada to build a reputation as an international environmental leader.

Our reputation has really been tested since this Conservative government was elected. The government has repeatedly denied and refused to listen to the facts, studies and truths about climate change. I am appalled that a self-proclaimed responsible government is endangering its own children's future by denying well-documented scientific facts.

Business of Supply

Many international experts agree on a number of facts that are evident when we look at the effects that have been directly experienced by Canadians. In Canada, temperatures have already increased by 1.3°C over the past 60 years. This has led to increased flooding in Quebec, for example, and the costs associated with these tragedies keep increasing as well. Something else that can affect the whole country is the transformation of seasonal landscapes. Heavy equipment operators, who transport large loads and equipment to support the economy in Canada's north, have noted that they are able to use ice roads for much shorter periods. Thousands of Canadians depend on these roads to receive essential commodities. A young Inuit man even went to Durban to talk about the consequences of climate change. These effects are threatening Canadians' lives. This many effects cannot be a lie.

The many disasters that have been happening outside Canada also attest to the consequences of climate change: the devastating fires in Russia, major floods in Thailand, increasingly extreme droughts in Africa, increasingly violent hurricanes in coastal regions, and the melting glaciers in Greenland, which will speed up the rise in global temperatures and the rise of sea levels. Concrete examples from around the globe support what scientists are saying. When we do not see these things with our own eyes, it is easy to ignore the facts or try to explain them all individually, without connecting the dots between them.

More and more Canadians need to use their cars, because the absence of a national transit strategy or green alternatives that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions is only making matters worse.

These data are not being invented by political lobby groups. More and more independent experts have condemned this government's failure to act and its laissez-faire attitude. Not only did the Conservatives fire Environment Canada experts who could have produced excellent scientific data specific to our needs, but they also like to ignore all science when it does not serve their purposes. That is what happened with Bill C-10, which is completely irresponsible. To young people, climate change is clearly not just a political theory, but rather a reality they need to face immediately in order to reduce the negative impact it will have on their future.

The Conservatives have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that they have failed when it comes to environmental vision and leadership. What is surprising, however, is that they are not taking advantage of this opportunity for Canada to become a global leader in green power production, given that climate change affects everyone. This economic vision would guarantee a future for our businesses and for Canadians, since we would be able to meet the rising global demand while creating thousands of well-paid jobs.

Unfortunately, with the end of government subsidies for programs like eco-energy after just one year, the small and medium businesses are the ones taking a direct hit. Many of my constituents will not have the opportunity to benefit from those subsidies. However, the biggest failure is that Canada has been alienating itself from its economic allies for the past few years. The hope for international co-operation, in which Canada would lead by example, is fading after the many fossil awards we have been winning these past few years.

My constituents have sent me hundreds of reply cards from my householders indicating how important the environment and

international leadership are to them. They deplore Canada's new reputation, which does not reflect their many efforts and numerous accomplishments. They simply do not understand why individuals can be prepared to take action but the government is not willing to support them. The people of Terrebonne, Blainville and Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines are worried about the state of our environment.

• (1220)

In each of those towns that I proudly represent, we can easily find agencies, businesses and citizens' groups that struggle daily to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but more than anything, we find people who have taken their future into their own hands in order to ensure a better future for their children.

I would like to highlight the work of Compost Ste-Anne, a not-for-profit organization that helps the Town of Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines reduce its waste while creating jobs. That organization is celebrating its 10th anniversary today.

Young people are also showing leadership by becoming more informed and understanding the impact of their actions. Students from the Collège Saint-Sacrement are contributing to the environmental initiative in my region by setting up a sorting centre at their school. This summer, the young people from Terrebonne formed an environmental patrol that went door to door to inform families about how to protect their environment, how to recycle and how to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Even businesses in my region understand that a healthy environment is essential to a vibrant economy. That is why Tricentris obtained LEED certification.

The environment is such an important issue in my riding that people from one neighbourhood in Blainville fought to stop trees from being cut down in a wetland because they understand that our ecosystem needs those trees.

I have mentioned just a few of my constituents' initiatives. These people are committed to saving our planet because they realize there is a significant problem. The young patrollers and the Saint-Sacrement environmental committee know that we must take action now or our generation will inherit a massive problem. None of these people understand why their government is not on board with these initiatives. On the contrary, the government has decided to ignore the problems and to work against initiatives taken by the people.

Young people are increasingly cynical about politics, but I am proud to see that those in my riding realize that they can take their future into their own hands. I believe that it is my duty to support them during my term of office.

Business of Supply

That is why I am pleased to represent the NDP, which has the courage to put forward bold environmental solutions to secure our economic future and offer Canadians an even more promising path: a path that recognizes the responsibility of the people's representatives towards youth and future generations; a path that recognizes the need to act now in order to lessen the economic and environmental burden that will be placed on my generation and those to come; a path that ensures that industry and the private sector work together to ensure a transition towards a clean environment and a green economy that is not dependent on fossil fuels.

In short, the Conservatives' lack of vision and responsibility is punitive for our children. The government is acting like an absent parent who does not take his or her responsibilities seriously. It is time to restore hope to future generations.

We need practical, science-based, fair, ambitious and binding legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We will not reach our targets with good faith and promises about taking action in the future, which is what this government is doing. It is time to revive the climate change accountability bill.

We need carbon emission regulations that will provide economic motivation for reductions to ensure that we can reach the targets to which we have made committed international commitments.

We need money to make this transition to a greener economy. It can be done if we make major emitters pay higher taxes and stop subsidizing the oil sector, the richest sector in Canada.

We must remain ahead of the game in order to take advantage of the considerable economic benefits resulting from the inevitable transition to a green economy. In the next 50 years, the oil sands resources will be depleted. We must build sustainable industries that will create more and more jobs across Canada. We must make long-term investments in programs such as the eco-energy initiative in order to motivate Canadians to decrease their energy consumption.

We must take action that reaches beyond policies and laws—*not* like the Liberals, who gave us the Kyoto protocol but, in the long term, failed to honour the commitments they made in that regard.

Finally, we must work together. We must recognize that we have an international responsibility since our choices influence other nations. We are all in this fight together. Young Canadians are growing up in a country that is currently seen by the world as a pariah because of the Liberals' broken promises and this government's complete lack of action.

It is time to act courageously. It is time to help Canadians regain their pride in their country. It is time this government recognized that science is right, that excellent solutions exist and that action will drive the economy and provide more sustainable jobs for future generations.

• (1225)

[*English*]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, let us talk about action.

My colleague opposite spoke about a legacy for our children. This weekend, in the NDP leadership debates, the candidates spoke about

a carbon tax. Once again, the NDP has brought forth an economic policy that was not costed and not thought through with regard to long-term economic legitimacy or a legacy for our children.

One of my colleagues opposite also spoke earlier about clean energy tech investments being a shell game. Let us look at the tangible actions that have come out of our investments in clean energy tech. I would like my colleague opposite to answer the question, how is this a shell game? How are investments in R and D that reduced by 39% the per barrel GHG emissions for oil produced in our oil sands between 1990 and 2008 a shell game? How is R and D in geothermal heat, which is a lower-emission alternative to natural gas, a shell game? How is water treatment with respect to fresh water and enhancement of water recycling systems a shell game?

At the end of the day, our country is a leader in clean energy tech and in environmental stewardship. Please explain this.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Charmaine Borg: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her question. This government insists that we must choose between the economy and the environment. However, it does not have to be a choice. We can combine the two things. We can invest in green energy. We are not currently doing so. We do not necessarily have to choose one or the other. We do not have to decide whether to invest in the economy or in the environment. In my opinion, the two go hand in hand.

[*English*]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the legacy the government will leave is potentially a \$21 billion to \$43 billion adaptation debt by 2050, annually.

Severe drought developed in parts of east Africa in late 2010 and continued through most of 2011. The most severely affected area encompassed parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The humanitarian impacts of the drought were severe, especially in Somalia. They included significant famine and large-scale displacement of population.

The UN estimated that 13 million people required humanitarian aid. A camp in Kenya had 400,000 people, most of whom were from Somalia. Our office helped bring a true hero, Dr. Hawa Abdi, to Canada to tell her story about the hospital she built on the land and the over 100,000 refugees she cares for daily.

In Africa, climate change means the difference between life and death.

The government has an opportunity to help prevent drought by taking action on climate change.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Ms. Charmaine Borg: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her comments. Climate change is having significant and devastating effects on other countries. We cannot think that our actions do not influence other countries. As I said in my speech, what we do not only influences our neighbours but also has a direct impact on them. Similarly, greenhouse gases produced by other countries affect us. Everyone in the international community must implement these measures. That is why these negotiations are so important and why we are proposing this motion today.

• (1230)

[English]

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague and my colleague from Halifax, for leading the charge in this debate.

I think the government has completely dropped the ball on this and is disappointing Canadians. The government is choosing to speak for a small segment of the oil industry rather than for Canadians at large.

According to the International Energy Commission, CO₂ emissions in Canada went up 20% between 1990 and 2009. I would like my colleague to comment on how the NDP's plan for a cap and trade, something that we have all committed to and have campaigned on for a long time, might help reduce these really gross levels of CO₂ emissions.

[Translation]

Ms. Charmaine Borg: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. The NDP's plan is very important. At some point, we need to tell the big polluters that we have had enough. We need to give them ways to reduce pollution. We must be demanding and not encourage a laissez-faire attitude where everyone does as they see fit. We must take real action and tell businesses and big polluters that enough is enough. We have a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today on a very important issue. I am going to start by talking about Canada's role in this.

It has been deeply disappointing to me as a young Canadian to hear the opposition parties denigrate our country and our reputation in this area. It is false to say that, because we are taking tangible action at home, we are not leaders. We have made billions of dollars in investments and we have seen great improvement in our technology. This commitment is not just from our government, but also from all industry sectors. Our government has taken a strong action-focused approach to produce reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. We have already started to see those results at home. More importantly, we are going to be doing this in such a way that our economy will not suffer.

The opposition talks about the need to balance the economy with the environment, yet I notice that it has no plans to do so. When opposition members talk about economic instruments to do this, they never talk about the cost or the long-term effects on our children. We

can manage our environment. We can have environmental stewardship while having economic sustainability. That is where real action-focused results come into play and that is what our government is doing.

I would like to take the opportunity to present, once again, the Government of Canada's sector-by-sector strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change. It is a national plan with a strong corresponding international component. We believe the best way to achieve results on climate change management is to better integrate our environmental objectives into Canada's economic structure. It is one way to maximize our competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global field.

There is no question our domestic businesses can be more productive and more efficient than ever while meeting our greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 17% below 2005 levels by 2020. We have aligned this target with that of the United States. Given the degree of integration within the North American economy, we will align our approaches to reducing emissions in a manner appropriate to the Canadian context.

One of the key pieces to our sector-by-sector approach is the new emissions regulations for cars and trucks. This is tangible action. Canada has already completed standards for regulating GHGs from new passenger cars and light trucks for the 2011 through 2016 model years, aligning with the U.S. on a common North American approach.

We have also issued a notice of intent to continue to develop more stringent standards for new cars in model year 2017 and beyond, working closely with the United States. Again, we are making sure that our industrial partners, stakeholders within the economy and international trading partners are included in the dialogue so that we can achieve real action while ensuring economic sustainability.

We are taking action in the area of electricity generated from coal-fired plants. In August, our government published new draft electricity regulations in the *Canada Gazette*, the result of extensive discussion with industry, provinces and stakeholders.

Our renewable fuel standards have mandated a 5% ethanol content for gasoline used by cars and trucks and a 2% average renewable fuel content in diesel fuel and heating oil. These regulations are one element of our broader renewable fuels strategy. They will bring significant environmental benefits to our country.

Clean and renewable energy has been a central focus in the government's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The various eco-energy initiatives of this government are helping to develop clean and efficient energy. My colleagues opposite spoke about this earlier today; however, they have consistently voted against these measures in our budget.

Business of Supply

The eco-energy initiatives facilitate research and development in clean energy and renewables. The eco-energy efficiency initiative will make the housing, building and transportation industries more energy efficient and increase energy performance. The eco-energy retrofit homes program is helping Canadians to make energy-efficient home renovations.

In addition, we have invested another \$40 million in Sustainable Development Technology Canada for the commercialization of clean technologies. This fund is becoming self-sustainable thanks to industry commercialized technologies that make tangible benefits to our environment in Canada. We are exporting this technology and seeing the growth of clean energy tech industry here at home.

• (1235)

As of 2010, the energy efficiency regulations' minimum energy performance standards have resulted in an annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 26 megatons.

Through the eco-energy for renewable power program, we will see \$1.5 billion in investments over the next 10 years to support our renewable energy industry. The eco-energy for biofuels program will provide production incentives to producers of cleaner renewable fuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel.

Our investments through the clean energy fund, eco-energy technology initiative and carbon capture and storage projects are helping to position Canada as a producer of clean, reliable electricity for decades to come, again, measures that the opposition continues to vote against in our budgets.

Last month, our government also announced that we will spend over \$148 million over the next five years to help our country adapt to climate change. This funding will help us frame credible, science based responses to the impacts of climate change here at home. This funding builds on the \$85 million that we have already spent over the past four years to help provinces, territories, municipalities and others develop important strategies for domestic adaptation to climate change.

The government made another important announcement for the environment last month. In recognition of the important work being carried out to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality since 2006 through the clean air regulatory agenda, we announced that over the next five years our government will invest a further \$600 million in the clean air regulatory agenda. This investment in the clean air agenda will help us to identify emerging air quality issues, measure and monitor the status of existing ones and evaluate action focused solutions that ensure that our economy is stable. It ensures that Canadians will literally breathe easier.

At the same time as we are focused on the long term, we are not neglecting the shorter term opportunities to address climate change here at home. For example, we are looking at ways to reduce soot, or black carbon, methane and ozone, which are short-lived climate forcers. Reductions of these climate forcers produce near-term benefits for the climate, particularly in the Arctic. We are also doing this work collaboratively with our partners in the United States, Mexico and elsewhere.

Our approach, along with the work done by the provinces, has brought us 25% of the way to reaching our 2020 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, action-focused results.

It is work that complements a variety of existing regulatory and international efforts and holds the promise of some significant results.

It is also important that the reality of climate change be well understood and proactively managed. Our government firmly believes that, on the international front, only an agreement that includes all major emitters can deliver the greatest impact in addressing climate change. Canada is engaged at the international negotiations in South Africa in developing a strategic response to climate change. It is a question of enlightened self-interest. If we want Canada to meet the environmental challenges ahead, we need to help others do the same.

That is why Canada has stepped up with its fair share of climate change funding for developing countries, something that we pledge to deliver under the Copenhagen accord. We have already provided \$400 million in fast-start financing in 2010-11 to help the world's poorest and most vulnerable nations develop clean energy options, address the problems caused by deforestation and boost sustainable agriculture. In turn, this funding reinforces our \$100 million contribution in the 2008-09 World Bank pilot program on climate resilience.

In other words, we have implemented a proactive climate change action plan on domestic and international fronts, one that is tailored to our country's specific needs but based on our commitments at recent UN climate change summits in Copenhagen and in Cancun.

Canada's position is very simple: We will only support climate change agreements that are signed and ratified by all major emitters because the reality is that we are an integrated global economy and we need to be cognizant of that fact for our children. It is a straightforward, practical approach.

We have already declared that, however acute the international pressure, we will not agree to a second commitment period under the Kyoto protocol. The Kyoto protocol does not meet our simple criteria. It does not include targets for all of the world's greenhouse gas emitters. It ultimately covers less than 30% of global emissions. This is not what we need to do to achieve a global international binding commitment. We can do better than this. This is the way forward that has been discussed in the Copenhagen accord and in the Cancun agreements, which we are committed to continuing.

Business of Supply

● (1240)

The agreements reached in Cancun a year ago established a workable template for continuous improvement in the future. Establishing a program to implement agreements is a major focus of the negotiations that are taking place right now in Durban, South Africa. Canada, led by our Minister of the Environment, Peter Kent, is playing an active and constructive role in these negotiations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. I would like to remind the member not to refer to any member of this chamber by their given name.

Ms. Michelle Rempel: The reality is that Canada emits only 2% of the world's total emissions. That is why we need to work hard to get the 98% covered by a new agreement. Kyoto does not do that, never did that and cannot do that in the future. We need a new agreement that is fair, effective and applies to all major emitters to see real change.

This is not an easy task. However, we do not shy away from difficult tasks and we are not swayed by pressure and criticism from those who want to retain the status quo. The status quo was not good enough domestically, which is why we have established a strong regulatory approach to addressing climate change.

The status quo of Kyoto is not good enough on the international front. That is why Canada is showing brave leadership to address the reality of international climate change actions. If they are to be effective, they must include all major emitters, including the United States and China.

Currently, the 37 countries, plus the European community, that have commitments under the Kyoto protocol represent less than one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions. Two of the world's most significant GHG emitters, China and the U.S., are currently responsible for close to 40% of global emissions and yet China and the United States are not parties to the Kyoto protocol and have no international legally binding emissions reductions commitments.

What is more, it is expected that China and other emerging economies will be responsible for almost all future growth in emissions and are expected to be responsible for about two-thirds of global emissions by 2020. As such, it will be essential for ensuring sustainable global development that major emerging economies take effective action now and in the future to mitigate emissions growth, as their economies grow.

The fact that the New Democrats and the Liberals have stubbornly adopted a nothing-but-Kyoto approach just shows that neither party is willing to face reality. When they signed on to Kyoto, the Liberals privately knew that they could not meet Kyoto's emissions targets.

Eddie Goldenberg, one of prime minister Jean Chrétien's former aides, revealed that the Liberals went ahead to the Kyoto protocol on climate change even though they knew there was a good chance Canada would not be able to meet its goals for pollution reduction. In a speech prepared for the Canadian Club of London, Ontario, and reported by the *Toronto Star* in 2007, Mr. Goldenberg said:

Nor was the government itself even ready at the time with what had to be done. The Kyoto targets were extremely ambitious and it was very possible that short-term deadlines would at the end of the day have to be extended.

Mr. Chrétien's ego wrote cheques that his party could not cash.

Then there is the NDP. Never having been in government, the NDP has often been the party asking questions and rarely the party answering them. That is convenient for the NDP. It does not need to answer the tough questions on its nothing-but-Kyoto policy, questions like these: how many thousands of Canadian jobs would be lost as Canada hopelessly tries to meet unachievable Kyoto targets? If Canada signs on to a second Kyoto commitment period, how many billions of dollars in penalties will Canada have to pay for not meeting our unrealistic targets? Those countries producing over two-thirds of the world's greenhouse gas emissions have no obligations under Kyoto. How many megatons of greenhouse gases will be emitted by non-Kyoto parties? How much will these rise before the NDP realizes that Kyoto is not working?

This government is willing to ask the serious questions and deal with realistic achievable plans that involve all of our stakeholder groups across this country and internationally. Unlike the Liberals, we will not enter into agreements that we have no intention of keeping, and unlike the NDP, we base our plans on science and on reality.

As we continue this debate today, I want to ensure that what we talk about here is action-focused, that we talk about the realities that Canada has at home and about the economic sustainability factors that we need to look at for our children. When we are talking about the debate on how we will manage our country, our greenhouses, et cetera, for our children, we also need to ask how we can do this sustainably and how we can do this in such a way that we can achieve real action.

I am proud to say that our government's plan can do this, it will do this and we will continue moving forward as an international leader.

● (1245)

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that clean air agenda the parliamentary secretary talked about does not really deal with climate, in light of the fact that South African leaders said,

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“Canada, you were once considered a leader on global issues like human rights and environmental protection. Today you're home to polluting tar sands oil, speeding the dangerous effects of climate change”, in light of the fact that today China said that it was willing to enter into legally binding agreements, in light of the fact that the Conservative Senate killed the NDP climate change accountability act, in light of the fact that the government continues to give billions in tax breaks to fossil fuel companies, in light of the fact that the government has failed to renew the successful eco-energy renewable power program and in light of the fact that Canada is being outspent per capita 18:1 on renewable investments by the U.S., does the member actually believe any of the talking points that she has been sent here to deliver?

Ms. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, as someone who has worked with clean energy technology and as someone who works in a province and in a country where our energy sector provides hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of funding for social programs, I cannot accept my colleague's criticism of our country as not being an international leader in environmental stewardship. Our country operates in one of the most stringent environmental regulatory frameworks in the world. That is a fact. That is not a talking point. We are a leader in this. We also are one of the most socially responsible producers of energy. We are one of the freest countries in the world.

The fact that we are being criticized and the opposition is accepting this criticism against our country is shameful. When we look at what our government has done since 2006 as opposed to previous Liberal governments, previous governments that did not do anything, we see actual action occurring. We are seeing a reduction in almost every sector. We are seeing reductions in our transportation sector where we put in regulations this year. We are seeing reductions in our electricity production sector.

These are not talking points. This is reality. When will the opposition wake up to that?

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I agree with almost nothing the parliamentary secretary said.

After a decade of effective work with the provinces, the public and industry, the Liberal government made huge progress and emissions actually went down in 2005 during an economic boom. The reform party tried to block those moves every step of the way. Unfortunately, I am hearing the very same propaganda from the parliamentary secretary that we heard from the reform party over the years.

In terms of setting goals, I would hope the member has set goals for herself that it might be possible that she would not meet. However, by aiming high, we achieve more than if we do not set goals.

In this much lauded funding that the government is announcing, shamefully, because it was announced before, there is nothing new. Half of it is loans and the other half is a redirection of important international aid from other funding that the government had already committed to.

Could the parliamentary secretary please tell us of any new dollars going into the climate fund?

● (1250)

Ms. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's question allows me to speak to the profoundly shameful history of the Liberal government's management of both our economy and our energy sector.

I will talk about the national energy plan that cost hundreds of thousands of jobs and a generational impact on western Canadians. I will talk about the Kyoto protocol that the Liberal government signed on to with no financial planning. I will talk about the dollars. There was absolutely no discussion on the cost of the Kyoto protocol to our economy or to implementing it. I will talk about the green shift, a carbon tax that would be a tax on everything with no cognizance of our economy's sustainable future.

I am so proud to stand here today and say that our country is a leader in environmental stewardship. We are a leader in putting regulations in place that will ensure the sustainability of our environment and, not only that, to monitor them and enforce them to ensure that funding is provided for clean energy technology to see the commercialization of new technologies, which will see a green economy develop in our country in the future.

Those are the things that our government stands for, is proud of and on which we are taking real action.

Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP wants us to believe that we can grow the economy by Canada assuming the full cost of decarbonizing its own economy while assuming the additional costs of decarbonizing other global economies and simultaneously boosting taxes on Canadian companies and consumers. I do not know about other members, but to me, not growing the economy sounds like a recipe for disaster. That is why the United States never signed on to Kyoto. It is why the EU is backing away from further action under Kyoto. They recognize that everyone in the global economy has to be involved. That is why this country put its leadership behind the Copenhagen process, the only global process that has a real prospect of being able to grow our economies while improving global climate.

Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment like to answer the question about Canada's global leadership under Copenhagen?

Ms. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question gives me an opportunity to highlight, once again, the fact that our country is a leader in environmental sustainability and in dealing with climate change in a way that we are going to see real results.

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Our government's approach, which includes a sector-by-sector regulatory approach, is designed to ensure our economic sustainability and, as he mentioned, see tangible results with regard to greenhouse gas emissions. The first sector we looked at was the transportation sector. We did that because we know it is a sector that creates a large amount of greenhouse gas emissions. We went forward with these regulations through a consultative process to find out how we could actually implement this while ensuring that our economy is not competitively disadvantaged. We are doing the same thing right now with our electricity sector. We are doing this sector by sector because we want to make sure that we are achieving those tangible results.

With regard to the question about economic sustainability, this is something that cannot be lost. It is easy to gloss over. We have heard it in the opposition rhetoric today. When we are looking at binding commitments and agreements in the future, we need to ensure that our approaches are similar to those being taken in the Copenhagen accord. Those approaches ensure that all emitters are on board and working toward the same goal and that our economy is sustained.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what spectacular stickhandling. Congratulations. Honestly, I have never heard anything quite like that.

I have a question. Last week, I saw, with my own eyes, members on the other side applaud when it was announced that Canada had once again received a fossil award.

What does my colleague think about that?

• (1255)

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I cannot support bringing into the House any sort of award that is designed to denigrate this country. This country is a leader in the world, period. The real award that we should be talking about is the fact that our country in a global recession sits atop of the G7 with regard to economic growth. We have seen over 600,000 net new jobs created. We are doing that at the same time as we are protecting our environment. That is an award we should be proud of. That is an award the opposition should be bringing forward.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, where is the credible plan? Where are the science-based targets? Right now the government can only get us 25% of the way there. How is it going to get the remaining 75%?

I would like to know if the hon. member truly appreciates what climate change will mean in Canada. There will be more extreme weather events. A rise in sea levels will affect Vancouver and the Hudson Bay lowlands. Lower Great Lakes levels will impact shipping. An increased frequency and severity of heatwaves will impact the health of Canadians. The melting permafrost will have an impact on infrastructure and housing in the north.

We do not inherit the environment from our parents; we borrow it from our grandchildren.

Ms. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased that my colleague opposite brought up the topic of climate change adaptation. This is one area where our government has been more

than committed with regard to funding, both measures that are designed to mitigate it, but more importantly, designed to produce the research which develops an understanding of it.

What is more unfortunate is that the opposition parties continue to vote against our budgetary measures for climate change adaptation.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by sharing a story about a young woman who was forced to give up farming in southeast Asia. The rising sea level meant that saline water had stopped crops from growing in her fields. As a result, her husband was forced to leave their village to look for work in the forest where he was killed by a tiger. Her husband's family then sent her back to live with her family. Her family's home was subsequently destroyed by a hurricane. Thankfully, the family stayed alive by living on an embankment for a month. Now the monsoons are changing and new diseases are coming. She understands that these changes are not acts of god, but rather are caused by other countries with big factories and smoke.

When parliamentarians from the Commonwealth gathered for five days in London in 2009, she asked all of us big important people to please do justice for them; there was no water to drink and people were leaving their villages. She said, "Climate change is deep down in my heart painful".

I spent the last 20 years of my life studying climate change, particularly the impact of climate change on human health. I had the privilege of serving as lead author on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for two reports and consulting to Environment Canada's climate adaptation and impacts research group for many years. However, it is that young woman's words that haunt me every day.

It is for these reasons that I spent four months building the first ever all-party climate change caucus on Parliament Hill. I hope all parliamentarians, as well people who are watching this debate, are encouraged by this news as we are enormously excited about the prospects. This morning the climate change caucus had the privilege of listening to the South African high commissioner. We thank her for her time and effort.

Climate change is our most pressing environmental issue, perhaps the defining issue of our generation. It will profoundly affect our economy, health, lifestyles and social well-being. It requires moral responsibility and intergenerational responsibility. How we respond will define the world our children and their descendants grow up in.

Canadians know about climate change. We have had our climate change wake-up calls: the 1998 ice storm, which cost \$5.4 billion; the 1996 Saguenay flood, which cost \$1.7 billion; the 1991 Calgary hail storm, which cost \$884 million; and the 1997 Red River flood, which cost \$817 million. Those are just a few extreme weather events.

Today in the Canadian Arctic, permafrost is warming. The annual thaw layer is deepening and damaging infrastructure. In British Columbia, glaciers are retreating at rates not seen in the last 8,000 years. On the Prairies, lake and river levels are lowering in summer and fall and are impacting agriculture. In Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, sea level rise and increased storminess are accelerating coastal and dune erosion.

As a result of climate change around the world, we see dwindling fish stocks in the Atlantic and other oceans, encroaching deserts in northern Nigeria, flooding lowlands in Bangladesh, shrinking rain forests in Asia and the Pacific, and rising sea levels around the Maldives which lie only 1.5 metres above sea level.

In the Maldives, weather patterns are shifting. Fishing is poor and people are starting to relocate. There, sustainable development means climate-proof development. After the 2004 tsunami, 16 sewer systems were built, but there was no money for maintenance and 16 islands were bankrupted. As a result, the Maldives will be carbon neutral in 10 years and will invest in tomorrow's technology, not yesterday's diesel. Even these actions will not guarantee its future as its tomorrow will in part depend on international climate negotiations today.

Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it is also a human rights issue: the right to live. Climate change is also an international security issue and a justice issue; that is, the ones who are suffering most had the least responsibility for it.

We must listen to leaders of small island states who remind us that climate change threatens their very existence. Recently, the island nation of Kiribati became the first country to declare that climate change is rendering its territory uninhabitable and asked for help to evacuate its population.

• (1300)

In any struggle, it is important to listen to the front lines. In the case of climate change, they are aboriginal peoples, those living in low-lying states and those living in the Canadian Arctic. If people are being meaningfully impacted by climate change, they should be meaningfully involved in negotiations. Governments must be accountable to those who are impacted. Tragically, Kiribati and the Maldives are the canaries in the coal mine. If the international community cannot save the front line first, it will not be able to save itself down the line.

Globally, this year's floods that devastated Colombia, Pakistan and Venezuela, and the wildfires that gripped Russia are more climate change wake-up calls. There will be more extreme events, worse impacts, and no country will be exempt.

Yet, despite this year's weather warnings, the government failed to even mention climate change in the throne speech. Sadly, at the UN climate talks, my beloved Canada, which once had a reputation as a green country, wins fossil awards for being a follower instead of a leader on the world stage. Canada has won fossil awards three of the first four days at COP 17 in Durban for signalling pullout of Kyoto and actually influencing other countries to do the same. The failure to win a fourth award was the result of no award being offered on Thursday.

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Canadians should be highly critical of the government's abdication of leadership on issues related to climate change, specifically: its performance in meeting international climate commitments; setting science-based emissions targets; developing incentives for low-carbon technologies; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; pricing carbon; and putting in place adaptation measures necessary to respond to the risks of climate change.

Comprehensive climate actions include developing a cap and trade system, eliminating subsidies for dirty energy, and providing incentives for low-carbon technologies and infrastructure investments.

Before I discuss what is needed in Durban, let me address Liberal action on climate change.

The Liberal government was up against the Conservative-Reform alliance that did not even believe in the science of climate change and threw up every conceivable roadblock. For example, Liberals attempted to hold a debate in the House of Commons to discuss the merits of the Kyoto protocol, but the party of the members opposite, many of whom are now ministers, filibustered and slowed down progress considerably.

While Kyoto was signed in 1997, it was not ratified until 2002. In 2005, the Liberal government introduced project green, a comprehensive plan developed with stakeholders across the country to put Canada on the right track to meet commitments. The Conservatives killed the plan when they became government. Conservatives are trying to rewrite history by calling the Kyoto protocol a blunder. The only purpose is to mask their own inaction.

Incidentally, although I was not granted an emergency debate on climate change last Monday, I am still hopeful the government will consent to a take note debate on Earth's most pressing environmental issue.

Today we are halfway through COP 17, the United Nations climate change conference in Durban, South Africa. This year's theme is "Working Together. Saving Tomorrow Today". There is an absolute urgency, first, as Kyoto comes to an end, and second, as the world tries to hold the average climate warming to just 2°C, the threshold associated with dangerous climate change.

Parties must strive to find solutions for scientifically defensible targets in Durban and build on the work undertaken in Cancun, Mexico at COP 16.

Business of Supply

Fortunately, climate change is not a closed case. We can rise to the challenge as in the past when major powers rose to the challenge. They built countrywide railways. They fought in World War I and World War II. The government should take a lesson from history. It should negotiate for our children and our grandchildren who are yet to be born.

In 1987, Canada was one of the original parties to the Montreal protocol, largely recognized as the most successful response to the global environmental challenge to date. Canada took a leadership role in examining the science underlying ozone depletion and acting to eliminate its causes.

● (1305)

Parties must first come to the negotiating table in good faith, and the expectation is that they must work toward an outcome that is balanced, credible and fair. Unfortunately, instead of the government engaging Parliament, its environmental critics, its human rights experts, it has shamefully signalled its abandonment of Kyoto and has, as we learned, been secretly urging other countries to pull out of the agreement as well.

As a result, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other South African leaders from government, labour and non-government organizations recently placed a full page ad to remind Canadians of the leadership our country once showed.

We parliamentarians therefore have a pivotal role to play in setting the necessary regulatory frameworks here at home and in building political resolve toward strong multilateral action, and our action must be swift and it must be collective.

At home, the government must absolutely make progress on its 2020 emission reduction target, but its own plan shows that federal and provincial government actions, announced or already under way, are projected to reduce emissions by only one-quarter of what is needed to meet the 2020 target. Canadians are waiting to hear how the government plans to address the remaining three-quarters.

In seeking an effective and just agreement from Durban, I see several key challenges and opportunities. The challenges are: first, to build trust and strengthen good faith; second, to push for strong action despite difficult economic times; and third, to make any agreement an inclusive deal that leaves no country or group behind, deepening world poverty and threatening international security.

Let me therefore talk about financing climate mitigation and adaptation, which has always been a key challenge. The government will rightly ask, why take on more debt? The answer is simple. The benefits of strong, early action on climate change dramatically outweigh the cost. For example, it has been estimated that to stabilize emissions at manageable levels would cost about 1% of global GDP, but that not to act would cost at least 5%, now and forever.

While the numbers can be debated, the essential fact cannot be. In fact, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy predicts that climate change will annually cost Canadians \$21 billion to \$43 billion by 2050.

We must therefore adapt. While adaptation is not cost-free, it is the cost-effective way to alleviate some climate impacts. I must then

ask why the government is cutting climate impact and adaptation research at Environment Canada. The research group was started 17 years ago. It performs groundbreaking research by examining how climate change affects agriculture, human health and water quality in Canada. Some of its scientists shared part of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize on Climate Change.

Let me come back to the fact that those who have the most to lose from climate change are the ones who have contributed least to the problem and who are the least equipped to deal with it. Many of the least developed countries and small states are already struggling to achieve the millennium development goals, particularly since they lack the necessary financial and technical resources. On top of these challenges, many face severe physical impacts from climate change and have economies that are particularly sensitive to climate variations, such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

Thankfully, we also have opportunities at Durban to reflect the increase in concern of Canadian business, citizens and municipal and provincial governments regarding climate change and to use the economic and environmental crisis to green our economy.

Many Canadian businesses, governments and citizens are already doing their part, improving energy efficiency, reducing energy use, reducing waste, using forest-friendly practices, using green power, et cetera. Now they are looking to us to be their voice on the national stage and to demand a decisive response to climate change in Canada and internationally.

● (1310)

Groups from wide walks of life, such as Canada's faith communities, the Climate Action Network, Citizens Climate Lobby, Citizens for Public Justice, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and the Pembina Institute want their political representatives to show vision and a long-term commitment on climate change.

Let us therefore be inspired by two examples of parliamentary action. First, the Maldives government has pledged to become the world's first carbon-neutral nation. Second, the United Kingdom parliament passed its climate change bill, the world's first long-term legally-binding framework to tackle climate change.

One of Canada's reforms must be a shift to the green economy. Governments worldwide are concerned with making the shift to stimulate growth, create new jobs, eradicate poverty and limit humanity's ecological footprint. It is no longer a choice between saving our economy and saving our environment. It is a choice between being a producer and a consumer in the old economy and being a leader in the new economy. It is a choice between decline and prosperity.

Business of Supply

Therefore, we should be critical of the government's efforts to green our economy. For example, in 2009 the government missed a real opportunity for a triple win, a renewable stimulus with positive impacts on the economy, jobs and the atmosphere. While the government invested \$3 billion in green stimulus spending, Germany invested \$14 billion, the United States \$112 billion and China \$221 billion in green infrastructure and, in the process, created thousands of new green jobs.

Going forward the government should develop a green economy strategy to create a more environmentally sustainable economy. Specific measures might include green agriculture, energy supply, forestry, industry, the building sector, transportation and waste. This will require meaningful engagement of all stakeholders, progress in investment in renewable energy and tough questions about the government's management of the oil sands. Where is the long-term plan? What action has been taken to regulate the pace and scope of development? What progress has been made to protect air quality, boreal forest ecosystems and water resources. What assessments are being undertaken to investigate the potential human health impacts of development as well as the environmental impacts? What solutions is the government considering?

More stringent actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions cannot be postponed much longer, otherwise the opportunity to keep the average global temperature rise below 2°C is in danger. Serious impacts are associated with this limit, including an increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, shifts in growing season and sea level rise.

My grave concern is that the government wants as little as possible to do with climate change. It can get us 25% of the way there. Where is the other 75%? It has allocated \$9.2 billion in funds and has reduced our targets by 90%. It wants to pass the buck to the provinces and the municipalities and wants to walk away from its international obligations.

The government must realize our home, the planet Earth, is finite. When we compromise the air, water, soil and the variety of life, we steal from the endless future to serve the fleeting present. Therefore, when we parliamentarians contemplate environmental policy and legislation, we must ask if it is something of which our children and grandchildren would be proud.

• (1315)

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to praise the member for Etobicoke North for yet another great speech on climate change. She has been a supporter of our bills on climate change accountability for a long time and is really smart and well-spoken.

However, I take issue with one statement she made. I think she is being a little too kind to the Conservatives. She seems to feel that they are being lax. I would go further. This is not ineptitude, nor is it inaction. Is it not really just bowing down to the altAr of U.S. policy and doing what the oil companies want?

Would the member care to comment?

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague who is a strong supporter of climate change and of taking moral and intergenerational responsibility. I want to be very clear. The record of

the government is appalling on climate change. This is the biggest environmental issue facing the planet.

I want to begin with the science and what is at stake. We want to limit the increase in average global temperature to 2°C above the pre-industrial level, as this level is thought to be the threshold for dangerous climate change. Unfortunately the actions and targets that have been pledged to date fall very short of this goal. Current pledges would lead to warming of 3°C and possibly even more than 3.5°C. For a northern nation, for Canada's Arctic that could be a warming of 8°C to 10°C.

The reality is we need urgent global action to halt and begin to reverse in the growth of emissions within this decade. There are two key issues at Durban: the future of Kyoto and climate financing to support climate action in developing countries. The Kyoto protocol's first commitment will end next year and unless it is extended or replaced by a second commitment period, there will be an era without legally binding international climate commitments.

Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague. No one will ever doubt her sincerity and I applaud her for that.

She made a couple of points in her remarks about the oil sands and alluded to some things, which I hope she does not think are actually happening, such as the devastation of the boreal forest. Less than 1% of the boreal forest is being used and it is all being remediated back to where it started.

The member talked about water. I hope she would give credit to the oil companies that have invested billions of dollars in tailings pond technology to take a process from what used to take months and years down to a process that takes two or three weeks. I hope she was not referring to supposed damage downstream in places like Fort Chip, where the doctor who proposed that has been shown to be a fraud and has been disciplined by the relevant authorities.

Are these the kinds of things about which the member is talking? The overriding question is if we do not get countries like China on board, what hope do we have?

• (1320)

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, when I discussed the oil sands, I raised key questions that the government needed to answer, such as where the long-term plan was? Are Conservatives making progress on environment health assessments?

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I want to bring home the impacts of climate extremes with a Canadian example. The great ice storm, which slammed into Ontario, Quebec and parts of the Maritimes, was the most destructive and disruptive storm in Canadian history. It downed 1,000 power transmission towers and 30,000 utility poles. It left 1.4 million people in Quebec and 230,000 in Ontario without power for at least one week. One month after the storm, 700,000 were still without power. It also had a huge impact on health and medical services. Just one hospital reported over 300 injuries directly related to the ice storm. Multiply that by the area that was covered.

This is food for thought. Climate change means more extreme weather events and in the future we may expect to see an increase in ice storms. Milder winter temperatures may cause an increase in freezing rain if daily temperatures fluctuate around the freezing point.

[Translation]

Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her speech. My question has to do with the Liberals' record. In 1993, the Liberals promised to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2005. Instead, they allowed emissions to increase by 30%. In 2005, the UN reported that pollution had increased more in Canada than in any of the other Kyoto signatories. I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

[English]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I realize I did not address something that was said by my colleague across the way. I want to point out it was Liberal colleagues who pushed for water monitoring in the oil sands and it was Liberal action, as I had laid out, that introduced project green in 2005, which the Conservatives killed when they came to government. Again, to point out what is at stake, in a warmer world heat waves are expected to become more frequent and severe, and this may lead to an increase in illness and death.

Members will remember back in 1995 over 700 people died in Chicago from the heat. I have a lasting memory of that event, where there were ice trucks in the streets used as morgues. More recently, 35,000 people succumbed in Europe to the heat. These extreme weather events are increasing. In 1998, China experienced its worst flooding in 50 years, affecting 180 million people; 7 million homes were destroyed; and 4,000 people lost their lives. A cyclone in India affected 10 million to 15 million people; it killed 10,000. Hurricane Katrina destroyed 300,000 homes, displaced 770,000 residents, and cost \$200 billion.

Climate change is real, it is happening now, and it means more extreme events and impacts on people.

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what my colleague from Etobicoke North did not tell members, in her modesty, is that she is a member of a Nobel prize winning team that has studied climate change. I would consider her an authority.

While Conservatives spew deceitful, rehearsed lines and talking points, which concerns and alarms the people from Guelph that they are doing absolutely nothing about the environment, we have on the other hand the government's own round table on the environment and the economy, and the Conference Board saying that not only have their targets been set too low but the Conservatives are not

passing regulations or developing programs that will even meet those modest targets.

However, I am encouraged by my friend's comments about the ability to join the environment and the economy, to help the environment and create jobs at the same time. I wonder if she could talk to us a bit more about the need to join the environment and the economy.

● (1325)

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his work in this area. He does a tremendous amount of work regarding the environment.

The environment and the economy are two sides of the same coin. Business understands that when it is good to the environment, it pays off on its bottom line. When businesses reduce their inputs and their waste, they save on the bottom line. Business is pushing for action on the environment. In fact, the premier of Alberta is pushing for a national energy strategy. When is the government going to call a first ministers meeting to bring the ministers together to discuss energy and climate change?

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Vancouver East.

I am happy to speak today on the NDP's official opposition day motion that is, indeed, very timely. As I speak, the eyes of the world are on Durban, South Africa, and the United Nations Climate Change Conference. Canadians are watching, too.

We have good reason to be concerned about Canada's role there with talk from the Minister of the Environment in moving countries away from their obligations to be good citizens of the planet and good stewards of the environment. This motion is timely because in Canada there are important pipeline projects from the oil sands being reviewed and debated: Keystone, northern gateway and others. This motion is timely because we know the economy is moving slowly through a deep, damaging recession as we try to figure out a way forward for Canada and other countries.

Our motion today addresses all of these issues. It makes it clear that Conservatives and their spin masters across the aisle have it dead wrong to frame our debate and choices as one between the economy and the environment. It is not jobs or the planet, it is jobs and the environment. We and others know it can and must be both.

Business of Supply

There is a way forward to creating good paying jobs for Canadians at the same time as making sure the development of the oil sands is done in a coherent, thoughtful way that pays attention to both the economy and the environment. That was the message the NDP environment critic and I brought to Washington. While some across the aisle were hysterically screaming treason and treachery, we were actually talking about a rational energy strategy good for Canada, good for the planet, and good for Canadian jobs. There are good jobs in sustainable clean energy and renewable energy. That is possible with a coherent Canadian energy strategy that, to date, the Conservative government has shown little interest in.

I know something of the importance of good paying jobs in the community and also the need to pay attention to our environment. For 34 years I worked in the mines of Sudbury. I value a company coming to town, offering stable, permanent, good paying jobs. I value the importance of unions that fight for workers, their pay and benefits, pensions and safety concerns. I saw the need for companies to also pay attention to environment regulations, to do something about pollution, and damage to the air and neighbouring waters.

We must act now. The evidence is irrefutable. The Arctic is heating up. Just last week an Arctic report card was released by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration climate program office. This agency tracks the Arctic's atmosphere, sea, ice, biology, greenhouse gases, ozone and UV radiation. What it reports is not pretty: the Arctic is shifting to a new permanent stage, warmer, greener, less summer ice, a change in ocean chemistry, and more.

What is worrisome is not the year-to-year change only, but especially the rates of change. The rates of change are speeding to greater risks. With a greener Arctic, there will be even more projects involving northern resources. We need to be smart about this production and our motion offers a way forward.

The natural resources committee is studying the development of northern resources. Back in October, it heard a witness, Dr. Steve MacLean, president of the Canadian Space Agency. He was in space twice as an astronaut, both times in the month of October, once in 1992 and again in 2006. When I asked him to compare the two missions, 14 years apart, and tell us if things had gotten worse, this is what he said:

Yes, I did.

I was fortunate to fly in the same month, October, in 1992 and then again in 2006. As you know, seasonal changes are still larger than the yearly climatic changes that we're seeing, and so having the privilege of flying in the same month allowed me to see the climatic changes and not just the seasonal changes.

- (1330)

The amount of ice in the mountains all over the world is substantially reduced... The tongues of the Columbia Icefields, for example, are reduced by two to three kilometres depending on where you are. Pollution indexes were visible to the naked eye.

Back in 1992, China was dirty at the centre of Beijing, for example. The air was dirty. Now the entire region is dirty. I just came back from China, and it's a major problem for them over there... That local pollution problem is causing a pretty substantive problem in our north... the ice, for example, used to be open in M'Clintock Channel four weeks of the year. Now it's open six weeks of the year. In the time we've been measuring it, that is a substantial difference. The average temperature in the north is several degrees higher. There are parameters that indicate that change is taking place.

He said there were definitely changes taking place in the north, and if we do not react to them, we can consider them a disaster or an

opportunity. If we consider them an opportunity, then we need to react to them and mitigate them.

We also spoke with the astronaut on the massive Arctic ozone hole two million square kilometres, twice the size of Ontario, opening up. Scientists say this means higher degrees of harmful ultraviolet radiation hitting northern Canada and our northern hemisphere.

How does the government react? Just as with crime, just as with the census, it stops funding the groups reporting the problem. Canada has been a leader in Arctic ozone observation, but the Conservative government is now cutting Environment Canada's ozone monitoring.

What is happening in space, what is happening in the north, is also occurring in all of our communities.

Last week I met in Ottawa with the Sudbury citizens climate lobby from northern Ontario. It is part of an international movement of citizens wanting action. They want to ensure that clean energy becomes competitive within a 10 year time frame. Among many environmental issues, they asked for an end to our fossil fuel subsidies, including the tax credits, and to invest the money in the development of alternative energies. My party is committed to doing just that.

This too is captured in our official opposition motion today as we call for immediate action to lower the net carbon emissions in Canada and increase Canadian trade with our major partners in a new sustainable energy economy.

Canadians want us to act. Over 150,000 Canadians and 150 organizations signed the Kyoto plus petition calling for an emission reduction plan to reduce emissions 25% below 1990 levels by 2020, the target necessary to avoid catastrophic climate changes.

New Democrats have an action plan to address climate change. We will put a price on carbon and establish hard emission caps for large industrial emitters. We will enact our climate change accountability act, which will put in legislation a framework for achieving the national target of 80% below 1990 emission levels by 2050. We want to establish a permanent federal energy efficient retrofit program to reduce residential energy use, cut GHG emissions, create jobs, and save Canadians money.

Business of Supply

At the natural resources committee recently we heard departmental officials say how wildly popular the eco-energy program has been, how much it is helping the planet. Over 250,000 Canadians have participated in it. This program is set to end at the end of March 2012. The Conservative government needs to make this program permanent.

New Democrats are committed to fulfilling our international climate obligations. We will cut over \$2 billion in annual subsidies to fossil fuel industries. We will restart federal investment in renewable energy. We will create a green jobs fund to support the employment transition to the new economy.

It is clear Canadians want their government to lead. The world needs Canada's leadership. Climate change does not respect international borders. Here at home, the government must not shirk its responsibilities in finding a way to develop the oil sands in a way that is a win-win for the economy and the environment. There are good jobs there for Canadians if we do so.

We can move forward here in Parliament by all parties supporting this motion.

• (1335)

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to hear my hon. colleague speaking about jobs.

I want to give an example of a case in my riding of jobs being created. A few years ago the local community college, St. Lawrence College, created a program called the energy systems engineering technology program. It trained students to do things such as energy audits for houses, studying insulation in walls, learning how to mount solar panels and testing systems to make sure they are working properly.

In the first year of the course, a number of students enrolled, and every single one of them got a job. It means there is a lot of demand out there for jobs related to making our energy systems more efficient, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and saving money.

Could the hon. member give some more examples in his own riding of the demand for these kinds of jobs?

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my speech, through the eco-energy program we can create jobs from sea to sea.

Many Canadians are accessing this eco-energy program to retrofit their homes, which creates employment for carpenters, plumbers, people who sell furnaces and people who shingle roofs. It creates all kinds of employment. With the Canada fund program, eco-energy was one of the biggest job creators in Canada.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I find this debate very alarming, and not just today.

I am very proud of the motion that we put forward, but I find the tone of the debate on the other side of the House very alarming. The Conservatives have no plan for the environment, they are trying their best to wreck international agreements, they are cutting funding for our own environmental monitoring here in Canada and they are punishing our scientists for telling the truth about climate change.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague if the Conservatives are taking this approach of undermining our efforts to save the

environment, both here in Canada and worldwide, just to please Chinese and U.S. oil companies, or are they doing it just because they are in denial about climate change?

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, what the Conservative government is doing is affecting not only Canada but the world.

I tend to agree with my colleague that the Conservative government is in denial. It is refusing to accept the fact that the climate is changing. It is only interested in the oil sands and in creating jobs that will pollute. Instead of refining our oil sands in Canada, it wants to ship to the United States, across environmentally sensitive regions.

The government is really not interested in creating good-paying Canadian jobs. It is more interested in creating jobs in the United States.

Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of talk about the Keystone pipeline and how it would go over all these sensitive areas that everybody is suddenly concerned about.

Would my hon. colleague like to address the fact that well over 25,000 miles of pipeline already exist in those same areas, and that this is all about the 2012 presidential election and nothing else?

• (1340)

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise my colleague that we did not just suddenly become concerned about the pipeline. As far as the U.S. presidential election goes, I have nothing to do with that and I have no concerns about the presidential election.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to the official opposition motion on climate change. I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Nickel Belt, for his very personal and graphic description of the changes that have taken place that he has seen from the air when he is flying over his community in the north. It is a very good example of how serious this issue of climate change is here in Canada, and of how much we are missing the boat on what needs to be done.

As the Durban conference gets under way, it is very timely that the NDP has put forward this motion today calling on the federal government to show leadership on climate change. This is nothing new for the NDP; it has been doing it almost every single day. Certainly our environment critic, the member for Halifax, has been very front and centre, and very forthright in calling on the federal government for leadership and action.

This motion today is an opportunity for us to debate this important issue and to show where NDP members stand. We hope that the federal Conservative government will move and change its position.

Business of Supply

For New Democrats, some of the key priorities for the next international climate change protocol include ensuring that there is a fair, ambitious and binding agreement. We want to ensure that there is adequate financing for the green climate fund from 2013, and we want to close the gigatonne gap between promised emission cuts and actual action. This is critical, because saying one is going to do something is one thing, but actually not following through and doing it is very serious. This is why Canadians in the environmental movement generally feel so hugely disappointed in the government's lack of performance.

We also want to make sure there is no gap in legally binding commitments.

What has the NDP been calling for? It has had an astounding track record on this issue. When our former leader, Jack Layton, came into the House, the first thing he did was ensure that we tabled a bill on climate change. That bill passed through Parliament by a majority vote. Then we had an election. We reintroduced the same bill after that election, and for a second time the bill passed through Parliament. However, as we know, it was killed in the Senate. In terms of climate change, that was a very bad day for Canada; we had a fantastic bill that was doing everything that needed to be done, and it was killed by the unelected Senate.

New Democrats have a very good track record on this issue. We have always said that we would put a price on carbon and establish hard emission caps for large industrial emitters. We have said that we want to enact a climate change accountability act. This will now be the third time. It would put into legislation a framework for achieving the national target of 80% below 1990 emission levels by 2050.

We have said that we would establish a permanent federal energy efficiency retrofit program for residential energy use, cut GHG emissions, create jobs and save Canadians money.

We have said that we would establish an effective program to help communities deal with the impacts of climate change. One very important element of that is the transition fund for jobs. The issue of jobs is very important in this debate. They are linked. As we move to a greener environment and a greener economy, we have to make sure that people are not put out of work. We have to make sure there is a transition to new jobs, new training, and good-paying jobs.

We would also fulfill our international climate change obligations and cut the over \$2 billion in annual subsidies to fossil fuel industries.

Let us contrast that plan with what the federal government is not doing. It is a fact that Canadian greenhouse gas emissions were 24% above the 1990 level in 2008, setting Canada up to exceed its Kyoto commitment by almost 30% in 2012. A recent study from the International Institute for Sustainable Development makes it clear that Canada's plan is inadequate and that the current and planned measures by the provinces and the federal government combined will only achieve an emissions reduction of 46% of the government's own, and very weak, GHG emissions target by 2020.

What kind of record is that? It deserves an 'F' as a failure.

● (1345)

We know that the government has weakened its climate change targets by 90% since 2007. To make matters worse, on the 2010 annual climate change performance index, Canada finished 54th out of the 57 countries evaluated. There will be a new index published tomorrow, and we fear that it will not be any better for this year's index. Of course, to add insult to injury, Canada won three Fossil of the Day awards during the first two days at Durban. Unfortunately, we are a repeat winner.

This is a terrible record, and it is all the more reason we need to have this motion debated today.

I want to contrast that performance with what one city in Canada is doing. It is my own city, Vancouver. The City of Vancouver launched a program called Imagine 2020, which aims to make Vancouver the greenest city in the world in just nine years. The program's goals include green buildings, green transportation, growing local food and becoming a centre for green enterprise.

This is what is quite incredible: emissions have already been reduced to 1990 levels, and Vancouver is on track to meeting the Kyoto target, which is 6% below 1990 levels by 2012, at the same time that its population has grown by 27% and its jobs by 18%. As a result, Vancouver has the lowest per capita emissions of any major city in North America, at 4.6% tonnes per person.

I offer this because to me it is a brilliant example of how, when there is a political will—in this case, from the Vancouver City Council under the leadership of Mayor Gregor Robertson—the targets can be met and can be exceeded. We have seen this with the City of Vancouver.

Vancouver tops the chart of Canadian cities leading the fight against climate change, according to the World Wildlife Fund. The city ranks the highest on the organization's list, released in March of this year, based on indicators such as cutting greenhouse gas emissions, using renewable energy and encouraging green building and transportation. It can be done.

In fact David Cadman, who is an outgoing city councillor in Vancouver and well known in his role as president of Local Governments for Sustainability, was in Durban. I would like to quote something that he said. I quote:

Fundamentally unlike the nations of the world we are committed to action and a future for humankind. While the nations of the world like Nero fiddle while the planet burns, cities and millions of their citizens are doing the right thing and urging the nations of the world to come off this precipice that big oil gas and coal have taken us on to.

That is an initiative of a local municipal government. Here we have a federal government that claims it is interested in responding to climate change, yet every indicator, every report, every record that we have shows us that we are falling further and further behind, and now Canada is an embarrassment in the international community.

Business of Supply

In British Columbia we have some very special and key concerns about climate change. One of them is the Enbridge pipeline. We know this massive proposal would carry over 500,000 barrels of tar sands crude each day over very sensitive and precious mountains, farm land, the Fraser and Skeena Rivers, and straight through the Great Bear rainforest to the Pacific coast, where it would be picked up by supertankers that would try to navigate some very difficult waters. I am very proud of the fact that Rob Fleming, the NDP environment critic in B.C., along with our B.C. NDP members of Parliament, have been very outspoken on this issue.

This motion today is absolutely critical if we are to see the federal government change course and move to action. That is what we need: a move to action to say that climate change is a priority, that we are not going to divide people or pit jobs against the environment, that we are going to recognize that we have to deal with the problems of fossil fuels and energy resources in Canada and that we have to move to a new green economy.

• (1350)

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said that the purpose of the motion today was to call the government to action. In fact, this government has been acting ever since it was elected in 2006. It has been acting aggressively to ensure that something, finally, is happening on the environment. We all know that for 13 long years the former Liberal government did absolutely nothing. However, that ended in 2006. We have received a strong mandate and we have been acting rigorously and have been providing the leadership that the world needs to take action on climate change. We recommended internationally that the world move toward an international agreement that included all the major emitters, and that is exactly the direction the world is heading.

Why would the member want to move back to the Kyoto accord that did not work? It only covered 27% of greenhouse emissions. We are now moving toward 85% when we include all the major emitters. Why would she want to choose 27% instead of 85%? Why would she want to go back to something that does not work? The world has moved on. Why would the member want to go back to the past to a program that does not work?

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, I know the member is the former parliamentary secretary to the Minister of the Environment and probably has a special interest in this, but the fact is that the government's record here is terrible. The Conservatives are the only ones who actually do not agree with that because, obviously, they do not like to admit it. However, any other independent assessment of our government's record on greenhouse gases and meeting our international obligations is just appalling. There is no two ways around it.

The only thing I would agree with him on is that, yes, there were a lot of years when we had a Liberal government where it made very little progress. The Conservative government did not exactly inherit a great record. However, the Conservative government had an opportunity to move forward on this file and it has not, which is why Canada is now a laughing stock in the international community. That is why, at this particular upcoming international conference, we need to ensure we meet our international obligations. Do they mean nothing? Do we just throw them out the window?

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that the Liberals did take action. It was project green, which the Conservatives killed when they came to power.

Our party focuses on maternal and child health from the millennium development goals. I think it is important for people to understand that malaria kills an African child every 30 seconds and remains one of the most important threats to the health of pregnant women and their newborn. An estimated 20% of the world's population is at risk of contracting malaria. The disease causes more than 300 million cases each year and kills one million people. Malaria is the disease most sensitive to weather and climate.

Our government has an opportunity help prevent malaria and save lives through taking action on climate change.

Ms. Libby Davies: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member has put forward information about malaria and how controllable and easy it is to deal with and yet it is still a disease that is affecting millions of people and is exacerbating because of climate change. She has a very valid point to raise that. It shows us how, when we do not deal with the fundamental issues of the environment, of climate change, of income inequality, of poverty and of the growing gap between the north and the south, we can see that it comes right down to something called a mosquito that actually kills people. If we cannot solve those kinds of problems in our sophisticated world, then I think we have all failed.

• (1355)

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

The motion today talks about leadership. It is this government that has provided the leadership through the international negotiations to deal with a changing climate. I am very proud of the accomplishments of the government. In fact, we are already seeing greenhouse gas emissions going down in Canada because of the breadth of actions of the government.

The previous member for Vancouver East mentioned that she thought Canada was a laughing stock. That is not true. The fact is that Canada has great respect internationally. The only people who were laughing at these international conferences were some of the opposition members. They go on these junkets at taxpayers' expense and laugh at Canada disgracefully. That should never happen.

I appreciate the opportunity to highlight the government's recent announcements to help Canadians adapt to a changing climate, and changing it is. The government recognizes the need to address adaptation to climate change in Canada. The reality is that the climate will continue to change, regardless of the effectiveness of greenhouse gas reduction measures. Our commitment to this important area of climate change is part of our national plan with a strong, corresponding international component.

Statements by Members

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

OPERATION RED NOSE

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we enter the Christmas season and enjoy time with our friends and family, it is important to remember to be safe and not to drink and drive.

Operation Red Nose is a nationwide initiative committed to preventing drinking and driving. Since 1984, this volunteer-run organization has been offering free, confidential driving services during the holidays to drivers who are not fit to drive.

Although this operation is offered across Canada, I am pleased to say that Brampton was the first GTA city to implement it three years ago. By calling 905-459-2440, Bramptonians who feel they are unable to drive can get home safely.

I commend all of the organizers and volunteers for continuing to offer this service in my riding. Without them, it would not be possible.

I encourage my constituents and all Canadians to support this service to help ensure the holidays are, indeed, happy ones.

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[*Translation*]

FOOD BANKS

Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the latest Hunger Count, 18 regional food banks in Quebec—which supply some 1,064 food assistance organizations—have reported a dramatic increase in the number of people using the service. Requests for food assistance have jumped by 22% since the 2008 recession.

Unfortunately, while food banks can barely keep up with the demand, a growing number of households are being forced to rely on this service on a more permanent basis. Moisson Laurentides provides assistance to 15,000 people a month, including 5,000 children. That is the harsh reality of the economic crisis.

Last Saturday, the mayor of Saint-Colomban and I took part in the traditional food drive. Despite the best efforts of all the volunteers, the fact remains that all the food drives in the world will never replace a real plan to fight poverty. This government spent billions of dollars to rescue the investment banks from the crisis. Let us now address the crisis facing our food banks.

Unfortunately, the members across the way have consistently voted against these strong, concrete actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At a time when economic recovery, jobs and prosperity are the primary focus at home and abroad, it is more important than ever to ensure that we remain committed to providing a clean, improving environment. That means, even though we are currently in a period of real fiscal restraint, something this government takes very seriously, it is the right time to make investments that will protect the environment and position Canada's economy for the future. It is important that the reality of climate change be well understood and proactively managed.

In 2007, our government announced funding for six climate change impacts and adaptation programs totalling over \$85 million. These programs have laid the foundations for future work by strengthening the climate science knowledge base and addressing urgent risks in the north, infrastructure and human health. One would ask why opposition members would vote against that. It is actually shameful that they would vote against climate change and the environment.

Northern communities are of particular concern as they often are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As a result, we are actively consulting with aboriginal and northern groups on climate change adaptation issues.

Our government recently announced \$148 million of new adaptation programs to enable the government to continue to provide Canadians with information that supports their efforts to better understand and plan for climate change impacts. Building on the work already under way, these programs focus on four priority areas of action to ensure the safety and prosperity of Canadians for the future. Did the members opposite vote for that? Tragically, no.

This important funding, which extends and expands 10 programs across 9 government departments, will help us frame a credible science-based response to the impact that climate change has and will have on our economy. It is science-based, not rhetoric-based. This will ultimately serve to improve our health, our security and, in particular, our northern and aboriginal communities. There has never been a government in Canada that has cared more about our northern and aboriginal communities.

Our adaptation efforts do not just stay within our borders, though. Internationally, the government is also engaged in adaptation efforts. We believe that if we want Canada to meet the environmental challenges ahead, we need to help others do the very same thing.

That is why Canada, which I am so proud of, was one of the first countries to step up with its fair share of climate change adaptation funding for developing countries, something we pledged to deliver under the Copenhagen accord and we are delivering. The one thing this government is known for is getting it done and taking action on the environment.

• (1400)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. I must interrupt the hon. member at this point. He will have five minutes remaining when the House returns to this matter.

Statements by Members

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Bob Dechert (Mississauga—Erindale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last November, the Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a statement concerning Asia Bibi's incarceration in Pakistan under its blasphemy law.

At the time, the Government of Canada registered its concerns with Pakistan at the highest levels. We have also called on the Government of Pakistan to repeal laws criminalizing blasphemy, which restrict religious freedom and expression and target religious minorities.

We remember the brave stance taken by Governor Taseer and Minister Shahbaz Bhatti, both of whom have paid the ultimate sacrifice for their promotion of the rights of religious minorities, tolerance and legal reforms.

Promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of Canada's foreign policy. Canada continues to stand up for human rights and takes principled positions on important issues to promote freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

I call on Pakistan to release Ms. Bibi and to ensure equal rights and equal protection for all members of minority communities.

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NATIONAL CULTURAL TOURISM AWARD

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today with pride to extend my congratulations to Celtic Colours International Music Festival for winning the National Cultural Tourism Award at the Canadian Tourism Awards last week here in Ottawa.

The festival was recognized for its commitment to the development and promotion of authentic and innovative cultural tourism visitor experience.

Celtic Colours, which just marked its 15th anniversary, extends the tourism season in Cape Breton to the end of October, attracting thousands of visitors from every corner of the globe and generating millions for the local economy. It touches communities from Louisdale to Louisbourg, from Mabou to Marion Bridge.

Hundreds of artists from the Celtic world join our celebrated Cape Breton musicians for nine days of concerts, workshops, demonstrations and lectures.

This festival would not be possible without the legions of volunteers who give their time to drive artists around the island, cook meals and perform many other tasks.

I congratulate everyone involved in the Celtic Colours Festival on receiving this very prestigious national honour.

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BRANTFORD'S FARMERS' MARKET

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, throughout the 19th century, the fertile land of the Grand River watershed attracted settlers from around the world, spurring farms and settlements across Brant County.

To this day, places like Paris, Glen Morris and St. George are among Ontario's most beautiful and inviting rural communities.

Brantford established a farmers' market in 1848, and it is no surprise that it remains our community's largest weekly social gathering. The market is a place where people can learn about and purchase great local products that reflect the agricultural diversity and ethnic mosaic of our community.

Thanks to an investment from our government and the Brant County Federation of Agriculture's Bountiful Brant campaign, which encourages people to buy fresh, locally produced products, market vendors are reporting that business is up and more customers are visiting.

If people want to find Ontario's most delicious fresh food grown from farms with decades of hard-won experience, they need look no further than Brantford's farmers' market.

* * *

● (1405)

VOLUNTEERISM

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, CUSO International and Volunteer Canada have partnered to launch the first State of the World's Volunteerism Report, launched today at the UN General Assembly and in 70 other countries, coinciding with International Volunteer Day. The report calls for making volunteer action an integral part of sustainable human development, highlighting the need to measure volunteerism and its inclusion among the greatest assets of nations. It recognizes volunteerism and its underlying values, demonstrating its relevance for the millennium development goals.

The generosity of Canadian volunteers has made a significant contribution to the well-being of our communities. Volunteerism embodies the drive to help at home and abroad. It fosters inclusion and helps people make a concrete positive impact in our world.

The federal government has an important role to play in the volunteer sector in supporting the work of Canada's volunteers and revamping volunteerism in Canada. Positive change requires both financial and human investment.

I thank volunteers in our communities, across Canada and around the world.

* * *

CANADA CUP OF CURLING

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over the past week the city of Cranbrook in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia has been host to the 2011 Canada Cup of Curling. Some of the best curlers from across Canada were competing to win this tournament, which would give them a direct bye into the qualifying tournament for the 2014 Olympic Games to be held in Russia.

The RecPlex in Cranbrook was full for all matches, culminating in the final matches yesterday, with Jennifer Jones defeating Chelsea Carey 9-4, winning the women's event, and Kevin Martin defeating Glenn Howard 7-4, winning the men's event.

Statements by Members

This event, like so many others that Cranbrook has hosted over the years, would not have been possible without the efforts of the organizers and volunteers who put in so much time to ensure both fans and competitors would have a great time. Thanks to the city of Cranbrook, organizers and volunteers for showing their hospitality to this event and showing the spirit of the Kootenays.

* * *

VOLUNTEERISM

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate International Volunteer Day. Millions of volunteers, almost half our population, donate their time to help others, without accepting anything in return. If we could count the number of hours of service they put in, it would be equal to over one million full-time jobs or about \$14 billion a year. Why do they do it? Because they want to make a difference.

To celebrate these local heroes, our government created the Prime Minister's Volunteer Awards last January, and I had the privilege of nominating almost a dozen of my constituents, including Dr. Cynthia Post of the Procyon Wildlife Centre, Laureen Little of the Alliston Horticultural Society, and George Christie of the Simcoe—Grey Trails committee.

These awards highlight the exceptional contributions made by individuals and volunteer organizations working for the well-being of our families and our communities.

I would like to take this opportunity today to say how proud I am of their continued dedication as Canadian volunteers. We are all richer as a result of their selfless efforts. I invite all members of the House to rise and thank the millions of—

The Speaker: Order please. The hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

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[*Translation*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, ever since this government announced its intention to go ahead with the F-35 procurement, nothing has been going right. There have been problems with cost overruns, effectiveness, durability, communications, safety and landing. The list gets longer every week, but the government is determined to hide the truth from us.

Recently, representatives from Norway said they expect to spend \$10 billion to procure 52 planes and \$40 billion over 30 years to maintain them. That is \$1 billion a plane. The Minister of National Defence openly admitted in committee that he was not up to speed. This government is making things up as it goes along and is engulfed in a mess of its own making.

On behalf of Canadian taxpayers, I am calling on this government to stop hiding the truth. I am calling on this government to release the real figures, to hold a real debate on replacing the CF-18s and to launch an open and transparent tendering process.

● (1410)

[*English*]

OFFICER'S CROSS OF THE ORDER OF MERIT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today at the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Toronto, a true Canadian icon will be decorated with the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. This award is given to those who have rendered great service to the Polish nation.

It is therefore fitting that today this award is being given to my friend Dr. Frank Dimant. Dr. Dimant is an executive vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada and CEO of the Institute for International Affairs and the League for Human Rights. He is also the publisher of the *Jewish Tribune*. In addition to being decorated with the officer's cross, Dr. Dimant has been inducted as honorary chief of First Nations Keewatin Tribal Council.

A true human rights advocate, for decades Dr. Dimant has been on the forefront of fighting against racism and fighting for integration. On behalf of the Conservative caucus, I wish to congratulate Dr. Dimant on this latest recognition.

* * *

[*Translation*]

THE BELLE-BAIE TV SERIES

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on November 8, the member for Repentigny and I had the opportunity to attend the filming of an episode of the fifth season of the *Belle-Baie* TV series, which airs on Radio-Canada. The filming took place in the magnificent region of Caraquet and the surrounding area. This production gave people in the area the opportunity to be cast as extras in the series and showcased the beauty of the region.

Belle-Baie was created by Renée Blanchar and it is inspired by real-life events that occurred in Belledune, where a developer wanted to install a toxic waste incinerator but had to put a stop to the project as a result of public protest. The series is produced by Phare-Est and Cirrus Communications. In June 2011, it won the 2011 Prix Acadie-Québec, which is awarded by the Commission permanente de concertation entre l'Acadie et le Québec.

Unfortunately, *Belle-Baie* will not be back for a sixth season. I would like to thank Renée Blanchar, the producers, the actors and Radio-Canada for coming to visit my riding.

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[*English*]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Chris Alexander (Ajax—Pickering, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the run-up to Human Rights Day on December 10, Canada and the world are marking 16 days of activism against gender violence because it affects us all.

Statements by Members

Our government is committed to addressing the problem of violence against women and girls. That is why the Government of Canada led the initiative for the creation of an international day of the girl. Our resolution, co-sponsored by 104 countries, will soon be before the UN General Assembly for adoption.

[Translation]

An international day of the girl would encourage people to put girls on an equal footing with boys. This would include equality before the law, the right to a life free from violence, as well as equal access to nutrition, health care, education and training.

I hope that these 16 days of activism will remind us that we can all take action today and all year long to eliminate violence against women and girls.

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[English]

GRAHAM DENNIS

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Nova Scotia lost a leader, a champion and a dear friend last Thursday with the passing of Graham Dennis, publisher of *The Chronicle Herald* in Halifax.

Mr. Dennis was a true icon. He had a profound impact on Canada's ocean playground and was happiest travelling the highways and byways of our province.

Mr. Dennis was a man of great integrity and humility, and he possessed a profound, genuine devotion to the people of Nova Scotia. His lasting legacy would be the more than five decades he spent as publisher of Atlantic Canada's largest newspaper, maintaining one of the few remaining independent major dailies in our country.

I am sure all members will join me in offering our sincere condolences to his wife Gay and daughters Heather and Sarah.

* * *

AFGHANISTAN

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today our Minister of Foreign Affairs was in Bonn, Germany, to discuss the future of Afghanistan. During this conference, the minister took part in a round-table discussion with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the European Union's foreign representative Catherine Ashton, and members of the Afghan Women's Network.

Efforts to bring lasting and durable peace to Afghanistan should involve dialogue with all parts of Afghan society, including women and religious minorities. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has brought this message throughout his travels to Libya and the Middle East. The role of women is an essential component to progress on human rights and democratic development.

We will continue to speak out on the world stage and we stand with the women of all emerging democracies that seek to make a difference.

●(1415)

ASBESTOS

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives sit on their hands as their Prime Minister exports cancer to the developing world. Apparently it is not enough that the government dumps hundreds of thousands of tonnes of cancer-causing asbestos onto developing countries every year; now a trade official confirms that Canada wants India to drop its 10% duty on Canadian asbestos exports.

While other countries are banning or restricting the deadly material, the Prime Minister is actively seeking ways to profit even further from it.

Canadians do not want us exporting cancer. Scientists and doctors say it is wrong. Even Conservative MPs know it is unconscionable. However, instead of exercising their free speech, they sit on their hands, too afraid to speak up. Those MPs came here to change Ottawa. Instead, Ottawa has changed them. As they sit and allow cancer exports to other countries, it is clear they have become everything they used to oppose.

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NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday NDP candidates met for what one journalist called a "festival of economic illiteracy" during their first leadership debate. The topic was supposed to be the economy, but few positive ideas for improving the economy were heard. Instead, the candidates offered lavish spending schemes that would push Canada completely off track.

The candidates proposed high taxes on job creators, on consumers, on investors, on families and on banks, and even proposed a carbon tax that would drive up the price of gasoline, energy and everything that Canadians buy. No candidate was prepared to challenge the NDP's determined opposition to all free trade agreements, and some leadership candidates even called for the halt of the development of the oil sands, an action that would kill billions of dollars of investment and hundreds of thousands of good Canadian high-paying jobs.

This is just another worrying example that demonstrates that the NDP is simply not fit to govern.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is every indication that Canada is prepared to abandon its international commitments and withdraw from Kyoto. That is a real shame. If the Conservatives are not interested in fighting climate change with the rest of the world, why are they going to Durban? Is it because they just told their representatives to sabotage the talks?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have been saying from the beginning, the Kyoto protocol is an agreement that is not in the best interests of the climate or of Canada. It will hurt Canada's economy. What Canadians expect from Canada and our government is an approach that balances the interests of our environment with those of our economy. The Kyoto protocol is an agreement that does not work for Canada, for the environment or for our economy. That is the direction we will continue to take.

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 191 countries have signed and ratified the Kyoto protocol. Canada is the only country that is abandoning its commitments and going back on its word, the only country that is going to pull out of Kyoto. We should be ashamed of this situation and the government's position. The Conservatives will turn Canada into an international pariah. What kind of leadership is that? Is Canada part of the Kyoto protocol, yes or no?

[English]

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Kyoto protocol simply does not work. It only contains 27% of the world's emitters of greenhouse gases. What Canadians have asked for and what our government has led on is a true global effort to fight what is a true global problem. That is why the Prime Minister has been engaged and shown leadership with the Copenhagen accord and we continue to show leadership on the international scene.

What the NDP is asking this government to do is to follow through and increase taxes on consumers with a carbon tax, as was discussed last night with the nine brightest lights of the NDP running for leadership, and is asking us to punish Canadian consumers to go forward with an accord that simply does not work and that will not have the intended results that people want. We have the right way.

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, by opting out of Kyoto, Canada does not show any leadership.

Canada will have no say in any future agreement. We will not be at the table. The Conservatives want to play alone in their oil sand box. That is not the way to show leadership. Canada committed to the Kyoto protocol, so respect Canada's word, respect Canada's commitment. Why destroy Canada's reputation?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what hurts Canada's reputation is what the previous Liberal government did, which is what we will not do. What we will do is pursue a true global approach that works and that is why we have gone forward with the Copenhagen accord.

Oral Questions

What the Liberals did, which seems like the NDP is applauding, was sign the Kyoto accord, have no plan, say they that were in favour of it, did nothing, and at the last minute, when Michael Ignatieff said they that did not get the job done, they tried to prove that they were getting the job done by imposing a massive tax on Canadians in the form of a carbon tax. Fail, fail and fail again, and that is why they are over there and that is why we are showing leadership in a new direction.

• (1420)

[Translation]

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are pulling us out of the Kyoto protocol, claiming that the big polluters must participate. But China has shown that it is open. The government has no excuse. Withdrawing from the Kyoto protocol is a reckless decision. The health of Canadians is at stake here, and Canadian jobs are on the line. Will this government realize that we must develop an economy that is based on sustainable energy?

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, imagine a place where 75% of our electricity is generated by sources that do not emit greenhouse gases, or where a government invests billions of dollars in clean energy technology, or where there is one of the most stringent regulatory frameworks in the world. Wait a second; that is Canada.

When will the opposition get on board?

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, by withdrawing from Kyoto the minister is withdrawing Canada from the energy economy of the future. It sends a clear message to the employers of the future not to invest here. What timing, because China is now open to strict standards but the Conservatives instead are focused on environmental sabotage.

Canadians want to see investments in the world—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The member for Halifax has the floor and she should be allowed to put the question. The hon. member for Halifax.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Canadians want to see investments in the world that we will leave our children, Mr. Speaker. They want Canada to be a leader in building a sustainable economy.

Why does the government only listen to big polluters? When will it start listening to Canadians?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as opposed to the opposition that would have us continue with an international accord that only contains less than one-third of global emissions, we are taking strong action here at home.

Oral Questions

With regard to a clean energy economy, I would ask my colleague opposite what she would call an economy that has billions of dollars of research into clean technology, that exports across the globe intellectual property dealing with clean energy technology?

We are a leader internationally. The opposition should recognize that.

* * *

[Translation]

TELEPHONE CALLS TO MOUNT ROYAL CONSTITUENTS

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, will the government change the Canada Elections Act to ensure that the dishonest and misleading tactic used by the Prime Minister's government against the member for Mount Royal will no longer be tolerated?

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the member for Mount Royal is still here in the House. Members of the government accept that and do not dispute that.

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SEARCH AND RESCUE

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think I received an answer to the question, but it will not go away.

On another subject involving truth and fiction, the Minister of National Defence has stated in the House that there was a previously planned search and rescue mission which was the reason for his being picked up by a government helicopter.

I would like to ask the government if it could answer this simple question. If it was a previously planned mission, why did Lieutenant Colonel Chris Bulls say on July 7, 2010, that the mission will be under the guise of fighter group as search and rescue training? If it was a previously planned mission, why would you need a guise?

The Speaker: I would remind the hon. member to direct his questions through the Chair.

The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear that the Minister of National Defence returned from a private trip in order to go back to work. Government aircraft are used for government work.

If my hon. colleague wants to compare the difference between this government and the way the Liberals operated, this government uses government aircraft 80% less than the Liberals did. We are saving taxpayers millions of dollars. We are acting responsibly.

The Minister of National Defence has been clear on this file.

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in front of us very clearly is this. It is about the minister telling the truth to the House of Commons. Everybody has to understand that.

The minister said, "We have now confirmed that the military has said publicly that I took part in a previously planned search and

rescue demonstration". A review of the email traffic within the Department of National Defence makes it very clear that those comments by the Minister of National Defence are simply not true.

Will the minister now stand in his place, apologize, and indicate that he misled the House of Commons?

• (1425)

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty straightforward and it is very clear. The Minister of National Defence left a private trip to go back to work. We use government aircraft for government business.

As a matter of fact, and as I have pointed out and am pleased to say again—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage has the floor.

Hon. James Moore: That leaves me just enough time, Mr. Speaker, to point out to Canadian taxpayers that this government is saving them millions of dollars by reducing the use of government jets by 80% since we came into government. That is exactly what taxpayers expect. It is how we are going to act. It is how we are going to continue to behave.

The Liberals can catcall all they like, but we will continue to do what is in the best interests of taxpayers.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, temperatures have again dropped below -20 in Attawapiskat, and the people are suffering through another lost week of inaction.

The Red Cross teams are on the ground, but the federal government is still nowhere to be seen in this community. Other than deposing the band leadership, Attawapiskat has been left to fend for itself in this humanitarian crisis.

Now that the minister is taking control of this community, what plan does he have to ensure that the people living in the tents, cabins and trailer are going to be moved into safe, reasonable, permanent housing?

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is responding to the situation. The third party manager is in the community and is working to address the urgent health and safety needs of residents.

We are continuing to work with Emergency Management Ontario and the first nation. Supplies are being sent into the community, and materials for renovating homes have been ordered by the chief and council.

I strongly urge the chief and council to work with the third party manager in the interests of the people.

Oral Questions

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately a lot of that was bunk.

The community is on its own. It has moved in a third party manager, and the community is defending itself with no help from the federal government. Even Chuck Strahl said that this was a train wreck coming for years.

There is a lot of blame that can go around, but only the minister can fix this situation. He has to tell us why he thinks that putting people in an unheated hockey arena is a solution. Where is his plan to guarantee that these people will be moved into safe, proper housing with a long-term plan? Where is that plan?

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the chief and council are using the resources that we provided to order materials for housing. The third party manager and emergency management professionals are in the community.

I encourage the chief and council to work with the third party manager on behalf of the people of Attawapiskat.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the latest OECD report is damning. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing bigger more quickly here than in other developed countries. The poor are getting poorer and the rich are getting richer. Average families are having more and more difficulty making ends meet. The OECD has clearly stated that Canadians need good jobs. They also need a tax system that is progressive and fair. However, all this government does is give gifts to companies with money to burn.

When will the government finally come up with a job creation plan? When will this country return to a fair tax system?

[English]

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite refers to the OECD report. He does not mention that the OECD stated that employment is the most promising way of tackling inequality, and that the biggest challenge is to create more jobs.

This government is focused precisely on the goal of economic growth and the creation of jobs in Canada. There are nearly 600,000 net new jobs, the best job creation record in the G7. The OECD and the IMF say that Canada's economic growth and job creation will be the best going forward.

That is how we address inequity. That is what the OECD—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sadly the results are in on the Conservatives' so-called plan. They lost 19,000 jobs in the month of November. They lost 72,000 full-time jobs in the month of October. Because of their policies, the gap between rich and other Canadians is growing.

The OECD says that it is getting worse and worse. That is not surprising because at every turn the Conservatives put the well connected first. Bank profits are at a record high, and so are food bank lineups in this country.

Why do the Conservatives not care about middle-class and poor Canadian families and the income gap? When will the Conservatives start putting everyday families first? When will they stop the hemorrhaging of good jobs in this country?

● (1430)

Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite covered a lot of ground there. He is mad at the banks. He is mad at profits. He thinks we do not reduce taxes. Where do we start?

Well, we have reduced taxes on average by \$3,000 for every Canadian family since we took office. How did the NDP members help with that? They voted against every tax reduction. They say they care about Canadians, but they are happy to keep taxing. I heard it in the debate yesterday. The only question was, how much more should we tax Canadians? That is what we hear from the NDP.

Do they care that we have bank profits? I care. It gives us a sound banking system, and they paid \$8.3 billion—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Windsor West.

* * *

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we learned the government's secret border deal with the Americans will cost Canadians a whopping \$1 billion, and we still do not even know what the Conservatives are quietly negotiating away. We do not even know if Canadians' privacy will be protected in the secret deal. Every time we ask the government for assurances, we get nothing but silence. Canadians deserve answers, not secrecy, not stonewalling.

When will the government come clean with what it is giving over to the Americans on this secret border deal? Canadians deserve to know this now.

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are working with President Obama and his administration to deliver on the shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness.

We are strengthening our collaboration to streamline and secure our border and enhance the legendary co-operation to ensure that people and goods can flow freely and safely between our two countries. What is wrong with that picture?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Mr. Speaker, once again, we get a response from a government that is controlling critical information and keeping it from Canadians. This week, Canada and the United States are going to sign a border security agreement. We know that it is going to cost Canadian families at least \$1 billion, but that is all we know because the government did not want to table the agreement in Parliament before signing it. Citizens' groups and the Information Commissioner are concerned about the possible infringement of privacy rights.

Will the government finally reassure Canadians and tell them what this agreement says?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the privacy of Canadians is very important to us. The United States will not end up with more information than is already accessible. Exit controls are reasonable. This plan is about jobs and the economy.

* * *

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the defence minister took one of only three search and rescue helicopters out of service and he covered up his real intentions. As we have known since Watergate, it is the cover-up that buries one.

Even the *National Post* said, “the so-called inspection was what everyone has known all along — a convenient excuse to catch a ride on a helicopter”, and it called on the minister to apologize.

Will the minister bring this to an end today by doing the honourable thing and apologizing?

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, I was called back to work from personal time. Any suggestion that there was a re-tasking or a diversion of search and rescue aircraft from its actual tasking is simply untrue.

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister continues to mislead the House. He keeps pretending that there was a planned exercise. We all know there was no planned exercise. If the minister has documentation to the contrary, he should table it this afternoon. In the absence of that documentation, he should stand in his place and do the honourable thing, the right thing, and apologize to Canadians and their Parliament.

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for his calm, reasonable question. I was called back from personal time to go back to work, as I have said many times. That is what happened.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, the Minister of National Defence tried to claim that his trip was “a search and rescue exercise that we had been trying to arrange for some time”. However, the documents show that the opposite is true. The minister used the so-called search and

rescue exercise as a pretext to cover up his inappropriate use of our country's emergency resources.

Why does he continue to hide the truth? When will he finally apologize to Canadians?

• (1435)

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my answer remains the same. I was called back from my vacation to go back to work.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment is embarrassing Canada by announcing in Durban that we will not commit to the next phase of the international climate change agreement. Even a major country like China is putting forward a constructive proposal for the reduction of greenhouse gases and criticizing Canada's position.

We have a duty to our children and grandchildren not to destroy their planet.

Why is Canada totally abdicating its leadership responsibilities on the world stage?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we will not do is take the Liberals' approach to managing our energy sector and our environment. The national energy program cost hundreds of thousands of jobs in western Canada. The Kyoto protocol did not have an implementation plan. The green shift would put a carbon tax on everything—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor.

Ms. Michelle Rempel: —which would devastate our economy.

We are going to sign on to international agreement that takes into consideration all major emitters to see real change.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, former minister Chuck Strahl said that the housing crisis in Attawapiskat has been “a slow-moving train wreck for a long time”. Yet, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs claimed to have known nothing and when asked about the crisis in two neighbouring communities, the minister said it was news to him.

Would the minister now admit that, at the current funding levels, the people of Attawapiskat will be properly housed in 54 years?

Oral Questions

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is working with willing partners to improve the quality of life for aboriginal people across the country. We have made significant targeted investments in first nations priorities like education and housing. We are working in collaboration at the community, regional and national levels. We will continue to invest in practical and innovative solutions to get results for aboriginal people across Canada.

* * *

[Translation]

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we cannot remain indifferent to teenage suicide, which has taken the lives of young people like Jaimie Hubley and Marjorie Raymond, two victims of bullying.

The Government of Canada has a role to play in the fight against this scourge among our youth and in suicide prevention. Our children are the true assets of our society.

My question is for the Prime Minister, not only as a politician, but also as a father.

What real steps does he plan to take to ensure peace of mind for young people like Noémie, Joey and Nelka, who appeared on the Quebec program *Tout le monde en parle* yesterday, so that they and thousands of teens like them can thrive in our society?

[English]

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, bullying is something that none of us in the House would tolerate for our children. It is not something that should ever be tolerated for anyone who is attending school and trying to get an education.

At the federal level there are some programs that we are funding, in Ontario specifically, but we encourage programs that do deal specifically with bullying to talk to us. We would like to continue to help with that.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the EU has imposed new sanctions on Syria targeting the state-owned General Petroleum Corporation, Suncor's business partner in Syria. Last week the minister admitted he had no idea how much money the Assad regime makes off Suncor's work, yet the Conservatives are happy to exempt Suncor's partner from Canadian sanctions.

Why is the government letting a Canadian company help provide large profits to the Assad regime?

•(1440)

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the sanctions against Syria are targeted specifically against the Assad regime. They are not targeting the people of Syria.

Suncor production in Syria is keeping the lights on in Syrian homes. This has a significant impact on the public and allows them to continue their efforts to fight for freedom and democracy.

While I am on the subject, I would advise all Canadians to leave Syria as soon as possible.

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the partnership also provides loads of funds to the Syrian regime.

[Translation]

The United Nations has confirmed that over 4,000 people have been killed since March and over 14,000 are being detained, according to estimates. It is time this government took serious action and increased pressure on the Assad regime.

Will the government follow the European Union's lead and increase sanctions against Syria, including the state-owned oil company?

[English]

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear, Canada stands with the Syrian people in their efforts to secure freedom and democracy. We have targeted sanctions against the regime of President Assad. We will continue to do that. We have sent a very strong message to the government of President Assad that his reign of terror is unacceptable to Canadians.

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ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the growing number of allegations of sexual harassment in the RCMP is very disturbing. This weekend yet another constable came forward with allegations of near daily lewd comments and discrimination. Her case was so bad she had to quit the force.

The very integrity of the RCMP is at stake. Yet, the government is sitting on its hands. Why will it not stand up to protect these women? How does it plan on getting the harassment out of the RCMP?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely concerned about these types of reports. That is why, in consultation with Commissioner Paulson, the new RCMP commissioner, I have asked the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP to investigate allegations of systemic failures to deal appropriately with sexual harassment on the force.

It is imperative that all members of the RCMP be free to face the daily and expected challenges of a day's work without harassment and without fear of mistreatment by co-workers and superiors.

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we really hope this produces results, because this is not the first time we have heard that.

We are now hearing from another RCMP officer who is complaining about suffering sexual harassment almost daily. She says she was the victim of obscene remarks and discrimination that have no place in the RCMP. The growing list of similar allegations is another blow to the RCMP's reputation.

Oral Questions

Does this government plan to turn a blind eye to these women's reports of systematic harassment on the part of high-ranking RCMP officials? Will it stand up to defend these women and do more than just call an inquiry? The facts exist; it is time to act.

[English]

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the member for bringing this matter to my attention. Of course, this is something that had been raised with us previously and that is why we took the exceptional step, in consultation with the new commissioner, to ask the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP to investigate allegations of systemic failures to deal appropriately with sexual harassment on the force.

* * *

JUSTICE

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are concerned about crime, which is one reason why they gave our government a strong mandate to keep our streets and communities safe.

Canadians lose confidence in the justice system when offenders who commit sexual crimes against children receive sentences which do not reflect the severity of the crime. This is also true of drug dealers who sell drugs to children or who bring dangerous drugs like heroin, cocaine or crystal meth into Canada. We hear from front line experts, like police and victims, that we need tougher sentences for people who are engaged in this kind of activity.

Could the Minister of Justice please inform the House about the latest steps he has taken to help keep our streets and communities safe?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the hon. member for all the hard work he does on justice issues.

I am pleased to inform the House that all members will have the opportunity this evening to support the safe streets and communities act when it comes up for a vote. This important legislation cracks down on pedophiles, drug dealers, drug producers, arsonists, and the most serious violent and repeat young offenders.

I was speaking earlier today with Dale McFee from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. He told me that this bill is fully supported by his organization and by police across Canada. It should be supported by everybody in the House as well.

* * *

• (1445)

AVIATION SAFETY

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 16 years ago the Transportation Safety Board of Canada recommended that all planes, large and small, install the terrain warning system. This system provides the pilots of planes that are about to crash with early warning so that they have time to react.

In 13 years, the Liberals did nothing. For six years, three Conservative ministers did nothing. Why does the minister take so long to act on this warning system when lives are at stake?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is strongly committed to strengthening aviation safety for Canadians. The new proposed regulations will significantly reduce the risk of airplane crashes on land and water.

Ms. Olivia Chow (Trinity—Spadina, NDP): Mr. Speaker, studies show that the terrain warning system prevents close to 100% of accidents. The U.S. and EU required all planes to have this warning system years ago. Since 1997, 35 planes were flown into the ground, leading to the death of 100 people and 46 serious injuries. Many of these lives could have been saved.

These warning system regulations were on the minister's desk since August. What will happen in the next five years before these regulations are enforced?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like I said before, our government is strongly committed to strengthening aviation safety for Canadians. The Transportation Safety Board recommends the use and carrying of terrain awareness equipment, and we agree. That is why we will continue in this way, and it will save lives. We will always continue to do what is necessary to improve aviation safety.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government is trying to remove important safeguards that keep genetically modified crops separate from non-GMO crops. If the government has its way, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency will no longer test food and seeds that contain low-level concentrations of GMOs, but even small traces of GMOs can compromise our trade with Europe and Asia.

Why will the government not tell Canadians the truth about their food, and why is it willing to put our trade with our partners at risk?

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): From that question, Mr. Speaker, I can only understand the member for Welland has this completely backwards. We are trying to protect our food and make sure that there are no trade actions taken when there is a low-level presence, less than 1%. That is the right thing to do to enhance our trade and keep product moving.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is always the same lack of transparency whether we are dealing with Attawapiskat, the Kyoto protocol or GMOs. Judging by these answers, Canadians' health is obviously not a priority for this government.

Allowing goods that contain even a low-level presence of GMOs into the country without the authorization of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency could destroy organic farming, which is booming and creating jobs, but this government is so eager to please the agri-food giants that it is eliminating all controls without listening to expert advice or considering the consequences.

Why does this government continue to act in secret, in the interests of its big business friends, rather than protecting the health of consumers?

[English]

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing secret about doing consultations with industry. We are continuing to discuss with industry the best way to move forward on low-level presence. Of course, globally, everyone was at zero. With the efficacy of scientific testing, it has gone beyond that now. Zero is no longer zero.

There is a global movement to move toward 1%, which of course will not hurt organics. It is actually there to protect organics to make sure we all ship in the same containers and we all ship on the same ocean-going freight. It is a matter of making sure that organics are protected when there is a crossover like that.

We are doing the right thing. We are consulting with everybody who is involved and we will gazette the answers in due course.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government prides itself on promoting democracy around the world. Since 19—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. I have asked several times now that members hold off on their applause until after the question has been put.

The hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt.

• (1450)

Hon. Jim Karygiannis: Mr. Speaker, since 1999 Canada's efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo have included peacekeepers and millions of dollars in aid for rehabilitation and health care, yet, when it came to the recent election in the DRC, Canada sent six international observers, despite requests from the community to send more.

Why did the government abandon Canada's investment in the people of Congo during their recent election?

Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada is very proud to always be involved in election

Oral Questions

observation where required and when asked to participate. In fact, we sent the maximum number of Canadians allowed by the EU commission. The election observers joined 46 long-term and 72 other observers as part of the EU mission. We are proud of Canada's participation.

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CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has negotiated the perimeter security deal with the United States under a dark cloak of secrecy, and the Privacy Commissioner has expressed concerns, especially given the fact that both countries have very different privacy regimes. For example, in the United States, there is no independent body mandated to investigate privacy concerns with respect to the government handling of data.

Why did the government not consult Canadians on a deal that compromises their privacy? If the government is redefining our continental union, should Canadians not have had the opportunity to comment?

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we consulted Canadians extensively as we worked with the U.S.A. to develop this action plan. When we have more to announce we will do that, but I assure the member that the privacy of Canadians is very important to all of us. The United States will not end up with more information than there is already accessible.

* * *

[Translation]

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Saturday was the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. One Canadian in seven lives with a functional limitation. However, instead of presenting a real action plan to help these people integrate into the job market, the government has simply stopped tracking them. This is a dishonest practice that does not help the situation.

Instead of doing more for people with disabilities, why is this government refusing to adopt a tangible action plan?

Oral Questions

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are doing. In fact, we have created the disability savings plan. More than 46,000 plans have been set up. We have provided accessibility funds to make more than 600 buildings throughout Canada, such as community centres, more accessible. We have also improved the accessibility of federal offices and buildings. Unfortunately, the NDP voted against our efforts.

[English]

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are in danger of leading a generation of disabled Canadians behind. Most disability programs are linked to employment and the government is ignoring the jobs crisis in Canada. How are disabled Canadians supposed to access programs that depend on employment, like long-term disability, when they are having trouble finding a good job in the first place?

Where is the government's job plan? Why is it waiting to act?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that everyone has full inclusivity in all aspects of society, including the disabled. We have agreements with the provinces for labour market agreements with persons with disabilities so that on the ground, where the needs are best known, the provinces can help deliver the help that the disabled need to get the skills to get the jobs.

We have also made it possible and easier for them to finance and access post-secondary education and to make the payments of loans easier. We have even made over 600 community buildings across Canada more accessible. Unfortunately, the NDP voted against that.

* * *

•(1455)

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for weeks now, a shadow of uncertainty has been cast over the health of B.C. salmon due to the spread of premature and unsubstantiated claims. Infectious salmon anemia poses no risk to people and Pacific salmon appear to be resistant to the disease. However, at the forefront of the fear-mongering are members of the NDP who never seem to miss an opportunity to attack Canadian industry and undermine consumer confidence in our products.

Could the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans please update the House on the outcomes of intensified scientific scrutiny of this issue?

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, results from the extensive testing carried out over the last weeks have revealed that there are, in fact, no confirmed cases of ISA in B.C. waters. We continue the regular testing of all species of salmon in B.C., as we have for at least a decade.

The bottom line is that B.C. salmon is healthy and safe. As the member noted, the NDP's premature conclusions on serious matters such as these is completely irresponsible and, furthermore, is damaging to the Canadian industry.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, another week, another problem. Now we learn that the F-35s are developing a disturbing number of cracks in the fuselage. We have a government committed to a plane that cannot land in the north, cannot communicate in the north, cannot refuel anywhere and is full of cracks. The only thing about this plane that can take off are the costs.

In May 2010, the minister said that, in Canada, we will have "an open, competitive, transparent process". Where is it?

Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected our government to equip our Canadian Forces with the best aircraft, the best benefits for workers at the best price for taxpayers, and that is what we are doing.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. associate minister has the floor.

Hon. Julian Fantino: The development phase ensures areas of improvement are identified and addressed before Canada delivers its aircraft to our people.

That is the very same party that sent our men and women into Afghanistan wearing green uniforms, black boots and without proper equipment.

We are doing our job.

* * *

[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board was forced to change the mandate of the panel studying the Old Harry project because it could not perform its duties in the other provinces. That is a worrisome decision by the Conservative government and it creates confusion. It could have been avoided if the minister had set up a federal review panel from the very start, which he refused to do.

Will the minister admit that he failed to fulfill his responsibilities?

[English]

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the decision made was to increase the authority of the commissioner so that he could have the power to opine on the entire project and not just be confined to the area that was within provincial jurisdiction.

The member opposite should have been happy with this result. We have an independent regulatory body that is doing its job in the interests of this country.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians value the work that our front-line police officers do every day to keep our streets and communities safe, and this often comes at no small price to their own personal safety.

Yesterday, near the town of Breton next to my riding, there was a serious incident involving the shooting of an individual who had barricaded himself in his home and exchanged gunfire with the RCMP.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please update the House on the status of this incident?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his unwavering support of our front line police officers. I am happy to report that yesterday the RCMP, in co-operation with the Edmonton Police Service, safely secured a very dangerous situation and successfully arrested their suspect.

I would specifically thank the two RCMP officers who sustained gunshot wounds while securing the premises. On behalf of the government, we wish them a very speedy recovery.

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SENIORS

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, seniors have paid their dues to our country, but the government demonstrates over and over again that seniors just are not a priority.

Fortunately, the NDP is listening to seniors. We held a round table discussion this morning to hear first-hand about the challenges seniors face. That is in contrast to the government's attitude of ignoring seniors' needs for affordable housing, pension security and pharmacare.

Why does the government refuse to allow our seniors to age with dignity?

• (1500)

Hon. Alice Wong (Minister of State (Seniors), CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians gave us a strong mandate to continue doing more for seniors than any other government. It was our government that introduced pension income splitting, lower taxes for seniors, increased funding for elder abuse awareness and provided the largest GIS increase in a quarter century. What did the opposition members do? They voted against all of these measures.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a report that has just been released, the OECD confirms in black and white what people already know: the gap between the rich and the poor is getting wider all the time. Worse yet, Canada is one of the worst, among other things because of the increasingly harsh restrictions on employment insurance. As a result, despite repeated calls in favour of an overhaul, almost 60% of the unemployed are unable to qualify for this program.

Routine Proceedings

Since this government is insensitive to the fate of the unemployed, does it agree that the solution is to allow Quebec to manage the employment insurance program, as the Conseil national des chômeurs et chômeuses is calling for?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we believe the best way to help the unemployed is to provide them with training so that they can find jobs. Employment is the thing that will improve the situation and the OECD agrees. That is why, with our economic action plan, we provided training to more than 1.2 million Canadians in order to help them.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, treaties entitled, "Agreement Between Canada and the Republic of Costa Rica for the Exchange of Information on Tax Matters", done at San José on August 11, 2011; "Agreement Between Canada and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Respect of Aruba for the Exchange of Information with Respect to Tax Matters", done at Ottawa on October 20, 2011; and amendments to the Agreement Establishing the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, adopted by the Board of Governors on September 30, 2011.

An explanatory memorandum is included with each treaty.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in relation to the supplementary estimates (B).

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. I am pleased to report that the committee has considered the supplementary estimates under Foreign Affairs and International Trade for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012, and reports the same.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADA LABOUR CODE

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-376, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Employment Insurance Act (family leave).

Routine Proceedings

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to introduce this bill today. My colleague, France Bonsant, the former member of Parliament for Compton—Stanstead, introduced this bill once before. It is a huge honour for me to do so again on her behalf and on behalf of the Bloc Québécois.

This bill amends the Canada Labour Code to allow employees to take unpaid leave from work for the following family-related reasons: a) the inability of their minor child to carry on regular activities because the child suffered a serious physical injury during the commission or as the direct result of a criminal offence; b) the disappearance of their minor child; c) the suicide of their spouse, common-law partner or child; or d) the death of their spouse, common-law partner or child during the commission or as the direct result of a criminal offence.

This bill would also amend the Employment Insurance Act to allow these employees and self-employed persons to receive benefits while on leave.

I urge all members in this House to support this bill, in the name of all of the families who are suffering.

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

● (1505)

[English]

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I had my earpiece off for a few moments and I did not hear you ask for tabling of reports. With the permission of the House, I would like to table a report.

The Speaker: Is there consent to revert to presenting reports from committees?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food entitled, “Supplementary Estimates, 2011-12”. We dealt with five motions, votes 1b, 10b, 20b and 25b. I am happy to table it.

* * *

INCOME TAX ACT

Mr. Russ Hiebert (South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-377, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce a bill that would amend the Income Tax Act for labour organizations.

Labour organizations play a valuable role in society, representing and defending the rights of workers to health and safety on the job and ensuring that they have proper compensation for the work they do. As a result of the valuable role that they play, our government has provided substantial benefits through the Income Tax Act to support the work of labour organizations.

This bill would amend the Income Tax Act to require the public disclosure of labour organization finances. Public disclosure will help the public better understand how the benefits that are provided are being utilized. This is in line with the increased transparency we have introduced for government departments, agencies and native reserves. It is also in line with the public disclosure required of charities and political parties, which also receive substantial public benefits through the tax system.

I want to note that public disclosure is strongly supported by the Canadian public and by union workers themselves.

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

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I offer the following travel motion for consideration. I move:

That, in relation to its study on the review of the delivery of front-line health and well-being services for Canadian veterans, seven members of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs be authorized to travel to Vancouver, British Columbia, and to Edmonton and Cold Lake, Alberta, in December 2011, and that the necessary staff accompany the committee.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

● (1510)

PETITIONS

ASBESTOS

Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present a petition signed by literally thousands of Canadians from all across the country.

The petitioners call upon the House of Commons and Parliament assembled to take note that asbestos is the greatest industrial killer that the world has ever known. They point out that more Canadians now die from asbestos than all other industrial causes combined, yet Canada remains one of the largest producers and exporters of asbestos in the world. They also complain that Canada spends millions of dollars subsidizing the asbestos industry and blocking international efforts to curb its use.

The petitioners call upon the government to ban asbestos in all of its forms and institute a just transition program for asbestos workers and the communities they live in; they call upon the government to end all government subsidies of asbestos, both in Canada and abroad; and, finally, they call upon the government to stop blocking international health and safety conventions designed to protect workers from asbestos, such as the Rotterdam Convention.

HUMAN SMUGGLING

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure to present two petitions today. The first deals with Bill C-4.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the Government of Canada that Bill C-4, the preventing human smugglers from abusing Canada's immigration system act, violates sections 7 and 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and furthermore that Bill C-4 violates Canada's international obligations as set forth in articles 28, 31 and 33 of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, violates several articles in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The petitioners point out that smuggling is already punishable by life imprisonment or a fine of up to \$1 million in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

For that reason, these petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to withdraw Bill C-4.

HEALTH

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is also my pleasure to present a second petition calling for a royal commission on the environment and health.

I quote: "We the undersigned residents of Canada draw the attention of the Government to the following: that during the past 70 years tens of thousands of chemicals, many of which are cancer-causing, have been used in industrial processes and the production of consumer goods; that some of these chemicals now contaminate our air, water and food; that over the last 10-15 years, new technologies, such as those that create genetically modified organisms and nanoparticles, have developed rapidly and are being used in the production of consumer goods; that there have been few independent peer review studies and no transparent, inclusive, in-depth discussion of possible environmental and health impacts of these substances and technologies; that protection of human health and the environment requires rigorous application of the precautionary principle;"

"Therefore, your petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to appoint a royal commission on the environment and health with a mandate to examine and make a certain number of recommendations".

The Speaker: I would remind members not to read the actual petition, but just to provide a succinct summary.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITIES ACT

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition that has been signed by Canadians across the country from small towns and big cities. It is regarding Bill C-10, which we are going to be voting on later today.

The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that this bill currently bundles together too many pieces of unrelated legislation, some of which make sense and some of which do not. They also wish to draw the attention of this House to the fact that there is a big problem with implementation, because Ontario and Quebec may refuse to pay the costs of some of the measures that would be downloaded to them.

Routine Proceedings

Therefore, the petitioners call on Parliament to separate Bill C-10 into its pieces and allow members to vote on each part separately.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today signed by over 1,300 people who want to see the Employment Insurance Act amended. We want to increase the number of weeks of compassionate care benefits for parents who must care for a loved one or child from 6 to 50.

I would like to pay tribute to the courage and determination of Anne-Marie Gravel, who initiated this petition. She is a constituent of mine whose son recently passed away from cancer.

The government must pay more attention to caregivers. We are talking about their quality of life. This is a matter of respect.

● (1515)

[English]

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition regarding CCSVI. International data suggest that one-third of MS patients significantly improve following the procedure, one-third moderately improve and one-third show no to little improvement. Regardless, no drugs have ever reversed the symptoms of devastating MS.

Studies from Argentina, Britain, Bulgaria, India, Poland and the United States show a significant improvement in quality of life. Moreover, we have peer-reviewed literature, presentations from eight international conferences, reports from returning Canadian MS patients treated outside Canada as well as recommendations by such groups as the American Society of Interventional Radiology and the Canadian Society for Vascular Surgery.

The petitioners are calling on the Minister of Health to consult experts actively engaged in diagnosis and treatment of CCSVI to undertake phase III clinical trials on an urgent basis in multiple centres across Canada and to require follow-up care.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the following question will be answered today: No. 187.

Routine Proceedings

[Text]

Question No. 187—**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:**

With regard to Canadian Coast Guard Search and Rescue (SAR) Centres: (a) does the government plan on using the closure of the St. John's SAR Centre as a template for the future closure of the Quebec City SAR Centre and, if so, when will the Quebec City SAR Centre close; (b) what will the total transition costs associated with these closures be; (c) how many part-time, full-time and contract employees will lose jobs due to these closures; (d) will employees who lose jobs due to the closures be offered any type of severance pay and, if so, how much will be offered, (i) what will the total costs associated with any severance be; (e) what was the total operating cost for Halifax, Trenton, St. John's and Quebec City SAR Centres for 2010; (f) what were the 2010 operating costs for the individual centres, (i) Halifax, (ii) Trenton, (iii) St. John's, (iv) Quebec City; (g) what are the government's projected annual operating costs for the two remaining centres, (i) combined and individually, (ii) Halifax, (iii) Trenton; (h) what are the costs associated with needed infrastructure upgrades to accommodate the proposed changes in (i) Halifax, (ii) Trenton; (i) will all the employees at the remaining centres in Halifax and Trenton be fully bilingual at the highest capacity; and (j) will the government have to spend money and resources on improving French language abilities by SAR employees following the closure of the Quebec City SAR Centre and what will the total costs associated with this be?

Hon. Keith Ashfield (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), work is under way to consolidate both the St. John's and Quebec Marine Rescue Sub-Centres, MRSC, into Halifax and Trenton Joint Rescue Coordination Centres, with completion scheduled in spring 2012. Due to the complexity of the project, full implementation will not occur until the Canadian Coast Guard, CCG, is comfortable that the present level of safety and service can be maintained in both official languages. The Coast Guard has completed initial operational reviews on both St. John's and Quebec Sub-centres and a national implementation team, jointly participated by the CCG and the Department of National Defence, will apply the best practices from both MRSC consolidations to ensure that the transition will be seamless and public safety will be assured.

With regard to (b), the total cost to consolidate both centres will include expenses such as hiring, relocation and training costs for employees and changes to existing centres and communications systems. The total cost is unknown at this time, as expenses will continue to be incurred over the next several months.

With regard to (c), a total of 23 indeterminate, i.e., full-time, employees are in an "Affected" status in accordance with the work force adjustment policies in their union/management collective agreement, as their positions are being eliminated. These include 12 in St. John's MRSC, six in Quebec MRSC, and five at the Halifax Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, JRCC. Twelve new positions will be created, six in Halifax, six in Trenton, and all affected employees at the St. John's and Quebec MRSCs were offered relocation as part of the consolidation implementation. Each employee is being assisted in order to meet their needs in a timely manner. There are also three term employees on contract whose term will not be extended, as the position is being eliminated.

With regard to (d), the 23 full-time employees are being offered assistance in accordance with the work force adjustment policies of their collective agreement. As each employee has a unique plan to address their situation, individual or total costs are not available at this time

With regard to (e), the total Coast Guard operating costs for salaries, operations and management for these four centres in 2010-11 were \$5.6 million.

With regard to (f), the total Coast Guard operating costs for salaries, operations and management for 2010-11 were as follows: Halifax, \$1.9 million; Trenton, \$1 million; St John's, \$1.7 million; and Quebec, \$930,000.

With regard to (g), the projected total operating costs for salaries, operations and management for both JRCC Trenton and JRCC Halifax are approximately \$4.5 million, while the breakdown between the two JRCCs is still being finalized.

With regard to (h), no incremental accommodation costs are being incurred at the JRCC Halifax, due to a pre-existing renovation plan already being put in place. Concerning JRCC Trenton, this is being determined at this time, so no estimate is yet available.

With regard to (i), language requirements at the MRSCs are currently set at BBB by the Coast Guard and deemed satisfactory by previous reviews conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. Following consolidation, both Trenton and Halifax Joint Rescue Coordination Centres will have the capacity to provide services in both official languages and bilingual capacity at the CBC level, an increase above the levels that are in place now at both Halifax and Trenton. The level of bilingual service is regularly reviewed by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

With regard to (j), as is the case throughout the Canadian Coast Guard, resources will be dedicated to maintaining and/or improving the French language abilities of the Coast Guard's search and rescue coordinators. However, total costs will be determined following the staffing of these positions.

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[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 179, 183 and 184 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Business of Supply

[Text]

Question No. 179—**Ms. Denise Savoie**:

With regard to Transport Canada, and the government's role in the management and operation of the Victoria Harbour Airport (VHA) and the Victoria Harbour: (a) what is the process by which Transport Canada or its agents have evaluated, are evaluating, and plan to evaluate the impact on quality of life, noise and air pollution and the frequency of air traffic (including takeoffs, landings, taxiing, and other related activities) associated with operations at the VHA; (b) to date, what analysis has the government conducted with respect to the effects on the communities surrounding the airport and their residents of the impact on quality of life, noise, air pollutants and the frequency of air traffic (including takeoffs, landings, taxiing, and other related activities) associated with operations at the VHA; (c) what further analysis does the government plan to conduct with respect to the effects on the communities surrounding the airport and their residents of the impact on quality of life, noise, air pollutants and the frequency of air traffic (including takeoffs, landings, taxiing, and other related activities) associated with operations at the VHA; (d) what are the parameters of all past and planned analysis with respect to the effects on the communities surrounding the airport and their residents of the impact on quality of life, noise, air pollutants and the frequency of air traffic (including takeoffs, landings, taxiing, and other related activities) associated with operations at the VHA; (e) what steps has the government taken, and will the government take, to address problems associated with the impact on quality of life noise, air pollutants and air traffic frequency (including takeoffs, landings, taxiing, and other related activities) associated with operations at the VHA; (f) what is the timeline for completion of this process, including but not limited to (i) any evaluations, (ii) any decision to regulate or impose rules with respect to noise and air pollution and the frequency of air traffic; (g) with respect to the past and planned resident's committees and any public consultation relating to the VHA, what will be the composition of the resident's committee; (h) what action has the government taken on the basis of past results, information, and recommendations arising out of public consultation thus far, including the past resident's committee; (i) what are the terms of reference for the new resident's committee, including but not limited to scope, powers, membership, evaluation criteria; (j) how will Transport Canada and the VHA evaluate and act upon the results, information, concerns and recommendations of the residents committee; (k) what policies, practices and procedures do Transport Canada and the VHA have in place to mitigate all real or perceived conflicts of interest between Transport's Canada's role as both operator of the VHA and as the government body having jurisdiction over aeronautics; (l) what are the current government policy, practices and procedures relating to its federal responsibilities with respect to noise and traffic pollution; (m) what are the details of all current draft regulations pertaining to the VHA and its operations; (n) when does the government or its agents plan to publish permanent air safety or other regulations pertaining to the VHA and its operations; (o) does the VHA have a complete Safety Management System (SMS); (p) what are the details of the process by which Transport Canada is assessing the application to build a mega yacht marina in Victoria Harbour (Marina); (q) what policies, practices and procedures do Transport Canada and the VHA have in place to mitigate all real or perceived conflicts of interest between Transport's Canada's role as both operator of the VHA and as the government body having jurisdiction to approve or deny the construction of the Marina under the Navigable Waters Protection Act; (r) what are the details of current timeline for the approval or rejection of the Marina application; (s) what are the details of the timeline for the completion of the VHA's assessment of the Marina under its SMS; (t) who is bearing the cost of the VHA's assessment of the Marina and Transport Canada's; (u) what is the estimated cost of all activities related to Transport Canada and the VHA's assessments of the Marina; (v) what are the details of the impact, including but not limited to safety, would the Marina have on marine and air traffic in Victoria harbour; and (w) how is Transport Canada including the impact of the Marina on non-motorized vessels such as kayaks and canoes in its review of the Marina proposal?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 183—**Mr. Sean Casey**:

With respect to Conditional Sentencing in Canada: (a) what is the number of conditional sentences issued since 2002 to present and for what offences under the criminal code; (b) what is the expected financial impact of the increased prison population, and longer prison terms expected as a result of the passage of Bill C-10 (An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts) and what financial impact will this have on the provinces; (c) what assessment, if any, has been conducted on

the impact, including financial, of eliminating conditional sentences as provided in Bill C-10, on the administration of criminal justice by the provinces; (d) has the government received correspondence from stakeholder groups advocating for elimination of conditional sentencing, and if so, what are the details of this correspondence; (e) what, if any, advice was provided or sought from Corrections Canada and its unions with respect to eliminating conditional sentencing, and (f) what advice, briefing notes, and or assessments have been provided to the Minister and senior officials by non Canadian jurisdictions with respect to conditional sentencing and other crime related initiatives?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 184—**Mr. Dany Morin**:

What is the total amount of government funding since fiscal year 2004-2005, up to and including the current fiscal year, allocated within the constituency of Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, identifying each department or agency, initiative and amount?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Ms. Candice Hooppner: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?**Some hon. members**: Agreed.**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—CLIMATE CHANGE**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Langley has five minutes left to conclude his remarks.

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was speaking to the NDP's disingenuous motion on a very important topic, the environment, and what we do to provide a clean environment for this generation and the generations to follow. I was sharing with the House what we are doing in the way of funding in Canada and internationally.

Internationally, Canada was one of the first countries to step up with its fair share of climate change adaptation funding for developing countries, something we pledged to do under the Copenhagen accord. The opposition opposed those dollars going to developing countries, countries that are in need.

We heard from a number of opposition members. They get that the climate is changing. A changing climate it is having a very serious effect on a number of people in Canada and globally, yet when it comes to approving the funds for adaptation, opposition members vote against it. I am having a difficult time, and I think Canadians are having a difficult time, connecting the dots. The opposition members say they care about a changing climate and call on the government to take leadership—and we now have a government that is taking leadership, getting things done and providing funding—yet they vote against that funding. Canadians have great difficulty with that, as do I.

Business of Supply

Internationally, we are contributing \$45 million this fiscal year to help developing countries adapt to climate change as part of fast-start financing under the Copenhagen accord. Opposition members voted against that. Over four years, we have also contributed over \$238 million to the Global Environmental Facility. Some of that came from our fast-track financing envelope, and the rest came from our international assistance envelope. Of course, being consistent, they voted against that. In turn, this funding reinforces our \$100 million contribution in 2008-09 to the World Bank's pilot project in climate change resilience. Of course, they voted against that.

Helping Canadians and our international partners around the world adapt to the challenges posed by climate change is an important part of our overall approach to climate change. Making adjustments in our decisions, activities and thinking because of observed or expected changes in climate is essential if we want to manage the risks associated with a changing climate.

If we were to ask the average Canadian if they would support an international agreement that included 27% or 85% of emitters globally, we would find Canadians support 85%. They disregard the 27%. That is the Kyoto protocol; the Copenhagen accord is the 85%. The 27% includes no major emitters; the 85% under the Copenhagen accord includes all the major emitters. Not only do all Canadians support that, all scientists support it. If we take the issue of climate change seriously and really believe it, we have to have all the major emitters participating or it will not be possible to address the issue globally.

About a month ago we had a delegation from the EU. That was exactly their message: that we have to have all the major emitters included.

This is what *Nature* magazine had to say about a month ago:

One of the goals of Kyoto was to make a relatively small dent in emissions, with the prospect of significantly bigger dents to come. Without the world's two largest polluters—the United States and China—on board that now seems impossible.

There is no need to kill it. The treaty is already weakened and will prove hard to revive. The Durban meeting should be where the Kyoto Protocol, as we know it, goes to die.

• (1520)

A well-known Liberal made this comment in speaking about the former Liberal government. He said:

Instead, the government's plan in terms of the Kyoto agreement was basically written on the back of an airplane napkin on the way to Kyoto... There was no real negotiation with the provinces or with industry sectors. In fact—

The Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member as his time has expired. We will move on to questions and comments with the hon. member for Etobicoke North.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the government is abdicating leadership in meeting international targets and in setting science-based targets. In meeting these targets, it has reduced its own targets by 90%.

The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development recently examined 35 federal climate change programs. Some had performance measures, but some did not. No one was responsible for the “disjointed, confused and non-transparent patchwork”. No one was tracking the results of the demonstration projects and clean technology incentives, industrial subsidies and tax

credits that the government had announced. The environment commissioner told parliamentarians that he could find no link between the government spending \$9.2 billion and progress on climate change.

Could the hon. member tell us what progress on climate change Canadians are getting for their \$9.2 billion?

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, if the member remembers her history, it was her leader in the last Parliament who said, “We didn't get it done”, referring to the previous Liberal government. It was a reference to 13 dark years when the Liberals had a chance to sign on to Kyoto, ratify it and get something done, but they got absolutely nothing done. He asked why we did not get it done.

We hear the echoes in this chamber of the former Liberal environment minister saying, “Do you think it is easy to make priorities?”

We listen to the echoes of history and it was the environment commissioner who said that the Liberals were really good at making announcements, but before the confetti hit the ground they forgot those promises.

That all changed in 2006 when the Conservative government came into power with a strong mandate. We have been tirelessly working for a cleaner environment. Canadians know that. Internationally, we are well respected. We have said that we need a new international agreement with all the major emitters and that is the way the world is heading.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the motion could perhaps help this government, because we want the government to take action. The government must think about the future, about the long term and about future generations. It must think about the future economy. A green economy is coming. Countries like Germany and even China are already investing in this economy.

So the government must take action now to reap the benefits later. We are proposing that the cost of pollution be included in the price we pay now. If we do not pay for pollution now, future generations will end up doing so. The government is not preparing for the future. We are proposing a system such as cap and trade. That is why we want to put a price on carbon.

Could the member opposite confirm that the Conservatives will ensure that future generations do not end up paying for this government's inaction?

Business of Supply

• (1525)

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, Europe addressed the issue of the price of carbon continentally. We have said that we will deal with the issue of a cap and trade agreement continentally, if the United States does the same thing continentally.

The United States has a target of a 20% reduction of 2005 levels by 2020. We have exactly the same target. We are doing it continentally.

When we brush the facade off the question, it is: Do we support a carbon tax?

Absolutely not. We heard from the member for Vancouver East just moments ago saying that Bill C-469 was a wonderful bill and it passed through the House. That was because of the coalition that had come together to support a carbon tax.

Canadians said no to a carbon tax. That is one of the big reasons why the Conservative Party is the Government of Canada.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am speaking on the issue of climate change today, the opposition supply day motion. This is an incredibly important topic for discussion in the House. The science is overwhelmingly clear on the matter of climate change. Anthropomorphic-caused climate change is happening. We as a society, as Canadians and as citizens of this planet need to act to reduce emissions.

I was reading a report published in September 2011 by the National Academy of Sciences in the United States, in which it surveyed all of the scientific research on climate change. It found 98% confidence among 1,372 climate change researchers that climate change is caused by human activity, largely by the emission of greenhouse gases. This is overwhelming evidence. The conclusion was clear.

It surveyed some 1,372 researchers who had produced many publications. The paper was written by professors Anderegg, Prall, Harold and Schneider, from leading universities like Stanford University in Stanford, California, the department of engineering at the University of Toronto, the Hewlett Foundation in California and the Woods Institute at Stanford University. These are leading researchers at respected academic institutions. They produced a peer-reviewed paper and the evidence is clear and overwhelming. Climate change is happening. It is caused by human activity, and it will have serious effects on our climate and ecosystems unless we act.

The science is clear. Most people who have read the research understand that the evidence continues to build and there is need for action on the part of governments. In fact, the Prime Minister, in addressing the Australian parliament some years ago, made the same point. Climate change is a serious challenge for humanity. We need demonstrated international action in order to combat this challenge.

Many of us in the House understand that climate change is a challenge that the federal government needs to address. The big question then becomes what exactly we are going to do about it. This is where the debate really starts to take hold.

The government has argued, and I support the government's position, that the solution is not for an extension of the Kyoto protocol. In fact, there are a number of third parties who have made this case. Recently, in *Nature*, the well-respected scientific journal, both an editorial and a separate commentary article suggested that clinging to the hope of an extension or phase two of Kyoto was not constructive. This would do more harm than good in achieving meaningful dialogue on how to fight climate change.

The editorial and the article both made the point that there is no chance that the world's two largest emitters, the United States and China, would agree to binding commitments within the Kyoto protocol. Leaving out those two major emitters would not be a good approach. In their words, it would do more harm than good to seek an extension to the Kyoto protocol. The article underlined that a binding all-or-nothing mentality has held sway ever since and the result has been nothing. The government also understands this. This is why the Minister of the Environment today in Durban announced that the government would not be agreeing to an extension of the Kyoto protocol.

• (1530)

Other third parties have made similar points. In fact, the United Kingdom's former chief scientist, Sir David King, has suggested that we abandon any approach that would see an extension to the Kyoto protocol. Instead he advocates a bottom-up approach, or what he terms "muscular bilateralism". Countries would make commitments on carbon reductions without the overarching framework of an international treaty.

Other respected third party research institutes, like the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, a respected American think tank, agree. Just last month, the Pew Center made the case that Kyoto needs to be let go and a new framework needs to be negotiated. That was in a paper by Elliot Diring in *Nature*.

A number of respected third parties, people who do not deny the science of climate change, who do want to see meaningful reductions in emissions, have all made the case that the Kyoto protocol is not the way to go. Instead, they suggest that, as called for in the Copenhagen and Cancun agreements, we should work toward a brand new global treaty that would do two critical things. The first is that it would include all major emitters around the world, whether developing or developed economies. The second is that it would ensure there is a mechanism by which member states can be held accountable.

This is exactly what the Government of Canada has been arguing we need to do in Durban as we undertake these negotiations under the UN framework.

It is clear that the government has a plan and a clear target. It has yet to be fully rolled out, but the government is committed to its plan. If there is anything that I know about this government and the Prime Minister, it is that when the government makes a commitment, it will do everything it can to achieve that commitment.

Business of Supply

On many public policy files, the government has demonstrated that, time after time, when it makes a public commitment and reiterates that commitment, it is serious. It will ensure that public policies are put in place to achieve that commitment.

Our commitment is to reduce greenhouse gases by 17% below 2005 levels. In fact, since we took office in 2006, greenhouse gas emissions are down substantially. We are not there yet, but we are moving in the right direction.

Do not just take it from me. It can be taken from a report that was recently published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development, an OECD-affiliated research organization. It analyzed federal and provincial greenhouse gas reduction plans throughout Canada. It concluded that, with all the measures that have already been announced, the government is 47% of the way to achieving its 17% reduction by 2020.

We have been in office now for five years. We have put in place measures that will achieve a 47% meeting of our 17% target. We have yet another eight years to go to achieve the other 53%.

I commend the Minister of the Environment for recently gazetting the draft regulations for the electrical and coal sectors. Other sectors, like the oil sands sector, will also be dealt with at some future date. Other major industrial emitters in the heartland of Ontario and Quebec will also be brought into the plan.

I am cautiously optimistic that our government will achieve its target of 17% reduction. Ensuring that we agree to an international framework that is consistent with these domestic targets is not only rational but also bargaining in good faith, rather than making commitments that we cannot meet.

These targets that we have in place domestically are aggressive. They will achieve meaningful reductions in greenhouse gases by 2020 that we have not been able to achieve in the period from 1990 to 2005.

I strongly support the government's position at Durban. I strongly support our approach to greenhouse gas reductions.

● (1535)

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very encouraged to hear the hon. member state that climate change is real, that it is clearly anthropogenic and that he recognizes the science. That is a rare opinion on that side of the House. I laud him for his courage in standing and saying that he believes in science and climate change science.

I was less impressed, though, with his feeling that the very weak targets and lack of commitment by the Conservatives was adequate and appropriate.

When moving past weak targets, will the hon. member move to real science-based targets, a real plan, a real strategy and a real accountability, as was found in the climate change accountability act introduced, first, by Jack Layton, then in the last House by myself and will be introduced again this time? I hope he will support that.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the comment of my colleague from the NDP that our target is not aggressive. It is actually quite aggressive. If we look at the period between 1990 and 2005 in Canada, greenhouse gases rose some

25%. What we have said is that for the period from 2005 to 2020, the second 15 year period of that 30 year period, we will reduce submissions by 17%. Not only are we stopping the growth in emissions under our plan, we are actually going to reduce them by 17%.

He is indeed right. The new target of the government that we announced after we took office in 2006 is not as aggressive as the Kyoto protocol that the former government signed on to and that was later ratified in early 2005. Nevertheless, we felt we were not able to achieve a 30% reduction, but we could achieve the 17% reduction. Therefore, I think that these are very aggressive targets. The plan has yet to be fully rolled out, but when it is, Canadians will see true action on climate change in the second 15 year period of which we are in the middle.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his commitment to climate change. However, I want to point out the government's targets are anything but aggressive. It has reduced its targets by 90%.

The Prime Minister and several members of his cabinet and his caucus previously have questioned the scientific evidence linking human activity to climate change, describing the Kyoto protocol as a socialist scheme.

The current Minister of the Environment has described Canada's position as a constructive approach. He has said there is an urgency to this. He has also said we do not need a binding convention. What we need is action and a mandate to work on an eventual binding convention. Is this contradiction government policy?

Although the minister insists Canada is making great strides in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the government's own plan shows it can get us only 25% of the way there.

I would like to know this from the hon. member. Where is the government's credible plan to address the remaining 75%?

● (1540)

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, the rest of the plan will be rolled out in the very near future. In fact, last year we brought out the regulations for passenger cars and light trucks. A number of months ago, the government gazetted the regulations for industries that utilize coal. Regulations for heavy trucks will be announced shortly at some near future date. The oil sands and other major industrial emitters that lie in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor will also be brought under the umbrella of the government's plan.

Business of Supply

The fact is that in five short years in office, we will achieve 47% of the 17% target we have committed to based on the actions already completed to date. That is after five short years in office. We have another eight years to go before we hit our target date of 2020. The government is going to be rolling out these regulations and these plans and it is going to achieve, for the first time since 1990, meaningful reductions in greenhouse gases. That was not the case under the previous government for the period of 1990 to 2005.

The plan is real, the targets are aggressive and our plan is halfway rolled out. I would suggest for members opposite that when we roll out the rest of our plan, we need their support to sell this plan to Canadians, to industry and to the country as a whole, because these will be tough and aggressive targets.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

I rise today to speak to this issue. Everyone in the House recognizes the importance of climate change and the impact it has on our environment, not just through slight shifts in temperature but the real economic impacts, as well as the fact that climate change has a real effect on species and our culture as well. Despite that, we obviously have very little agreement on how to move forward.

I think all of us can agree that we are very proud of the fact that Canada has always had a stellar reputation in the world as a leader in human rights and on environmental issues. Therefore, it is with a great deal of sadness today that I will read a quote that has damaged our standing in the world community.

Last week we saw some of the media coverage when the ambassador for South Africa spoke up about our role in Durban and how nervous they were that Canada could sabotage the talks going on in Durban, which are so crucial not only for our generation but for all our generations to come.

Over the last week we have been taken to task not by one nation but many nations for the lack of leadership that we have showed.

South African leaders, including Desmond Tutu, along with several African environmental groups, released a letter last week criticizing the government. It stated:

Canada, you were once considered a leader on global issues like human rights and environmental protection. Today, you're home to polluting tar sands oil, speeding the dangerous effects of climate change.

For us in Africa, climate change is a life and death issue. By dramatically increasing Canada's global warming pollution, tar sands mining and drilling makes the problem worse, and exposes million of Africans to more devastating drought and famine today and in the years to come.

That is a very sad legacy and sad comments for our young people to read. I received an email from a student in my riding who talked about the lack of leadership being taken by Canada at the conference in Durban and expressing concern that we as parliamentarians were not doing enough to protect the world, the planet, for them. We really do need to sit up and start paying attention.

Often we understand economic arguments even when we fail to understand the survival of our planet. For those members who understand economic arguments, I will put forward some facts.

In Quebec, insurance payouts for claims mainly related to flash storms, sewer back-ups and basement flooding in 2005-06 represented a 25% jump in water-related payouts as a percentage of the overall payouts from the 2001 to 2002 levels. These were related to climate change. What we have seen is a one metre sea level rise that could inundate more than 15,000 hectares of industrial and residential land. That is more than 4,600 hectares of farmland and the Vancouver International Airport.

When we look at these arguments, it becomes imperative for us to make commitments now and commitments we can actually live up to.

● (1545)

I have heard this question in the media, as well in the House today. How can we make firm commitments when others do not? We keep using the fact that the U.S., one of the largest polluters, and China have not signed on to Kyoto, so therefore our not living up to Kyoto is not a big deal.

If we were to apply that same kind of logic to everything else we do, then Canada would be frozen into inaction. We would be immobile. We did not wait for everyone in the world to be in agreement before we sent our troops into Libya. We do not wait until every country honours human rights for us to fight for human rights around the world. We are not waiting until every country becomes a democracy to then say now we are going to promote and push for democracy.

Canada is a leader on the world stage. As a leader on the world stage, this is our opportunity, our chance to be a leader and show that we really do care about the environment, the future economy and the future of this planet, not just for ourselves but for our children and grandchildren.

Climate change is not just going to happen in one area of the world. We are already beginning to experience the impacts of climate change. All of us have experienced the erratic weather recently and maybe the lack of snow in some areas and the massive amounts of snow in other areas. All of us know this is a direct result of what we have done to the environment over the years. Climate change does not respect international borders drawn by man.

We cannot say that because some countries have been taking these kinds of actions, therefore climate change is not going to occur in that part of the world. We have to take a leadership role, show that we mean business and that we are still a player on the international stage when it comes to being advocates for the environment.

Business of Supply

Historically, the government has killed climate accountability measures before such as the accountability act that was introduced by our past leader, Jack Layton, but it is not too late today to still make those commitments. The costs, both human and economic, of not paying attention today are too high. David Suzuki does a wonderful experiment by which he shows how lack of action, even for a small period, can lead to an acceleration, which is way beyond our imagination, of the damage we are doing to our planet.

Together it is the responsibility of parliamentarians on both sides of the House to work together to prevent financial, social and environmental costs by working with all nations, not by isolating them, and leading by example. We have done that before and we need to do it again. Not only that, but we need to look at our own actions.

I would like to read into the record a letter written to me by a grade 11 student that I received today. She says, "I'm writing to you as someone concerned about ecological harm the oil sands in Alberta are causing. As a result, I would like to see something done to protect our environment. Oil sands production requires a very large amount of water". She ends by saying, "However, animals aren't the only ones suffering, as other 30 different first nations groups live in the oil sands region".

She is appealing to us. I wish I could read the whole letter into the record to show that this grade 11 student did her research and wrote a very detailed letter as to why we needed to play a critical role and be a world leader, not a fossil once again when it comes to the environment.

• (1550)

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have the opportunity to enter into this debate with a question for the hon. member.

The hon. member may know that Canada has recommitted \$1.2 billion toward a global adaptation fund, something I am very proud of, but there is something else this government has done. It amazes me that the member quoted things that, frankly, take a shot at her own country. I cannot understand that. It takes a shot at Canadians, the Canadian economy and Canadian workers.

We are moving to regulate, in absolute terms, the emissions of this country for a reduction of 17% by 2020. That is a target that has been matched by the United States. Perhaps she can name another government, other than this one, that has managed an absolute reduction in greenhouse gases. Maybe that is what she should be saying to international partners and asking what they are doing, because Canada is acting, is reducing emissions in absolute terms, and we are going to continue to do that all the way to 2020.

Does she say that when she speaks with international partners or does she down talk people who work in the energy sector in this country who need those jobs?

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question that I believe was in there somewhere.

Every time somebody has a different point of view, the government tries to paint the person as being anti-Canadian. Let me tell the member that Canada is a democracy and in this

democracy people are allowed to debate different points of view. We celebrate the fact that we have those different points of view. It is not a surprise to Canadians that through the media they are seeing that in the first two days of the Durban conference Canada received three fossil awards.

Miners and archeologists celebrate when they find fossils, but when we look at our role in the environmental sector, that is not something to celebrate. Yet, my colleagues across the aisle last week cheered when it was mentioned they had won the fossil award again. That is nothing to be proud of. It does not make me feel proud to be a Canadian. If being a Canadian means having to damage the environment, then I am a Canadian who wants to protect the environment.

• (1555)

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has to understand it cannot solve the world's most pressing environmental issues simply by throwing money at it. It requires leadership at home and internationally.

I would like to thank the hon. member for pointing out that climate change in Africa is a life and death situation. In terms of malaria, it affects 300 million people. We know with climate change that range will increase. It affects pregnant women and kills an African child every 30 seconds. Pregnant women are more susceptible to malaria infection. It increases their risk of illness, severe anemia and death. Maternal malaria increases the risk of spontaneous abortion, premature deliveries, stillbirth and low birth weight, a leading cause of child mortality.

Our government focuses on maternal and child health and we have an opportunity to help prevent malaria and save lives through taking action on climate change.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, people are often judged both nationally and internationally by how they behave and by their actions toward the most vulnerable in our society. However, we are talking about something that impacts everybody. Having millions of dollars in the bank is not going to protect people from environmental harm that results from climate change.

Let me put on the record an excerpt from a report. The 2010 annual climate change performance index indicated that Canada finished in 54th place out of 57 countries that were evaluated, 54th out of 57, with only Australia, Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia faring worse than Canada. That is not a record that the government should feel proud of. We have a lot to do, so let us get on with it, protect our environment, make commitments to firm numbers, and invest in green economies not by re-introducing or re-announcing the same money over and over again. Let us see what can be done with new projects.

Business of Supply

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, climate change represents a very serious global threat to our environment, our economy and our lives. While employment and the environment are important priorities for Canadian families, the Conservative government continues to ignore the wishes of the people and is showing, once again, that it is completely out of touch with reality.

Climate change is having an impact on Canada. A September 2011 report released by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy estimates that climate change could cost Canada up to \$5 billion a year by 2020 and between \$21 billion and \$43 billion a year by 2050. In addition, the average temperature in Canada has gone up 1.3°C since 1948. A sea level rise of one metre could cause over 15,000 hectares of industrial and residential land to flood, along with over 4,600 hectares of farm land and the Vancouver International Airport.

Insurance payouts in Quebec for claims related to sudden storms and flooded basements in 2005 and 2006 represented a 25% increase in water-related payouts in Quebec compared to 2001 and 2002. All of these facts cannot be ignored. We must take action on the environment. Every action counts and can make a difference. We must work together.

The NDP's vision is a Canada that invests in future generations and in clean jobs, and that assumes international leadership in the fight against climate change and the establishment of a new energy economy.

We must think of future generations—I am thinking of my young son—and it starts today. Our children have the right to hope for an incredible future and quality of life and this will depend on the choices we make on a daily basis about the environment.

A number of environmental disasters clearly show that the climate is warming and that we must take action now. Instead, the government is trying to sabotage the Kyoto protocol. Climate change has consequences for the health and safety of people, animals, forests, farms and water supplies. That is why it is important to take concrete action to stop it.

As is the case in other parts of the world, Quebec has entered the era of climate change. Every Quebec region is facing extreme weather events. For example, in spring 2011, there was flooding along the Richelieu River caused by record snowfall in the Lake Champlain basin, and the wet spring in Montérégie was responsible for historic floods in spring 2011. This natural catastrophe affected more than 3,000 households in Montérégie and people are still feeling its effects. For two consecutive years, during the winters of 2010 and 2011, the ice failed to form in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. This affected a number of economic and tourism activities.

These are two examples of the effects of climate change on our immediate environment. But we all know that disasters are occurring at an astounding rate throughout the world. It is now December and it is raining. It is wrong to believe that we cannot make a difference regarding the environment and global warming, and it is even worse to ignore the alarm bells.

My colleagues and I want to be leaders in the international fight against climate change and in ensuring that Canadian jobs will not disappear.

• (1600)

The NDP's main priorities for the next international climate change agreement are: a fair, ambitious and binding agreement; adequate financial resources for the green fund as of 2013; the reduction of the “gigatonne gap” between the promised emission reductions and the measures actually taken; and the elimination of the gap between the legally binding commitments.

The government's lack of action with regard to climate change is tarnishing Canada's international reputation.

The NDP supports demands for a new, fair, ambitious and binding agreement on climate change to succeed the Kyoto protocol.

Developed countries must do their fair share by reducing their emissions in a way that reflects their existing and historic responsibilities with regard to global emissions.

The current targets that countries have adopted under the Copenhagen accord will not reduce emissions enough to limit the increase in average global temperature to 2°C above the pre-industrial level. Reducing this gap and preventing dangerous climate change will require all countries, including Canada, to implement ambitious measures.

Canada must make a second round of commitments in the Kyoto protocol's second commitment period or as part of an alternative agreement, should countries decide to abandon the Kyoto protocol.

A healthy planet is the most valuable gift in the world. It is a gift that we can give future generations.

I think about my little boy. When I was young, there was a lot of snow everywhere. Now, that does not happen very often, and it worries me a lot. Animals are disappearing. Climate change is damaging the planet. We must work together. We are young. We have new ideas. We must share our ideas and find solutions.

I am asking the members opposite—who are not listening to me—to work with us. We have solutions.

• (1605)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently and I want to thank the member for her comments on this very important issue.

She said she wants action. Of course, she is seeing action. Does she disagree with the action that the government has taken, specifically in regard to asking all major emitters to sign on to a new international agreement that will truly reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Business of Supply

With the NDP bill in the last Parliament, Bill C-469, it did not want to have the major emitters participating in a new international agreement. Has the NDP position changed now or did it want to continue on with only 27% of greenhouse gas emissions—

An hon. member: Question, question. Order. Question.

Mr. Mark Warawa: May I continue? Thank you.

The question is, does the member prefer the 27% of global greenhouse gas emissions or 85%?

Second question, does she support the carbon tax that her party supports?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, we are in favour of a carbon tax, but I personally think we must also work with other countries. We must be at the table and discuss the problems. We must not abandon the Kyoto protocol. We must work together. We are talking about the future of our children and our children's children. It is important to me and to our party to be at the forefront and to take a leadership role. That is what we are doing.

[*English*]

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it a little bit strange that the member opposite seems to be claiming that Canada is showing leadership in another direction other than Kyoto. I would like to ask my hon. colleague, does she think Canada is really trying to do something significant as an alternative to Kyoto, if it is receiving these fossil awards at the conference in Durban, and would the international community agree with that assessment?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question.

I find that the three fossil awards Canada has received are proof that we are not at the forefront and that the government's plan is inadequate. We are being ridiculed around the world and in the media. We have to take the lead. We have to assume a leadership role. We have to work together. I hope the Green Party is listening to us.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the hon. member's speech, I heard her talk about her son quite a bit. In fact, through her son, she probably has access to the younger generation, to her son's friends and classmates. In her opinion, are young children worried about what is happening right now in terms of climate change? How do they view all this? How does the younger generation see it?

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her questions.

Indeed, young people are really involved. They know that climate change is a big problem and they are getting involved in the issue at their schools. When I make my son's lunch every morning, I put it in small recyclable boxes because we do not want to generate any waste. We have to think about the future. Schools are talking a lot about respect for the environment and the importance of adopting a leadership role on this. Children, the citizens of the future, are really

involved. That is why we are here and that is why it is truly important to take a leadership role.

[*English*]

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough Centre.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak about the Government of Canada's leadership on clean energy. It is truly a very good news story. Not only do we possess substantial reserves of conventional energy, but Canada is making a big name for itself in the clean energy sector. We have been leaders for some time, producing about 77% of our electricity from non-emitting sources like hydro generation and nuclear power.

Our government has moved aggressively in recent years with billions of dollars' worth of investments in clean energy, balancing our need for economic growth with our need to protect the environment.

Since 2006, the government has delivered over \$10 billion to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This funding has leveraged an additional \$25 billion in private investment, creating over 5,000 new jobs, many in the growing clean tech sector.

We are fighting emissions through innovation in green infrastructure, energy efficiency, clean energy and renewables. We are positioning Canada to lead in the clean tech sector and creating jobs for the future.

Our overall goal is to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by 17% below 2005 levels by 2020. This is a target that aligns with U.S. plans. Canada has significant opportunities to expand its share of the global market for energy and energy-related products, creating prosperity across this great country.

Here are just a few of the activities our government has put into play.

Our newest program, the eco-energy innovation initiative, was just launched in August of this year. It is a two-year \$97 million investment to support a wide range of collaboration among industry, colleges, universities and government. These projects will focus on research, development and demonstration in five key areas: energy efficiency in buildings, communities, industry and transportation; clean electricity and renewables; bio-energy; research and development of electric vehicles; and unconventional oil and gas.

The demonstration component will focus on clean electricity and the integration of renewables into the grid and the built environment. Then there is the \$78 million eco-energy efficiency initiative that will improve energy efficiency at home, at work and on the road, saving Canadians money while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The eco-energy efficiency initiative will make the housing, building and transportation industries more energy efficient. Improving energy efficiency is one of the fastest, greenest and most cost-effective ways for Canadians to reduce greenhouse gases and to save energy.

Business of Supply

The next phase of Canada's economic action plan is also advancing the clean energy sector on several fronts by delivering a number of strategic investments. For example, we have renewed the highly popular eco-energy retrofit homes program. This helps Canadians make energy efficient home renovations.

The renewed retrofit homes program could help up to a quarter of a million homeowners across Canada improve their home's energy efficiency, and also generate up to \$4 billion in economic activity.

We have also delivered another \$40 million to Sustainable Development Technology Canada for the commercialization of clean technologies. This is a fantastic organization.

The 2010 energy efficiency regulations minimum energy performance standards have resulted in an annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 26 megatonnes. Once the minimum energy performance standards are fully in place, products that consume 80% of the energy used in Canadian homes, institutions and businesses will become regulated.

These are significant achievements in our efforts to reduce emissions. What is more, the benefits of these and other eco-energy investments will continue for years and years to come. For example, the eco-energy for renewable power program will deliver \$1.5 billion in investments over the next 10 years to support our renewable energy industry.

●(1610)

The eco-energy for biofuels program will provide production incentives to producers of cleaner renewable fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel until 2017. Our investments in carbon capture and storage projects will help position Canada as a producer of reliable clean electricity for decades to come.

For example, one project that is under construction is the fully integrated carbon capture and sequestration, CCS, unit at SaskPower's Boundary Dam coal-fired power generation unit in Estevan, Saskatchewan. Our government delivered \$240 million of investment which will leverage \$1 billion from the provincial utility and will transform Unit 3 at Boundary Dam Power Station into a reliable long-term producer of 100 megawatts of clean base-load electricity while enhancing oil production and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by capturing one million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year.

We have many examples of clean energy success stories across Canada.

Drake Landing Solar Community south of Calgary recently received the prestigious 2011 Energy Globe World Award for Sustainability. Drake Landing comprises 52 homes that are part of North America's very first large-scale seasonal storage solar heating system. This is the first such project in the world to provide nearly 90% of domestic space heating requirements from solar energy.

B.C. Hydro's smart grid technology project is installing large-scale batteries in two remote communities. These will provide clean power to the entire community during any outage. They will also help manage peak electricity demand periods with a lower environmental footprint.

We are helping four maritime utilities led by New Brunswick Power Corporation as it integrates smart grid technologies, load management and intermittent renewables. Also on the east coast, the Fundy Ocean Research Centre for Energy is working to harness power from the most energy-rich tides in the world.

Our government's support for the lower Churchill River projects in Newfoundland and Labrador will boost clean energy production in Atlantic Canada. The production potential of the lower Churchill project is enormous. Muskrat Falls alone will have a generating capacity of 824 megawatts. That is enough to produce an estimated 4.9 million megawatt hours per year. That is equivalent to powering almost half a million Canadian homes.

This clean renewable energy provides an opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia to meet their own needs in an environmentally sustainable way. Once completed, Newfoundland and Labrador will obtain up to 98% of its electricity from non-emitting sources, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by up to 4.5 megatonnes.

As all members can see, the Government of Canada is delivering real emission reductions while still maintaining Canada's economic advantage. In this way, our government is helping the energy sector to become more competitive, create new greener jobs for Canadians, and further protect our environment.

Canada's energy sector, including clean tech, has an extremely positive impact on our national economy. Energy represents roughly 7% of our gross domestic product. It supports hundreds of thousands of jobs across the country. It is a major contributor to Canada's economic stability and quality of life. The positive impact of our energy sector is found throughout Canada's economy in manufacturing, support services, construction, engineering and the financial sector.

We need to continue delivering major investments in our infrastructure so that we can diversify Canada's energy markets. We need to continue our progress in developing our vast resources in an environmentally responsible way.

●(1615)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his speech.

He said that, as all members can see, Canada is making a significant effort, but I do not think that is the case. I do not see it. I listened to him and I heard all kinds of stories about the efforts being made, but the reality is that, around the globe, Canada is being singled out for how it is developing the tar sands. I wonder if my colleague could tell us what action the government plans to take to improve both the perception and the reality of how we are exploiting this resource.

Business of Supply

• (1620)

[English]

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I heard in the translation the term “tar sands”. The scientific and accurate term is oil sands. Is that a mistake—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I am not aware of the translation, but that is a point of debate rather than a point of order.

The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Mr. Speaker, I know that the members opposite highly respect CBC and its commentators, so I will respond to the question regarding the oil sands with a quote from Rex Murphy of the CBC. He said:

One of the first orders of business over there in Durban-land, as it was in Copenhagen, is how bad Canada is...[particularly] the Canadian oil sands. This one project, more perhaps than any other in Canada, has kept us out of the worst of the recession.

And is it not then bizarre that at Durban whole countries, like China and India, with massive populations and absolutely huge industrial and manufacturing enterprises, developing more and more electricity plants and coal generating stations—are let off the hook by the campaigners. The production of those countries dwarfs into nearly total insignificance whatever the oil sands may represent.

I endorse what Mr. Murphy had to say about that.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources has said, “We will continue to do what we have to do to meet our Kyoto obligations”. However, the Minister of the Environment has now said that formally pulling out of Kyoto is an option for Canada. However, when questioned repeatedly by reporters, he declined to confirm or deny a CTV news report that cabinet decided to withdraw from the agreement right after the Durban conference during the holiday season.

Will the government formally pull out of Kyoto? If it is the intention of the Government of Canada to renege on a treaty that was ratified by the Parliament of Canada, why would the government not say so now? Why not bring it forward for debate in Parliament? I have asked for an emergency debate. We have asked for a take note debate before the charade of participating in Durban. Why such a double standard?

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Mr. Speaker, I will let the Minister of the Environment speak for himself on that issue.

I do want to express my own opinion regarding Kyoto. If members opposite cannot see that Kyoto has been a massive failure, not only in terms of what the Liberal government did with it in Canada but what countries around the world are not doing with it, then they are out of touch. I think every Canadian knows that Kyoto has been a massive failure.

Although I am gratified that the member opposite mentioned CTV, I would like to quote again from CBC commentator, Rex Murphy, who said:

Kyoto has been for the majority of countries that signed on to it a mere pantomime. Emissions continue to rise, carbon markets floundered or were beset with graft, but everyone kept up the pretence.

The real charade is not what my colleague across the way is mentioning. The real charade is Kyoto.

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to this important issue and our government's

commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the air quality for all Canadians.

We are approaching the sixth anniversary of the successful clean air regulatory agenda. Our government developed this program in 2006 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to improve air quality. We want this good work to continue, so we have announced that over the next five years we will invest \$600.8 million to continue the clean air regulatory agenda. This funding will sustain the clean air agenda's considerable momentum, providing the scientific research, monitoring, modelling, regulation and enforcement required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants. In short, it will ensure that Canadians will literally breathe much easier.

We are also taking strong action to address climate change. Our government has committed to reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to 17% below 2005 levels by 2020. Given the highly integrated nature of the Canadian and American economies, we have aligned our target with that of the United States of America. We also have stated policy to align our greenhouse gas mitigation approaches with those of the U.S., as appropriate in the Canadian context.

We are pursuing a sector by sector approach by developing regulated performance standards for the major emitting sectors in Canada in tandem with the United States. We have also put in place a number of measures to reduce emissions from our key greenhouse gas sources. Together with existing provincial measures, we are already about a quarter of the way toward meeting our 2020 target. We started by developing regulations for transportation and coal-fired electricity, two of the largest GHG emitting sectors.

In the transportation sector, we have been working with the U.S. for some time to put in place harmonized greenhouse gas regulations. As members know, the North American automotive industry is highly integrated. Therefore, a harmonized approach is critical. We have established progressively tighter GHG emission standards for new cars and light trucks over the 2011-16 model years in alignment with U.S. national standards. We are now working with the U.S. on developing harmonized and progressively more stringent targets and standards for 2017 and later model years. In fact, we just released a consultation document on the development of the proposed regulations.

The government is also developing regulations to establish greenhouse gas emission requirements for new heavy-duty vehicles harmonized with that of the United States.

Business of Supply

In the electricity sector, we published proposed regulations for coal-fired electricity generating units. These proposed regulations would help enhance Canada's position as a world leader in clean electricity generation and would help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality for all Canadians. They would promote a transition toward lower or non-emitting types of generation.

The government's recent announcement for funding for clear air will allow us to continue to implement and enforce these regulations to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions from these key sectors.

In addition to supporting the government's climate change agenda, the clean air regulatory agenda also supports the government's equally important efforts to improve the air that Canadians breathe. We have been working with the provinces, industry and non-governmental organizations to finalize and implement a new national air quality management system, a system that will include new ambient air quality standards for key pollutants, new emissions requirements for major industrial sectors and equipment groups, and the management of air quality at the local and regional level. The funding that we have just announced will allow us to carry this work forward and to address air quality in a very comprehensive manner.

Three additional components of air quality management will also be addressed or continued: one, strengthen commitments to reduce transboundary air pollution under the Canada–U.S. Air Quality Agreement given that air pollution does not respect national borders; two, measures to improve indoor air quality, an important component as Canadians spend approximately 90% of their time indoors; and three, nationwide implementation of the air quality health index, known as AQHI, to help Canadians make informed decisions to protect their health.

• (1625)

These important efforts to improve air quality will have a very real, everyday impact on Canadians across this country from coast to coast.

At the same time, we are continuing to develop and implement further measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other major sectors, including the oil and gas sector, complemented by additional provincial and territorial actions in the respective jurisdictions.

Canadians expect and deserve real action on climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the quality of air. This government is taking those actions. Together, these measures I have outlined on climate change and air quality will continue to contribute to improving the environment, the air that we breathe and the health of all Canadians.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her speech and I would like to ask her a question.

Does she believe, as I do, that our current economy can no longer be separated from environmental protection?

We need to put an end to the disconnect that exists between the economy and the environment. We can no longer separate them. We

absolutely must start seeing the economy in relation to the environment. We must make a shift towards renewable energy sources, towards another way of seeing the economy. And we must do so now; it is urgent. We are already losing jobs. The current approach will kill the Canadian economy.

Would the member agree that it is time to integrate the economy and the environment?

[*English*]

Ms. Roxanne James: Mr. Speaker, yes, the member is absolutely correct. The government will always take into consideration both the environment and balancing the economy, unlike the opposition parties. Unlike the NDP, we will never sacrifice jobs, the economy and growth in this country by killing jobs and stalling the economy with taxation on different things for the environment.

I am very proud of the commitment that our government has taken with regard to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to air quality improvements. As I mentioned in my speech, along with respective programs in place, we have actually reduced greenhouse gas emissions by almost one-quarter per cent toward our targets of 2020.

When Canadians expect to see real action on the environment, they can count on the Conservatives to deliver that, while balancing the economy and ensuring that we continue with our low tax plan for jobs and growth.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member may not be aware that the government has cut its targets by 90% and can only get us 25% of the way to its 2020 target.

The Minister of the Environment has said many times in Parliament that Kyoto is the past and that Copenhagen and Cancun are the future. Does this mean that the government will finish the task from Cancun, that it will translate policy into concrete action? Will the government support the launch of the adaptation committee, approving the guidelines for national adaptation plans and progress on approaches to address loss and damage? This seems unlikely as the government is cutting the climate impacts and adaptations research group at Environment Canada which studies the impacts of climate change on agriculture, fisheries, forest, health, water quality, and many of them share part of the 2007 Nobel prize.

Will the government support the launch of the adaptation committee?

Ms. Roxanne James: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the member talks about the environment and yet it was her party that signed on to the Kyoto agreement, an agreement that saw less than 20% of the world's emitters participating in that agreement. In fact, some of the largest emitters in the world were excluded from that agreement, including China, India and the United States.

Business of Supply

Canadians want real action on the environment and this government is committed to that real action. That is why I am so very proud that we recently announced \$600.8 million in funding to achieve the real target that Conservatives will get to.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform you that I will share my time with the member for Edmonton—Strathcona.

I would like to address my comments to the Prime Minister, who will maybe hear them. I would like to tell the Prime Minister that Durban may be far from Canada, but Alberta is right next door.

We are big producers of hydrocarbons and energy of all types, and we mistakenly believe that our power is renewable. Today we may be masters of the world—the industrial world, of course—but our power does not go beyond the scope of our resources. We have worked for centuries to develop this country—which is as big as a continent—and there have been successes and failures. We have seen development and underdevelopment.

We all share this land imbued with the spirit of the Odawa, Assiniboine, Saulteaux, Dene, Cree and Algonquin peoples. I am mentioning all of these peoples of the Alberta plains so that the Prime Minister does not forget we borrow this land for as long as we are here. I have seen this land, the badlands and the plains. I have seen the beauty of the west and the endless forests in the east. Our country did not inherit all of these resources so that we could squander them. We have invented new ways of doing things: “precautionary principle”, “sustainable development”, “biomass” and “ecology” are all words that reflect both our know-how and our concern.

It is hard to believe that the plains of western Canada will be forever tainted by the waste water discarded by the oil industry working in the oil sands. It is hard to believe that the Prime Minister is rejecting the Kyoto protocol in the name of economic growth and at the expense of the quality of life of Canadians. It is hard to believe that temporary businesses are abusing the sacred land of our ancestors in the name of materialistic greed. I remind members that we are all here temporarily.

The Kyoto protocol will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Yes, the protocol is not perfect. So we have a choice. We can either be part of a new consensus based on the precepts of this protocol, or we can give up and be condemned to paying for the consequences of our actions.

Although Canada ratified the Kyoto protocol, our greenhouse gas emissions are steadily increasing. We all understand that the global economic crisis requires us to be cautious and that we cannot halt production of hydrocarbons overnight. We do not want to put Canadians out of work. Our economic development and growth are supported in part by the production of raw materials.

The energy needs of emerging countries are pushing us toward oil production that far exceeds our ability to regulate the industry. How can we balance our environmental regulations, whether they be domestic or international, with our obligation to meet our economic needs and our responsibility to ensure the health of Canadians?

The debate that is getting under way in Durban is a global one that concerns all members of the House. The decisions that the Prime Minister makes about reducing greenhouse gas emissions cannot be made in a vacuum. Tomorrow, everyone's children will have to live with the consequences of his decisions. I am now hearing comments from people in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec and the Maritimes, who are asking questions about energy development over which we no longer have any control.

The Prime Minister, like all of us, inherited a nation that was built in adversity. We put aside our differences and worked together for the common good of Canada. Perhaps it is the sum of our differences that made us a strong, prosperous and creative nation.

● (1635)

Balancing the needs of eastern and western Canada allowed us to develop original policies full of wisdom and compromise. We have had successive political regimes in Ottawa for over a century. At one time or another in our history, the prosperity of every region has benefited the people of this country. Eastern Canada's industries, the Maritimes' fisheries, Quebec's hydro, western Canada's wheat and British Columbia's forests are all resources that have built our democracy.

But let us remember the mistakes of the past. Let us remember that there was a time when we did not have the scientific knowledge to really understand how to protect our environment.

An exceptional Canadian died a few months ago. Pierre Dansereau, the father of modern ecology, was a great humanitarian with an inalienable faith in humanity. Today, like Pierre Dansereau, I want to believe in humanity, and I want to say that a prime minister's duty is to be the guardian of the democracy of our institutions.

The debate in Canada on global warming is bigger than him or me. As the spokesperson for the nation, he must act responsibly and accept that there must be a real debate in this precinct because, unfortunately, part of the population seems to be neglected by his good offices. No one will make me believe that the future of this nation does not concern the Prime Minister. He has an obligation to listen to all those who wish to speak and be heard by him. First and foremost, he is the Prime Minister of all Canadians, of all parties. He does not have the right to squander our common heritage.

In this regard, I would like to remind him of a few statistics about our thirst for oil, statistics that everyone has gone over. Canada should be increasing its production of oil by almost 70% in the next 15 years. According to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, we should surpass 3.4 million barrels per day in 2015 and reach 4.7 million barrels per day in 2025. There is no real agreement about Canada's actual reserves. However, Industry Canada estimates that we have more than 179 billion barrels.

Business of Supply

These statistics speak for themselves and Canada, as a major exporter of CO₂, must take part in the international negotiations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our production capacity and collective wealth also require us to act locally in order to balance productivity, prosperity and environmental conscience.

• (1640)

Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her speech.

She said earlier that the Kyoto protocol was not perfect. But should we give up and let pollution continue unchecked until we die from it and suffocate from all the pollution that we, our children and grandchildren will have to endure? I would like to hear her comments on that.

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Mr. Speaker, this morning, the South African High Commissioner told us that Canada withdrawing from Kyoto would be tragic for both emerging and industrialized nations alike, and that the latter have a significant responsibility, for they are the ones that produced the pollution that led to the Kyoto protocol. Canada must take that responsibility into account and make every effort to participate and help the global society.

Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the hon. member. I think she has elevated the level of debate after all the meaningless comments I have heard today—the lies and half-truths uttered by the lackeys and cowards speaking on behalf of developers.

I have a question for my colleague. We have heard that China might sign on to the second phase of the Kyoto protocol. For some time now, Canada has been using the excuse that other countries have not signed on. In my colleague's opinion, what would it take for the Conservative government to get involved in the negotiations?

• (1645)

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada must adopt a positive attitude. We do not want to stop all oil sands development and everything that creates jobs. We do not want to put all Canadians out of work. I want to be very clear about that. That is not what we want to do. However, we also need to take emerging nations into account. If there comes a time when everyone is sick or dead, we will be no further ahead for having created jobs and for having recovered from the economic crisis while ignoring the various environmental protocols.

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, I heard dates such as 2017 and 2020 and that we have to align with the United States. It is true that the economies are very interconnected. The United States uses our primary resources and our energy to manufacture vehicles and we drive those vehicles and put fuel in them. The real question has to do with the urgency of the situation: how many years do we have left to react? When we signed the Kyoto protocol, everyone said that it was the last chance for humanity. That was a quite a while ago. How much longer will we be able to continue like this? It is like people leaving their SUVs running in their garages. Eventually, they will get carbon monoxide poisoning. The attitude here is no different. I wonder how much time we have left.

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to say how much time we have left. I think it is urgent. We have already started to see the effects of climate change. We have to deal with it immediately and

accept the Kyoto protocol and improve it, so that our children—we may not be affected so much ourselves—can enjoy a planet that is not a real disaster. I think it is urgent. That is why international conferences are held. We want things to be dealt with as quickly as possible. Concluding agreements with other countries takes time and the emerging countries have to be on board. China is starting to be more open. That is already a big step in the right direction, but we have to go even further.

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to speak to the motion but, frankly, I find it really sad that the hon. member for Halifax has to, again, bring this matter before the House because nothing is happening.

Over the last year, the religious leaders of this country have been meeting on Parliament Hill because they are so frustrated with the lack of action by the government on what they see as a matter that will greatly impact the planet.

Mardi Tindal, the moderator of Canada's largest Protestant denomination, the United Church, has called on us to consider climate change a crisis of conscience. She has urged Canadians to choose hope and action over despair and paralysis in addressing what she calls one of the most urgent, moral challenges in human history.

The government has, only at the 11th hour, after being in power for six years, revealed that it intends to pull out of Kyoto. It could have revealed that six years ago and been honest. But instead, it has held this country out for potential penalties because of its complete inaction. It is absolutely reprehensible.

The government has failed to deliver even on its own commitments to reduce greenhouse gases. It has failed to deliver on the commitments that the Government of Canada made at the conference of the parties in Bali, Copenhagen, and Cancun.

What have some of those commitments been?

In Copenhagen, it actually committed to reduce greenhouse gases. What has it done, instead? Nothing. It has allowed our emissions to rise continuously.

At Cancun, it committed, and I know this because I was in the room when it signed and sealed on this, that it would issue a national low carbon energy strategy. Where is that low carbon energy strategy?

We have a government that likes to accuse previous governments. It likes to pick on the Liberals, who did not take a lot of action either. It has been in power for six years, it has gone to many international conferences on this important matter, and it has delivered nothing on its commitments.

Now we are hearing that the government is appearing at the conference and, shamefully, suggesting it may not even provide the funding to lesser developed countries that are already suffering the impacts of climate change.

Business of Supply

The Commissioner for Sustainable Development, who works in the Office of the Auditor General, has done a series of audit reports. The Auditor General issued a report just this year, castigating the government for the absolute failure to deliver on its promised reductions. Instead of requiring a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, it has significantly lowered its targets by 90%.

Apparently, according to the Commissioner for Sustainable Development, who did an audit, between the years 2007 and 2010, Canadian emissions rose by 31% above the 2006 committed targets. He reported there was inconsistent reporting on climate measures and no clear measurable way to measure its programs, despite allocating over \$9.2 billion. Where did that \$9.2 billion go? We will get to that in a moment.

The commissioner also said that there was a stop and start pattern, and that it sent an inconsistent message to industry, to other levels of government, and to Canadians. Even the fossil fuel industry, we have noticed over the last year, is fed up. It is expressing concern that there is no legal certainty and that in order to move forward in its sector, it needs clear and legally binding targets.

The government then accused the Commissioner for Sustainable Development for not being up to date and so, its own department issued a report. That report found even more problems, that it was missing meeting even its own meagre targets.

The government ran on a platform of openness and transparency. Whatever happened to that party?

These government members, every one of them, voted against the New Democrat bill which was tabled twice in this House, passed twice in this House, simply calling for accountability on actions on climate change. It was not enough that the Conservatives could not win because the majority of elected officials were in favour of this bill, they called upon the Senate to kill that bill. We now have before us absolutely no real binding measure to control greenhouse gases.

•(1650)

To make matters worse, the government has been clear that it will oppose any binding treaty out of the meetings that are going on now in the conference of the parties. Why not just be honest? Why do the Conservatives not just tell us that they will not agree to any binding treaty? They have lobbied against every binding treaty that has been proposed in the last six years of the conference of the parties.

Where are we at now? What does the International Energy Agency, to which Canada belongs and which consists of the major fossil fuel industries of the world, have to say:

Every further delay comes with costs. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has warned that any delay in coming to a global agreement will lead to significant "lock-in" of carbon intensive infrastructure...Thus, "every year of delay of introduction of a global framework with the sufficiently powerful economic incentives to direct investment to follow the path of the [2°C scenario] has two consequences: It increases the amount of capital stock that will need to be retired early, mostly in the power and industry sectors; [and] it limits dramatically the amount of more carbon-intensive infrastructure that can be added in the future." Delaying action to 2015 will increase the costs of action by \$4.3 for every \$1 saved—

The Conservatives are the party that supposedly believes in a strong economy. It does not sound like it.

We need simply look to Alberta. The government intentionally issued regulations for the coal-fired sector which will exempt coal-fired power plants that have not even started being built. The government has taken no action on the single largest source of greenhouse gases being emitted in Canada right now and no regulations at all for the oil sands sector.

In the meantime, Alberta taxpayers are being called upon to pay the costs of massive transmission lines from our expanding coal-fired sector to the United States. How is that for a good economic plan?

The majority of Canadian greenhouse gases, as reported by Environment Canada, are in the energy sector, 82%; transport, 28%. In the last decade, fossil fuels have represented 54% of the growth in greenhouse gases and transport 45%.

The key issue is cost. The national round table that was appointed by the government and reports to the government reported that the imminent costs to Canada for climate warming will be in the order of \$20 to \$40 billion a year by 2050. That is 5% to 25% of the GDP and this is the government that claims it is fiscally responsible.

The sad thing is there are a myriad of solutions that will save Canadians money. The technologies already exist. We have heard it in many committees. We have university researchers and technology is being tested in the field, but absent are the regulatory triggers that nobody wants to invest in. We need action, but we are waiting for federal leadership.

We are waiting for federal leadership on revising the national building code. The government of Alberta has been clear that it will not upgrade its building code until the federal government upgrades its building code to ensure that we have more energy efficient buildings.

We are waiting for leadership on energy retrofits. After a massive campaign by Canadians, the government finally relented to return the program for one year yet we had a burgeoning energy efficiency sector, including in my riding. Many young people want to get into the sector but they have essentially given up on this area of work.

Where is the leadership on training? There are incredible opportunities for youth, aboriginal communities, and immigrants, to be trained in the new energy economy. Where is the leadership?

Where is the leadership on the smart grid? The government lauded the agreement that it signed, the U.S.-Canada energy dialogue. Where is the leadership? Where is the smart grid?

Business of Supply

The government yanked all of the money for renewables. Meanwhile around the world, other countries are profiting and soon we will have to buy their technologies. Where is the level playing field?

Billions of dollars have been spent to merely test carbon capture sequestration for the coal industry and the oil sands, and mere millions for the renewable sector.

As my time is running out, I will speak of other matters during questions.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, since the hon. member is from Alberta, I imagine her province's economy is very important to her.

In her opinion, is there a way to develop the oil sands in an ecologically sound manner, without harming the economy in her province?

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question and the answer is, absolutely, yes.

I participated in committee hearings over a two year period and issued my own report. Why was that important? We heard testimony from many parties, including major researchers in this country.

I also attended an oil sands fair, and I went around to all of these new technologies and asked what the key barrier was to their not selling their technologies. They said that it was the lack of regulation. The government is not requiring anybody to clean up this sector, and therefore nobody is investing in cleaner technologies.

The technologies are there. We need to get them out of the lab and into the field. What is missing is federal regulation.

• (1700)

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if the member can acknowledge our investments in the clean energy fund, the eco-energy technology institute, the carbon capture storage projects that are helping Canada position itself as a producer of reliable clean electricity for the decades to come?

I want to know if the member recognizes the \$1.5 billion in investments over the next 10 years? I want to know if the member acknowledges the eco-energy retrofit homes program that is helping Canadians make their homes energy efficient, or the \$148.8 million over the next five years to help the country adapt to climate change? I want to know if the member has ever visited the oil sands and actually saw the work that has been done with technology in helping the oil sands through all of its initiatives? Has she visited to see the work that it has done?

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I do not have time to answer that question. I would like to give an elaborate answer.

Of course, I have been to the oil sands. I have been working for 40 years trying to clean up that sector. I recommend that the hon. member go to my website and read the report that I issued wherein are listed the recommendations by the deputy premier of the

Northwest Territories, first nations leaders, scientists, all calling for the government to issue clear regulations and standards so that in fact we control that sector.

One thing I would point out to the hon. member is the hypocrisy of the government. The government says it will not take any action and will not require major reduction of greenhouse gases in this country because China is not acting. This is the very government that is encouraging the shipping of raw bitumen to China so that it will be upgrading and refining, and increasing its greenhouse gases.

I do not need to take any lectures from that side of the House about what is needed to actually address greenhouse gases. We need to work together with other countries, but first and foremost we need to act here. I think that if regulations were passed, then the taxpayers of Canada would not have to bear the burden that is going to be placed on them and the next generations.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the hon. member on her very fine speech.

I quickly want to ask her what she thinks of the idea that we absolutely must not dissociate the environment and the economy, that the two go hand in hand.

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, that, of course, is the policy that this party stands by. That is the policy that the other side pretends to stand by but puts absolutely no heart in the environment side of that agenda.

There is no reason why we cannot have a strong Canadian economy and also a clean environment. There have been proposals put forward. The technologies are there. There have been two evaluations, to give some concrete examples, of how we could green electricity. The government promised that it would provide 90% clean electricity, I think it was by 2020, and has done nothing in that direction except go the opposite way.

Two reports by the Pembina Institute of Ontario and Alberta have shown that by 2020 we could have completely clean electricity without reverting to nuclear. The technologies are there. We just do not have the regulatory drivers because the government does not believe in that.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Wild Rose.

I am pleased to rise today to speak to the important issue of climate change. Our government supports an approach to climate change that gives real environmental and economic benefits for all Canadians. Given the highly integrated nature of the North American economy, this includes aligning our climate policies with those of the United States.

*Business of Supply**[Translation]*

That is why, as part of the Cancun agreements, this government agreed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 17% below 2005 levels by 2020, an ambitious but very realistic target that is completely aligned with that of the United States. We have made significant progress through many national regulatory initiatives on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- (1705)

[English]

In addition, the federal government recognizes the importance of integrating air pollutant regulations with those affecting greenhouse gases.

We will work to ensure coherence between greenhouse gas measures and air pollutant measures under the proposed national air quality management system.

Looking at industries, we have started with transportation and electricity, the two largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, and we will continue to proceed to address emissions from other major emitting sectors one by one.

[Translation]

With regard to transportation, Canada worked closely with the United States government to establish a North American common standard to regulate greenhouse gas emissions by vehicles. This approach will help the environment, the industry and consumers.

In October 2010, we implemented rigorous new regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions in the automobile sector through the Passenger Automobile and Light Truck Greenhouse Gas Emission Regulations.

[English]

Later that month, we issued a notice of intent to continue working closely with the U.S. toward a development of more stringent standards for model years 2017 and beyond. We continue to work with the U.S. on the development of these regulations.

In August 2011, we announced further measures on vehicles, indicating that we would develop regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty vehicles.

Canada and the United States are taking a common North American approach and Canada intends to implement regulations with a 2014 model year in alignment, once again, with those of the United States, which is an integrated partner when it comes to the automobile and transportation sector.

[Translation]

Implementing measures in the electricity industry will lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and will improve air quality for all Canadians. In August 2011, we also published regulations for the electricity industry, which will apply a stringent performance standard to new power plants using coal and to those that are nearing the end of their useful life.

[English]

The proposed regulations, in addition to commitments of the provinces and companies that have committed to coal plant closures as well as other measures to reduce emissions, amount to a reduction of 32 megatons below 2005 levels by 2020. That is a reduction of 26% from the electricity generation sector. That is the value of made in Canada, industry by industry regulations.

New coal-fired electricity units will have to meet stringent performance standards. That performance standard, as proposed, is 375 tonnes per gigawatt hour. It seems like a large number but that is a standard that is based on emissions of high efficiency, natural gas generation, and that represents a reduction of 60% for a unit of electricity produced.

The final regulations are expected to be published in 2012, working with the sector, and regulations are scheduled to come into effect in July 2015.

[Translation]

Over the past year, we have also made significant progress by implementing key components of our renewable fuels strategy. Since December 2010, gasoline must contain an average of 5% renewable fuel. Another measure, which took effect in July 2010, was the implementation of a requirement that diesel fuel contain 2% renewable fuel. These federal measures, combined with those implemented by the provinces, have made it possible for us to come a quarter of the way toward meeting our objective for 2020.

[English]

In fact, a report released in November 2011 by the International Institute for Sustainable Development, or IISD, highlights the significant progress that is being made in Canada on GHG emissions and confirms that the government's regulatory approach is delivering results and contributing to a national effort to reduce emissions toward Canada's 2020 target. It states, "Canada is finally establishing the policy architecture to reduce greenhouse gas emissions". Its analysis supports the core directions of the government's approach and demonstrates that sector by sector regulations are already delivering results, an important part of the national plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- (1710)

[Translation]

To bridge the final gaps, the Government of Canada will develop and implement additional measures to reduce greenhouse gases in other important sectors of the national economy. These will be complemented by additional measures implemented by the provinces and territories in areas within their jurisdiction.

Work is in progress to develop regulatory performance standards in priority industries.

Business of Supply

[English]

We are also looking to focus additional effort on short-lived climate forcers, such as black carbon, which will make our plan to address climate change even more comprehensive. There is increasing awareness that action on this front will yield near-term climate benefits, particularly in the Arctic and other parts of northern Canada.

I should make a comment on the previous Liberal government's Kyoto plan. It was Eddie Goldenberg, one of former prime minister Jean Chrétien's top aides, who revealed that the Liberals went ahead with the Kyoto protocol on climate change even though they knew there was a good chance that Canada would not meet its goals for pollution reduction. In a speech delivered to the Canadian Club of London, Ontario, he said:

Nor was the government itself even ready at the time with what had to be done. The Kyoto targets were extremely ambitious and it was very possible that short term deadlines would, at the end of the day, have to be extended.

That was said in 2007. It is clear that we have put forward some realistic, actionable plans to reduce greenhouse gases, working with the provinces and with various industries, and we are achieving results. The Government of Canada has a plan to reduce emissions further and that plan is working. We will continue reducing emissions sector by sector until we have reached our goal.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member just spoke about a more comprehensive plan and quite frankly I was wondering if he had said comprehensible. In fact, it is incomprehensible.

There is something incoherent about giving us this list of the nuts and bolts of the environmental policy. It sounds like a garage sale. They are telling us that they did this and that, but they forget to talk about what is important. Everyone recognizes the economic value of the oil sands. I am using the term "oil sands" to please them because we are obviously talking about a gigantic energy resource that is very profitable.

When we constantly align ourselves with our neighbours south of the border for good, and not so good, reasons, we ignore the warnings about it being important to clean up the operations to make it a little less disgusting. Unfortunately, they turn a deaf ear and try to ship it to China on a floating pipeline.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

Companies working in the oil sands have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions by 20% over the past 15 years as a result of technological advances. They have also made great strides in reducing the amount of water they use to extract oil from the sands. They are making progress and technology will bring about other advances.

The member asked a question and said that it was not a comprehensive plan. In fact, by working with the provinces and the affected sectors we will make reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is of a general nature in the sense that Conservative member after Conservative member gets up and they have no hesitation in terms of taking shots at the Kelowna accord, which, I believe, had widespread support. We had provincial governments from coast to coast, from what I understand, that were quite supportive of the concept of the Kyoto accord. Then the members take great liberty in trying to explain how they are such strong environmentalists nowadays in the actions they have taken.

Could the member explain to me why, if the government is doing so well on the international scene in terms of the Durban conferences going on right now, Canada is winning more fossil awards, which is not a good thing, than any other country in the world? Why is that the case if the Conservative government is "apparently" doing so well on the environment.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentions the Kelowna accord. I suppose, after signing many accords that they never planned to implement, that is just another one. I think he probably meant the other accord that begins with the letter K, the Kyoto accord.

That was a pretty sad story for Canada, signing on to an accord that was imposed on us by other countries with no realistic plan to actually implement anything. What we have done instead is come up with a plan that really works with our partners in the provinces as well as the various industries. A lot of that expertise actually resides within the provinces and those industries, as opposed to having a plan foisted upon us by certain economies that actually have nothing to do in terms of reductions. There are no commitments on their behalf to actually reduce any emissions whatsoever, including China, India and the large emitters.

We have said that, whatever we do, it will be something that makes sense for Canada. As members know, the oil and gas sector is just one example. That is 7% of the overall economy and we want to ensure that we do not destroy that as that is a source of our wealth and prosperity.

• (1715)

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, would the member remind the House what percentage from the emitters we are responsible for? I believe it is a very low percentage compared to other countries. Could the member elaborate?

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, Canada's emissions in the overall global greenhouse gas scheme of things is less than 2%. We can make our efforts but we also need to recognize that a lot of other countries are increasing their total amount, including China. They are increasing their greenhouse gas emissions by an amount equivalent to everything that Canada produces in a given year. Therefore, whatever reductions we make for Canada, it has to be considered that there needs to be equivalent reductions by the other major emitting nations like China.

Business of Supply

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in examining the motion we have before us here today, I have to wonder if the opposition members took the time to consider the implications of what they had proposed. The implications are not only for Canada's economic prosperity, but there are also repercussions for our timetable to make real and measurable progress on lowering emissions in the medium term, which is what the parties across the way claim they want to achieve.

Under the former Liberal government, which signed the Kyoto accord, the gap between Canada's target for emissions and the actual levels just continued to grow. Canada's greenhouse gas emissions increased by 27% under the Liberals. The Liberals utterly failed on Kyoto. As their party's former leader, Michael Ignatieff, famously admitted to the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier, "we didn't get it done".

In the NDP, we have an opposition that seems set on having Canada, which produces just 2% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, to shoulder a disproportionate share of the load, while China and the United States, which together represent more than 40% of the world's output of greenhouse gases, are not even on board. Pushing for an arrangement that does not even include the world's largest emitters will accomplish nothing except to disadvantage the Canadian economy in comparison to those countries.

By contrast, our Conservative government believes in a balanced approach to environmental stewardship, one which weighs jobs and the health of the economy alongside environmental protection.

On that note, this would be a good opportunity to highlight the important role the energy sector is playing in our country's economic future. Our government's top priority continues to be supporting jobs and growth and sustaining Canada's economy. As hon. members know, Canada is not immune to the uncertainties of the global economy, but Canada has come through the global downturn a lot better than most. Today, Canada is continuing to outperform most other developed nations.

Despite this, the NDP, instead of working toward a plan for long-term prosperity, is calling for tax hikes on job creators, on consumers, on investors, on families. Some of its leadership candidates are even supporting a carbon tax that would raise the price of gas, energy and almost everything that Canadians buy. They seem oblivious to the fact that Canada is the only country in the G7 to have gained back all the jobs and all of the economic output lost during the recession. In fact we gained it all back and more, over 600,000 jobs.

Now the IMF is predicting that Canada will be one of the G7's leaders in economic growth both this year and the next. In its annual ranking of global economies *Forbes* magazine named Canada as the best place in the world to do business.

A large part of our economic success is due to the strength of our growing energy sector. Canada is blessed not only with abundant natural resources, but also with innovators and risk takers. We have built one of the most advanced energy sectors in the world. We have turned Canada's energy endowment into a pillar of our economy. Energy now accounts for about 7% of our GDP. It is the key driver of our prosperity both now and in the future.

Around the world Canada is gaining a sterling reputation as an energy superpower. The numbers speak for themselves. Canada is the world's second largest producer of uranium. We are the third largest producer of both natural gas and hydroelectric power. We are the sixth largest producer of crude oil and we have 170 billion barrels of proven oil reserves.

Our renewable energy sector, wind, solar and biomass, is growing steadily. Energy has always been identified with opportunity in Canada, connecting workers with good paying jobs and products with markets. In 2010 total direct employment by the energy sector was 271,000 jobs. It also supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in other sectors such as construction, manufacturing and financial services to name a few.

Canada is one of the few countries in the world that is energy rich, has a highly skilled workforce and a strong innovation system. We are also capable of increasing our energy production in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner. Simply put, we have enormous energy assets that are generating great economic wealth right across the country. To capture even greater benefits for all Canadians, we must invest in the infrastructure necessary so that our energy resources can supply rapidly growing demands, especially in Asia.

One of the prime sources of our energy wealth, of course, is the oil sands in my province of Alberta. When most Canadians think of the oil sands, they think of Alberta, but the benefits of this vast resource extend well beyond Alberta's borders and will well into the future.

• (1720)

Over the next 25 years, the oil sands are expected to support, on average every year, 480,000 jobs. They will pump about \$2.3 trillion into Canada's economy, according to the Canadian Energy Resource Institute. That economic activity is creating thousands of jobs and benefiting hundreds of companies all across the country. In Ontario, for example, the oil sands industry is expected to buy about \$65 billion worth of goods and services from Ontario companies over the next 25 years.

There is no doubt that the development of the oil sands is in the best interest of all Canadians. Yet, in their zeal to push for a grand scheme that does not even include major emitters, the NDP members have worked to undermine initiatives that are important to the economic health of our country.

Several NDP MPs made an anti-trade mission to Washington recently to actively lobby against the oil sands, the Keystone XL Pipeline and thousands of Canadian jobs. There, they criticized Alberta's oil sands as too greenhouse gas intensive, despite the fact that oil sands account for just one-tenth of 1% of the total.

Business of Supply

I could not help but notice that while the NDP were undermining Alberta's oil sands and the Keystone pipeline project during their junket to Washington, they could not find the time to inform our friends about some of our country's many achievements. Rather than building up the achievements Canada has made toward a cleaner environment, the NDP, unfortunately, prefers to tear our country down. We need only remember how the NDP member for Edmonton—Strathcona called for a moratorium on oil sands development, while one of the NDP's leadership candidates, Brian Topp, affirmed his commitment to the same job-killing action.

It is particularly troubling for me that a fellow Albertan, like the member for Edmonton—Strathcona, would take a position such as that. The strength of Alberta's economy has been the envy of other jurisdictions, both in Canada and around the world. It is centred on two things: our people and our abundant natural resources.

The people of Alberta are resourceful, hard-working, self-reliant and entrepreneurial. We understand and appreciate the value in our abundant resources. We are careful and responsible stewards of those resources because we know that by caring for them, they will in turn help to take care of us. Yet we have a member of Parliament who suggests her fellow Albertans are being irresponsible in developing the oil sands resource.

The NDP continues to undermine this resource that will contribute \$2.3 trillion to Canada's GDP over the next 25 years. The royalties that the oil sands pays the provinces to explore for resources will total \$429 billion in that same period. Some 1.4 million barrels of crude oil are exported every day from Alberta to the United States alone. Our economic prosperity as a nation relies in no small part upon Alberta's oil patch.

Of course, we must ensure the oil sands are developed in the most environmentally responsible way possible. In my opinion, it is being done. Those companies that are developing the oil sands are also on the cutting edge of research into new technologies to reclaim land, manage water and reduce emissions.

Alberta accounts for nearly 73% of national oil and gas development and one in every fifteen jobs is related to the sector. However, that wealth is also being shared. The spillover from oil patch investments in Alberta will contribute another \$400 billion to GDP in other provinces. That is because investments in our resource create jobs and demand for service industries right across the country.

Opposition MPs do not really understand the good, responsible environmental work that the oil and gas industry is doing and the enormous economic benefits that result. Their smear campaign against the oil sands is not helping matters.

Canada has a compelling energy story to tell. Our tremendous energy endowment provides an opportunity to create jobs and stimulate growth. We are maximizing our resources and diversifying our markets. With strategic investments in clean energy, we are positioning Canada to lead through innovation and creating the jobs of the future. We are growing Canada's status as a global energy superpower and doing so in partnership with industry in an environmentally responsible way.

● (1725)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member opposite for his speech. The government continues to talk about adopting a solid regulatory program to fight climate change, and yet it is two years behind its own deadline for regulating the oil and gas sector. It still has not submitted anything to the House. I would like the hon. member to comment on that.

[*English*]

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Speaker, our government is working through regulations on a sector-by-sector basis in terms of dealing with emissions. It is important that we remember, unlike our friends on the other side who seem to forget, that there are two parts to the equation. There is the economy and the environment. We have to ensure that we are being good stewards of the environment and we have to do so while ensuring we are cognizant of our economy, the economic strength of the country and how important the oil and gas sector is to the strength of the economy. It is unfortunate they do not understand that, but we certainly do.

We are working in partnership and collaboration with industry ensuring we develop ways of protecting our environment, while also ensuring we are protecting our economy.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the economy and the environment are two sides of the same coin. The government claims it supports the economy, but I want to point out it has actually failed to green the economy. With the stimulus package, it invested \$3 billion. In stark contrast, the United States invested \$112 billion, China \$221 billion and therefore created thousands of new green jobs.

The Minister of the Environment has said that formally pulling out of Kyoto is an option for Canada. However, when questioned repeatedly by reporters, he declined to confirm or deny a CTV news report that the cabinet had decided to withdraw from the agreement right after the Durban conference during the holiday season. It is signalling its withdrawal from international climate obligations. If the minister accepts climate change is real and the government promises accountability and transparency, why is it planning to withdraw after the Durban conference?

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Speaker, the member was speaking about some of our work toward trying to ensure that we were developing green energy and I would like to address those comments.

There are all kinds of measures being undertaken both by industry and our government to try to ensure we are doing that. We understand the importance of our oil sands and the oil sector to our economy, but there are also many other parts to our energy future in Canada.

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I look at our natural gas sector and how it has a very strong role to play in our economic future. We are already the world's fourth largest exporter of natural gas and analysts predict that over the next 100 years we will have all kinds of growth potential in natural gas. That is a cleaner form of energy and one that we will have for decades to come in terms of our energy mix. We are looking at other renewables, whether it is biofuels being created through the mandates that we have, biodiesel and gasoline as well. Those are just a few examples. There are so many that I could not list them all. We are certainly doing a lot of great work in terms of greening our energy.

• (1730)

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we have heard the opposition talk about the Kyoto protocol, which the previous Liberal government signed on to with no plans to implement. We also heard the NDP leadership candidates over the weekend talk about implementing a carbon tax with no plans to cost it out. I was just on a television program with the NDP environment critic, in which she said that the international community should not listen to Canada, when we are in fact a world leader in our economy.

What does the member think of the opposition's non-plan to deal with greenhouse gas emissions as opposed to our tangible plan to deal with greenhouse gas emissions and does he think it is in the best interests of our country?

Mr. Blake Richards: Mr. Speaker, it certainly is disappointing for me to hear those on the other side who do not really seem to get it. They really are being irresponsible. They do not want to look at the implications for our economy. They want to talk about things, but they do not want to take any action. We saw that with the previous Liberal government. It signed on to the Kyoto accord, yet our emissions and greenhouse gases went up 27% under that government. We are a government that is taking action and delivering real measures rather than just talking about a problem.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for York South—Weston. Before I begin, I would like to dedicate this speech to my daughter Ariane and my stepdaughter Oriana.

I must admit that I have certain prejudices. I have major prejudices against the Conservatives. I thought they were all the same, they really did not care about the environment and they only cared about what they call the economy. But I admit that I was wrong and I apologize. It is not entirely true. I have seen some Conservatives rise in the House in one way or another to defend the environment, even though the Minister of the Environment and the Prime Minister turn a deaf ear. It is reassuring to see that people on all sides of this House care about the environment.

I hope the Conservatives come to understand that the economy of the future can no longer be separated from the protection of our environment. I hope that many Conservatives will rise here this evening to defend our beautiful planet and vote in favour of our motion on the environment. I hope they will stand up in great numbers and call on their Prime Minister and their Minister of the Environment to show leadership in the fight against climate change, because right now, it is difficult, very difficult. I also hope that in

Durban they will commit to supporting the 2°C limit for global warming and to respecting commitments under the Kyoto protocol, and that they will change their minds about wanting to kill the protocol. Quite the reverse, I hope they commit to respecting their Kyoto targets and that they show leadership in the second phase, which is now needed.

I will demonstrate that the Kyoto protocol definitely needs to be rescued. Not only does the future of our children depend on it, but the Conservatives are also in the process of undermining our Canadian economy and job creation for our families. The Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment are actually killing the Canadian economy with their policy. Let me explain.

The Conservatives' plan is a complete failure in the fight against climate change. The proof is that in 2008 greenhouse gas emissions had increased by 24% compared to 1990 levels, thereby exceeding our Kyoto target by 31%.

I have done my homework and studied this issue very carefully. The report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, which I have right here, points out some problems in the Conservatives' plan. In the report, Mr. Vaughan says:

Since I began as commissioner three years ago, a recurring theme in my reports has been the significant gaps in the information needed to understand and respond to the changing state of our environment.

Without the proper information, how can we react appropriately? Further on in the report, Mr. Vaughan says that Canada has spent just over \$9 billion in the fight against climate change but that the results of that investment are unknown. We do not know how to do better in our fight against climate change.

There will be very serious consequences. If the Conservatives and Canada do not act differently, there will be dramatic consequences. For example, the warmer temperatures could negatively affect air quality and result in more smog in urban areas, not to mention the proliferation of pollen, dust and other particles that may trigger or aggravate allergies and asthma. We can also expect that these warmer temperatures will extend the range and increase the number of insects that carry diseases such as malaria, dengue fever and various types of viral encephalitis. Some animals that carry dangerous diseases, such as rodents and bats, may also extend their range and become more numerous.

There are thus real dangers associated with climate change. This is not just a story or myth. The government needs to wake up.

●(1735)

There is also the danger that the permafrost will melt. The hon. members are perhaps aware of this. I have an article that explains the dangers of this very well. Right now, something called an organic carbon reserve is trapped in the permafrost. If the polar ice cap melts, about four times more carbon than all the carbon emitted by human activity in modern times and twice as much as is present in the atmosphere now will be released into the atmosphere. It is not me who is saying this; it is scientists—American biologists at that. These are prestigious scientists. I can tell you their names: Edward Schuur and Benjamin Abbott. They spoke about this in a comment published Wednesday in the British journal *Nature*.

We must shift our current position on climate change. However, all these things I have mentioned pale in comparison to the other effects. The lack of concern demonstrated by the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment is also going to hurt our economy and take jobs away from Canadian families. We are currently experiencing economic problems, an economic slowdown. The last thing we want is for the government to kill more jobs.

In a recent press release, the Leader of the Opposition said that the Conservatives' environmental inaction is tarnishing Canada's reputation and putting Canadian jobs at risk. Our leader of the official opposition said:

The rest of the world is moving forward with clean energy solutions and, under [the prime minister], Canada is being left behind. That's bad news for our environment, and it's bad news for Canadian families who will be shut out of high-paying sustainable energy jobs.

Proof of this can be found in an article written by Louis-Gilles Francoeur that I have here. It was in the weekend edition of *Le Devoir* under the headline "Canada's climate debt: \$19 billion". It clearly states, "Taxpayers will pay a high price for the failure to comply with the Kyoto protocol." Who will pay a high price? Taxpayers.

The Conservatives call themselves the champions of tax cuts, but it will cost taxpayers \$19 billion. Someone is going to have to pay this amount at some point. It is not true that if they sit on their hands and wait for climate change to magically stop there will not be a price to pay. This has real costs. It is more profitable to tackle climate change right away and to make revolutionary changes than to wait. The more we wait, the more costly it will be for Canada. Who will pay? Taxpayers. What this means for Conservatives is that, if nothing is done, we can expect tax hikes in future years. It will be their fault because they waited and sat on their hands. Climate change will cost us a fortune if we do nothing.

In 1997—although that was a while ago, it does not matter because it is still relevant—more than 2,800 eminent North American economists, including 300 Canadians, signed a declaration recognizing that the advantages of measures that reduce harmful emissions far exceed their cost. It is better to tackle the costs than to wait.

In conclusion, I would like to read a poem inspired by our planet. I wrote it over the weekend and it is called "The most beautiful environmental poetry".

Business of Supply

The most beautiful environmental poetry
Is written step by step, and slowly, slowly
Our planet Earth is a gift from above
A gift from above that fills us with love

The most beautiful environmental poetry
Is written step by step, and dances gracefully
It's a planetary dance with rhythm and finesse
Encircling the earth with a silky dress

The most beautiful environmental poetry
Is written step by step, from the depths of the heart
Only dancing hearts will have a part

The most beautiful environmental poetry
Is written step by step, and slowly, slowly
Our planet Earth is a gift from above
A gift from above that fills us with love

●(1740)

[*English*]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, yes, the planet is indeed beautiful.

I wonder if the member would like to acknowledge that Canada is not responsible for the amount of emissions that are in fact causing a lot of climate change. What about the countries that have the highest percentage of global emissions?

I would like the member to speak about the countries that are contributing to climate change.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her question. It was a multi-tiered question and I will try to be brief by answering two parts of it.

I will begin by answering the first question, which she had already asked the hon. member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore, about Canada's impact on the rest of the world. In fact, we are one of the 10 worst countries per capita in the world. Earlier, someone said our impact accounted for just 2%, but that is not true. In reality, according to the figures I have here, Canada is one of the world's 10 biggest polluters per capita. Canada needs to stop making excuses and start reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. It is here in black and white on a scientific web site. It is false to say that Canada does not have a major impact on climate change.

To answer her second question, in which she talks about other countries—and that is an important aspect—we must not forget that we have a debt. For many years, we have been polluting much more than the emerging countries. That is called differentiated responsibility. We have to think about that as well. Those countries are starting to emerge and it is clear that they cannot make the same sacrifices as we do when we have been polluting for decades. We must also respect other countries, emerging countries.

[*English*]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's passion on this subject.

Science tells us there will be dramatic environmental change owing to climate change with impacts on weather patterns, food production, coastlines, and diseases, among other things.

Privilege

Our Arctic is extremely sensitive. We are trying to hold the warming to 2°Celsius; it may be 3° or 3.5°, but in the Arctic the warming will be much greater. This will result in collapsed terrain due to permafrost thaw, which will be ruinous for Arctic infrastructure and human activities. Permafrost thaw is already a reality.

Could my hon. colleague talk about the impact on our Arctic?

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my honourable colleague for her question.

As I mentioned earlier, we must ensure that the permafrost does not disappear because it contains huge reserves of organic carbon. These are the decayed plants and animals that have accumulated in the soil for millennia. If the permafrost were ever to thaw and disappear, this carbon would be released into our atmosphere. It would represent about four times the amount of current carbon emissions. Therefore, we absolutely must comply with the Kyoto protocol. We made a commitment, we ratified the protocol and we must comply with it. We must be a leader, we must show leadership in the matter of the second phase of the Kyoto protocol.

The first phase is one thing, but now we must commit to the second phase of the Kyoto protocol. Above all we must not abandon the protocol—just because China is not willing to do its part or because the United States does not want to sign—and go sulk in a corner. Just because one country is shirking its responsibilities does not mean that we have to join the race to the bottom. We must show leadership, prove that we want to be part of the solution and serve as an example. For that reason I ask the Conservatives to vote for our motion this evening.

* * *

[*English*]

PRIVILEGE

TELEPHONE CALLS TO MOUNT ROYAL CONSTITUENTS

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the issue regarding the question of privilege from the member for Mount Royal.

Last week I explained why the complaint of the hon. member for Mount Royal was not a matter for the House to judge because it falls outside its authority. I will not go through my entire submission again. I believe it speaks for itself. I will briefly summarize.

First, the resources used here to make these calls were not those of Parliament or the Government of Canada, but those of the Conservative Party. Moreover, the underlying goal of voter ID is an important activity, and those calls were within the bounds of typical political discourse.

Second, the day-to-day conduct of political parties should not be judged by the House or by its members.

Third, the hon. member has not explained how he was prevented from doing his job as a member of Parliament, beyond being asked about the issue by constituents and fielding calls on the matter. He has not given examples of how this has prevented his work in this

place from being done. I accept that these calls and questions were an irritating and even maddening diversion, but they did not prevent the member from performing his duties, which I think he does well.

I would nonetheless clarify the content of the voter ID calls and the matter of erroneous information being spread since I spoke last on this issue. The member for Mount Royal said that the Conservative Party of Canada conducted calls into his riding that stated clearly that he had stepped down or was about to. That is false. The reality is that the Conservative Party did not say that the member had stepped down or was about to, only that there were rumours that he might step down.

The member for Mount Royal has said that he has no problems with a political party conducting voter identification calls. The member also admitted that there had indeed been rumours that he might resign and that there was nothing wrong with saying so.

In conducting voter identification, the Conservative Party used its traditional voter ID script, with no mention of a byelection. However, when prompted by voters on why they were being solicited or asked for their support, in those instances there was a pre-written response that the callers were to use. I would like to read this prepared response into the record.

Once the initial voter ID script was read, if a voter asked why the Conservative Party was calling, the caller would say:

Some people are suggesting that the current MP may retire, so we're calling on behalf of [the Prime Minister] and the Conservative Party of Canada to ask if you would consider supporting the Conservative Party of Canada if there is a byelection.

It is true that this might raise some questions for the hon. member. However, as he stated, those questions have been floating around for the past 12 years. In no way did the Conservative Party say that he had or would quit, only that he might. The member, however, has stated the Conservative Party went much further. That is the epicentre of this dispute.

I, for one, would concede that political parties cannot say whatever they want and that there must be some element of truth. Nothing here crossed that line, and although the calls were perhaps tough, they were still acceptable in the day-to-day world of political jockeying.

I do also want to address a point raised by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, who compared this matter to one that occurred in 1985. In that instance, a newspaper advertisement suggested that someone other than the sitting member was the member of Parliament. This is not comparable to the dispute before us today, for a simple reason. The newspaper ad caused confusion by stating that the seat in question was held by someone other than the person who held it. On the other hand, the matter before us does not sow confusion by either claiming that there was a different member of Parliament or that the current one had resigned or was about to, only that there were rumours that he might. This is fundamentally different.

I hope you will find that no prima facie breach of privilege has occurred and agree this language falls within the boundaries of political discourse, or, at the very least, that it is not a matter for the House to adjudicate. I would also add that the hon. member has indicated he will not step down and will serve his whole term. I accept that, as I'm sure his constituents do, which puts the issue to rest.

The best place for this to be judged is among Canadians, not in the House. Otherwise, I fear you will be called upon to rule on all matters of political activity. Examples are past TV advertisements stating that Conservatives would flood cities with our soldiers or recent billboard ads stating that repealing the long gun registry would result in restricted weapons becoming unrestricted, both of which are false and groundless.

This is the peril. You are being asked to send the House into territory where it does not belong. I urge you to proceed with caution.

• (1750)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House thanks the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest for his intervention.

Is the hon. member for Winnipeg North rising on the same point?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point.

I find it somewhat surprising that the member from New Brunswick would stand in his place today at ten to six to bring home a point that has been explained at great length. I question it in terms of his motivation for bringing it up.

The facts do not change. The Prime Minister, who is the leader of the Conservative Party, condoned a polling done in the riding of Mount Royal, thereby giving a clear impression to the constituents in Mount Royal that the member for Mount Royal was going to be resigning.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that it is indeed a privilege. To try to give the impression that it would not interfere with the member's ability to perform his or her duties is just out of this world. I do not understand how you could possibly imagine that it would not affect it. What is hard to believe is that the Prime Minister has not had the courage to stand up and apologize to the member for Mount Royal in recognizing that the behaviour of the Conservative Party was highly irresponsible. If anything, the Prime Minister should be asking Elections Canada to get directly involved and investigate the matter. That is what is necessary.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you should take the time necessary to protect the rights of each and every member, because if we allow the Prime Minister to get away with this, it could happen to any one of us. I would suggest that you take the time, do the work, and let us rule that whoever it is, whether the Prime Minister or anyone else in this chamber, does not have the right to go into a constituency and say that a member is resigning when we know full well that is—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. I do not know that there was anything new there, but we appreciate the

Business of Supply

intervention. I am sure that we will take these interventions in due course and bring the issue back to the House in good time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for York South—Weston.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—CLIMATE CHANGE

The House resumed consideration of the motion

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will bring us back to the matter at hand, which is leadership. What we are talking about here today is leadership, leadership of the Government of Canada in leading not just Canada but the rest of the world in tackling global climate change.

It used to be called global warming, but people did not like that. It is now called global climate change. I liked global warming, because it gave a real idea of what it meant.

We are trying to deal with a real phenomenon. It is really happening; it is not a mystery anymore; it is not something that people are imagining, and it is catastrophic. What is about to happen to the planet is something that can be prevented, but for some reason governments all over the world are reluctant to take the leadership role that they need to take to do it.

Canada has traditionally been a country where leadership on issues of global importance could be counted on. Canada could be counted on to take on the role of being a peacemaker. In 1939, Canada was counted on before the United States to move into Europe with troops to help defend Britain and the rest of Europe. We did not have to wait for the United States to jump on board before we would do it, but that is what the Conservative government is telling us here today: that we have to wait until the big players jump on board before we do anything about climate change. That is wrong.

One need only look at where the greenhouse gases come from to understand the enormity of the problem that faces us. Essentially, we could imagine a pie chart divided into fifths. Agriculture is about a fifth of the pie. Industry is about a fifth. Goods transportation is about a fifth. Human transportation is about a fifth. Heating and cooling our dwellings is about a fifth.

When we look at that pie, we can look at reducing the amount of greenhouse gases each of those sectors contributes or at just shutting one of them down altogether—industry, for example. No, that is not a good idea, because we are an industrial country and we need our industry. What could we shut down, goods transportation? That does not work either. What we would have to do is shrink the amount of greenhouse gas coming out of each of those sectors of our economy.

The Conservatives have suggested that we are going to do it by reducing by 17% from 2005 levels by 2015, but what really needs to happen, and what world leaders and scientists have agreed on, is that we need to reduce by 80% by 2050.

Business of Supply

Now, looking at that pie, will we shut down four parts of our economy to get to 80%? Are we actually going to close down goods transportation, people transportation, industry and agriculture, leaving only heating and cooling, which is essential to get by? No, of course not.

However, there needs to be a much bigger response than the one we are getting from the other side of this House to deal with it in such an enormous way. We do not have time to waste while we dither over which country is in or out of this club. That is not what we are about. We are Canadians. We lead the world on issues like this. We do not say, "Well, we are only 2%, so the rest of the world should do this, and we will just continue to put our 2% out."

Think of what our kids would say if our attitude was that it was okay to go ahead and litter because what we put on the ground was only 2% of it. That is not what we as adults want to tell our children, and it should not be what we as Canadian leaders tell the rest of the world. Our 2% is actually four or five times greater than it should be, because we are one of the world's largest per capita consumers of fossil fuel energy.

Why is that? It is not just because we are in a cold country; it is because we do not do anything about our fossil fuel consumption. I will give a real-world example.

Let us take the transportation sector as one of the four pieces of the pie, and the human transportation sector as one of those four or five pieces of the pie, which I think is low-hanging fruit. It is something we could do something about very easily and quickly. They have done it in Europe.

• (1755)

In Switzerland, we discovered, as we were listening to witnesses at our transportation committee, that 80% of the trips taken by the population of Switzerland is in public transit. That is what we should be aiming for. We reduce greenhouse gases by 80% out of one sector of the economy by building a transportation infrastructure system that is convenient, regular and runs like a Swiss watch, which is what happens in Switzerland, so people know they will get from point A to point B in a reasonable period of time and it is competitive to using their own personal vehicle.

However, we are not doing that. We are building roads. Every province in this country is building roads as fast as they can because cars are the only way people know how to get around.

As a federal government, we ought to be encouraging the building of public transit. We ought to be using the large arm of the law, as it were, and the large spending capacity that we have as a federal institution to create a public transit infrastructure in this country that would take people out of their cars and into public transit with mechanisms that are electric.

In a lot of countries, electric generation is done without the use of fossil fuels. It can be replaced quite easily by the use of windmills, photovoltaics and hydro-electric systems that do not consume any hydro carbons and, therefore, do not emit any greenhouse gases.

Instead, we are encouraging the use of personal vehicles. We are sucking fossil fuels out of the ground as fast as we possibly can. All we can say to a government that is doing that is that, as we expand

the sucking of fossil fuels out of the ground, let us do it in a slightly less consumptive way next year. However, that is not the way to solve the problem of greenhouse gas emissions on this planet.

The way to solve the problem of greenhouse gas emissions on this planet is to consume dramatically less fossil fuels. It is not a little bit, not 17% over 10 years, but 80% over the next 30 to 40 years. If we were to do that, we could create jobs in the meantime. We can build an industry in Canada, an industrial base that is based on green technologies and the generation of electricity using non-fossil fuel sources. We can build electric vehicles that can transport people in large numbers. Instead, we turn to other countries to build them for us.

We should be taking leadership. We should be building jobs in this country based on what we know we will need in 40 years. We know we will need more efficient ways of getting the job done. We know we will need more efficient and less consumptive ways of getting around. We know we will need more efficient and less consumptive ways of getting our agriculture done. Since we know all of this, and it is a little way in the future, we should be planning for it. We should be taking steps to create these industries and create an industrial model in Canada that builds jobs around what we know we will need in 40 years.

Instead, we are told over and over again by the other side of the House that the jobs are in the oil patch. The jobs will be where oil is coming out of the ground. However, if the rest of the world wakes up and realizes that we cannot actually consume that much oil because we would not have a planet to live on anymore, then the jobs will not be in the oil patch. The economies of the world will not demand oil if they decide they are going to create sustainable environments, industries, transportation, agriculture, home heating and cooling, all of which we think we should be working toward consuming fewer fossil fuels.

We are in a position where we could be leaders in the world. We should not be pointing fingers at other countries in the world telling them that until they lead we will not go here. That is wrong-headed. We should be taking this bull by the horns, creating the jobs, the industry and the technologies that will bring us out of this morass.

• (1800)

We should not be investing any more in sucking fuel out of the ground, nor should we be counting on the jobs that would be created to ferry stranded passengers at Vancouver airport when the airport floods. Let us look at the jobs we have, running ferryboats across to Vancouver airport. Those are not the kind of jobs this country needs or wants.

• (1805)

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my hon. colleague's remarks with interest, understanding that he is from a Toronto area riding where they may not be quite as familiar with pickup trucks as are my constituents.

I noted that the member said that about 80% of the trips taken in Switzerland were by public transport. The four Saskatoon area constituencies have a square mileage slightly larger than that of Switzerland, about 10% or 15% larger, with the population of around 300,000.

Does the hon. member not think that certain comparisons, like the one with Switzerland, is considerably unfair with a country as remote and as rural as Canada that does not have anywhere near the population densities of a country like Switzerland which has seven million people? Does the hon. member not think his analogy was a little inaccurate?

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, it is very true that Canada is a much bigger place than Switzerland. However, even the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities appealed to the transportation, infrastructure and communities committee that it needed suburban rural public transit and it does not have it. It relies on private sector bus companies to come by its communities once in a while. The government is not investing in public transit for communities like Saskatoon, for communities in the rural municipalities of Saskatchewan that really could use some investment in public transit and which, I think, understand that public transit is one of the ways we will get out of this mess.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate my hon. colleagues from York South—Weston and Drummond on their excellent speeches in favour of the motion moved by the member for Halifax.

We have often heard that the municipalities are showing real leadership when it comes to climate change, and the same thing is happening at the provincial level and in small communities.

Can my colleague explain why it is so important that Canada show real leadership regarding climate change, as our motion states?

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, it should not be just left up to individuals. The member is absolutely right. It also should not be left up just to some municipalities that do take as much of a leadership role as they possibly can. Municipalities in this country do not have the taxation ability, the wherewithal that the federal government does to invest heavily in infrastructure. What needs to happen is those heavy investments in infrastructure in such things as public transit, but it may be electricity generation. Not only are they a great return on investment in terms of the actual capital return, they help with climate change and they create jobs. We are looking at creating jobs every chance we get and we should be looking to create jobs with this global climate change attack that we are preaching.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his excellent speech.

I would remind the member that he is quite right and that Canada is currently one of the 10 worst countries when it comes to the fight against climate change. The Conservatives' error was saying that the impact is only 2%. When we look at the numbers per capita, we are among the 10 worst countries in the world.

Business of Supply

My colleague suggested some excellent solutions to fight climate change. Now what does he think of the NDP's recent proposal for a national transit strategy?

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, we have in fact proposed a national public transit strategy because we recognize, not just that people need to get around, but that public transit is an effective way of combating climate change, at least in Canada, and an effective way of creating a new industry in Canada. We need industrial jobs in this country. We need to be able to return to an economy in which people can expect to have a good, full-time job with benefits, and that comes, in large measure, from the kinds of industries that public transit infrastructure will provide.

• (1810)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before I recognize the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, I need to let him know that there are about four minutes remaining in the time allocated for debate this afternoon and so I will need to interrupt him at 15 minutes after.

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise two points in the time I have left.

First of all, we have heard a lot here today about the supposed progress that Canada has made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but I think if we took the recession and the efforts made by the provincial and municipal governments out of the equation, very little would remain.

[*English*]

This choice between the economy, the environment and the balance that the Conservatives are giving us is very misleading. I want to give a couple of examples to show that this is a false choice. The first example I want to give is of a project that occurred in my riding. It was an effort by the municipal government. It was not something that was easy to accomplish. It was the construction of a new police station.

A sustainability engineer in the city government decided that an energy-efficient police station should be built. She said that a lead gold building for the new police station should be built and it was not an easy thing to do because it required a lot of up-front costs. However, she was persistent and, in the end, she got this new police station built to lead gold standard. Once the proper accounting was done and people saw all the money that could be saved in the future, it turned out that the new police station built to lead gold standard actually saved the city of Kingston \$1 million over its lifetime. If we were to do the proper accounting, we would realize that we need to act now, even if there are costs now because there are a lot of benefits in the future. That is an example of action by a municipal government that made a difference despite the lack of leadership from the federal government. It was something that saved taxpayers money and helped the environment.

Business of Supply

The second thing I want to mention is something that the provincial government has been doing. In my riding of Kingston and the Islands, about 50 jobs were created about a year ago in the manufacture of solar panels. This is another example of where, as we prepare for the post-fossil fuel economy where renewable energy becomes cheaper and cheaper, we want to position this country as a leader in renewable energy. This happened in my riding with the creation of 50 jobs in the manufacture of solar panels. Who was responsible for that? It was not the federal government. The provincial government showed leadership in this case and that is the source of some progress.

Another example is of a private company that makes and sells thousands and thousands of little monitors to utilities, mostly in the United States. These monitors tell consumers when the utility is providing a lot of electricity. Everybody has their switches turned on and they are paying peak prices for electricity. This is a way of warning consumers that they should start turning off their appliances or do their washing at a different time of day. This is a tool that utilities can use, a product made and designed in my riding. There was the creation of jobs in my riding by a private company that helps utilities in the United States avoid having to build the extra power plants to create the extra power that is needed to service peak demand.

I have given three examples of projects in my riding that have either saved money or created jobs and a healthy environment and all of them were done by either the municipal government, the provincial governments or private enterprise with no help from the federal government. We can just imagine what we could do if the federal government was onboard.

● (1815)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It being 6:15 p.m., and the last allotted day for the supply period ending December 10, 2011, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Call in the members.

● (1840)

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

(*Division No. 93*)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Bellavance
Benskin
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brisson
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Chow
Cleary
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Eyking
Freeman
Gameau
Genest-Jourdain
Godin
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Julian
Kellway
Lapointe
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
Mai
Martin
Mathysen
McGuinty
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Nantel
Nunez-Melo
Patry
Pilon
Quach
Rafferty
Regan
Sandhu
Scarpaleggia
Sgro
sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
St-Denis
Stoffler
Thibeault
Tremblay
Turmel

Andrews
Ashton
Aubin
Bélangier
Bennett
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brahmi
Brosseau
Caron
Cash
Chicoine
Choquette
Christopherson
Coderre
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseau
Foote
Fry
Garrison
Giguère
Goodale
Groguié
Harris (St. John's East)
Jacob
Karygiannis
Lamoureux
Larose
Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
MacAulay
Marston
Masse
McCallum
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray
Nicholls
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rae
Raynault
Rousseau
Savoie
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Sullivan
Toone
Trudeau
Valériote — 126

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Adler
Albas

Adams
Aglukkaq
Albrecht

Business of Supply

| | |
|--|---|
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |
| Boughen | Braid |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) |
| Bruinooge | Butt |
| Calandra | Calkins |
| Cannan | Carmichael |
| Carrie | Chisu |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Daniel |
| Davidson | Dechert |
| Del Mastro | Devolin |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) |
| Dykstra | Fantino |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty |
| Fletcher | Galipeau |
| Gallant | Gill |
| Glover | Goguen |
| Goodyear | Gosal |
| Gourde | Grewal |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) |
| Hawn | Hayes |
| Hiebert | Hillyer |
| Hoback | Hoepfner |
| James | Jean |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr |
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) |
| Lake | Lauzon |
| Lebel | Leef |
| Leitch | Lemieux |
| Leung | Lizon |
| Lobb | Lunney |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie |
| Mayes | McColeman |
| McLeod | Menegakis |
| Menzies | Miller |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | Norlock |
| Nicholson | O'Neill Gordon |
| O'Connor | Oda |
| Obhrai | Opitz |
| Oliver | Payne |
| Paradis | Poillievre |
| Penashue | Raitt |
| Preston | Rathgeber |
| Rajotte | Rempel |
| Reid | Richardson |
| Richards | Ritz |
| Rickford | Schellenberger |
| Saxton | Shea |
| Seeback | Smith |
| Shory | Sorenson |
| Sopuck | Storseth |
| Stanton | Sweet |
| Strahl | Toet |
| Tilson | Trost |
| Toews | Truppe |
| Trottier | Uppal |
| Tweed | Van Loan |
| Van Kesteren | Wallace |
| Vellacott | Warkentin |
| Warawa | Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) |
| Watson | |
| Wilks | |
| Weston (Saint John) | |
| Williamson | |
| Woodworth | |
| Young (Oakville) | |
| Zimmer— 157 | |

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

● (1845)

[English]

The next question is on supplementary estimates (B).

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 2011-12

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC) moved:

That the supplementary estimates (B) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012 be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.**Some hon. members:** Yea.**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.**Some hon. members:** Nay.**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.*And five or more members having risen:***Hon. Gordon O'Connor:** Mr. Speaker, if you seek it I believe you would find agreement to apply the vote from the previous motion to the current motion, with the Conservatives voting yes.**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**Ms. Chris Charlton:** Mr. Speaker, NDP members will be voting no, and I would ask you to add in the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North.**Ms. Judy Foote:** Mr. Speaker, Liberal members will be voting against.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois will vote against the motion.

[English]

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

(Division No. 94)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| Ablonczy | Adams |
| Adler | Aglukkaq |
| Albas | Albrecht |
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |

Business of Supply

| | | | |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Boughen | Braid | Brison | Brosseau |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) | Byrne | Caron |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) | Casey | Cash |
| Bruinooge | Butt | Charlton | Chicoine |
| Calandra | Calkins | Chisholm | Choquette |
| Cannan | Carmichael | Chow | Christopherson |
| Carrie | Chisu | Cleary | Coderre |
| Chong | Clarke | Comartin | Côté |
| Clement | Daniel | Cotler | Crowder |
| Davidson | Dechert | Cullen | Cuzner |
| Del Mastro | Devolin | Davies (Vancouver Kingsway) | Davies (Vancouver East) |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) | Day | Dewar |
| Dykstra | Fantino | Dion | Dionne Labelle |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) | Donnelly | Doré Lefebvre |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty | Dubé | Duncan (Etobicoke North) |
| Fletcher | Galipeau | Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) | Dusseau |
| Gallant | Gill | Eyking | Footé |
| Glover | Goguen | Freeman | Fry |
| Goodyear | Gosal | Gameau | Garrison |
| Gourde | Grewal | Genest-Jourdain | Giguère |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) | Godin | Goodale |
| Hawn | Hayes | Gravelle | Groguhé |
| Hiebert | Hillyer | Harris (Scarborough Southwest) | Harris (St. John's East) |
| Hoback | Hoepfner | Hsu | Hyer |
| James | Jean | Jacob | Julian |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) | Karygiannis | Kellway |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr | Lamoureux | Lapointe |
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) | Larose | Latendresse |
| Lake | Lauzon | Laverdière | LeBlanc (Beauséjour) |
| Lebel | Leaf | LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard) | Leslie |
| Leitch | Lemieux | MacAulay | Mai |
| Leung | Lizon | Marston | Martin |
| Lobb | Lunney | Masse | Mathysen |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie | McCallum | McGuinty |
| Mayes | McColeman | McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood) | Michaud |
| McLeod | Menegakis | Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue) | Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) |
| Menzies | Miller | Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine) | Morin (Laurentides—Labelle) |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | | Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot) | Mourani |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | | Murray | Nantel |
| Nicholson | Norlock | Nicholls | Nunez-Melo |
| O'Connor | O'Neill Gordon | Papillon | Patry |
| Obhrai | Oda | Perreault | Pilon |
| Oliver | Opitz | Plamondon | Quach |
| Paradis | Payne | Rae | Rafferty |
| Penashue | Poillievre | Raynault | Regan |
| Preston | Raitt | Rousseau | Sandhu |
| Rajotte | Rathgeber | Savoie | Scarpaleggia |
| Reid | Rempel | Sellah | Sgro |
| Richards | Richardson | Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor) | |
| Rickford | Ritz | Sims (Newton—North Delta) | |
| Saxton | Schellenberger | Sitsabaiesan | St-Denis |
| Seeback | Shea | Stewart | Stoffer |
| Shory | Smith | Sullivan | Thibeault |
| Sopuck | Sorenson | Toone | Tremblay |
| Stanton | Storseth | Trudeau | Tumel |
| Strahl | Sweet | Valerioté — 127 | |
| Tilson | Toet | | |
| Toews | Trost | | |
| Trottier | Truppe | | |
| Tweed | Uppal | | |
| Van Kesteren | Van Loan | | |
| Vellacott | Wallace | | |
| Warawa | Warkentin | | |
| Watson | Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) | | |
| Weston (Saint John) | Wilks | | |
| Williamson | Wong | | |
| Woodworth | Yelich | | |
| Young (Oakville) | Young (Vancouver South) | | |
| Zimmer — 157 | | | |

NAYS

Members

| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Allen (Welland) | Andrews |
| Angus | Ashton |
| Atamanenko | Aubin |
| Ayala | Bélangier |
| Bellavance | Bennett |
| Benskin | Blanchette |
| Blanchette-Lamothe | Boivin |
| Borg | Boulerice |
| Boutin-Sweet | Brahmi |

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Tony Clement moved that Bill C-29, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2012, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

Hon. Tony Clement moved that Bill C-29, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2012, be read the second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.

Business of Supply

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it I believe you would find agreement to apply the results on the previous motion to the current motion, with the Conservatives voting yes.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Ms. Chris Charlton: Mr. Speaker, NDP members are voting no.

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, Liberals will be voting against.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois will vote against the motion.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 95*)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Ablonczy | Adams |
| Adler | Aglukkaq |
| Albas | Albrecht |
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |
| Boughen | Braid |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) |
| Bruinooge | Butt |
| Calandra | Calkins |
| Cannan | Carmichael |
| Carrie | Chisu |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Daniel |
| Davidson | Dechert |
| Del Mastro | Devolin |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) |
| Dykstra | Fantino |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty |
| Fletcher | Galipeau |
| Gallant | Gill |
| Glover | Goguen |
| Goodyear | Gosal |
| Gourde | Grewal |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) |
| Hawn | Hayes |
| Hiebert | Hillyer |
| Hoback | Hoepfner |
| James | Jean |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr |

| | |
|--|--|
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) |
| Lake | Lauzon |
| Lebel | Leaf |
| Leitch | Lemieux |
| Leung | Lizon |
| Lobb | Lunney |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie |
| Mayes | McColeman |
| McLeod | Menegakis |
| Menzies | Miller |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | |
| Nicholson | Norlock |
| O'Connor | O'Neill Gordon |
| Obhrai | Oda |
| Oliver | Opitz |
| Paradis | Payne |
| Penashue | Poillievre |
| Preston | Raiitt |
| Rajotte | Rathgeber |
| Reid | Rempel |
| Richards | Richardson |
| Rickford | Ritz |
| Saxton | Schellenberger |
| Seeback | Shea |
| Shory | Smith |
| Sopuck | Sorenson |
| Stanton | Storseth |
| Strahl | Sweet |
| Tilson | Toet |
| Toews | Trost |
| Trottier | Truppe |
| Tweed | Uppal |
| Van Kesteren | Van Loan |
| Vellacott | Wallace |
| Warawa | Warkentin |
| Watson | Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to |
| Sky Country) | |
| Weston (Saint John) | Wilks |
| Williamson | Wong |
| Woodworth | Yelich |
| Young (Oakville) | Young (Vancouver South) |
| Zimmer — 157 | |

NAYS

Members

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Allen (Welland) | Andrews |
| Angus | Ashton |
| Atamanenko | Aubin |
| Ayala | Bélangier |
| Bellavance | Bennett |
| Benskin | Blanchette |
| Blanchette-Lamothe | Boivin |
| Borg | Boulerice |
| Boutin-Sweet | Brahmi |
| Brisson | Brosseau |
| Byrne | Caron |
| Casey | Cash |
| Charlton | Chicoine |
| Chisholm | Choquette |
| Chow | Christopherson |
| Cleary | Coderre |
| Comartin | Côté |
| Cotler | Crowder |
| Cullen | Cuzner |
| Davies (Vancouver Kingsway) | Davies (Vancouver East) |
| Day | Dewar |
| Dion | Dionne Labelle |
| Donnelly | Doré Lefebvre |
| Dubé | Duncan (Etobicoke North) |
| Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) | Dusseauit |
| Eyking | Foote |
| Freeman | Fry |
| Garneau | Garrison |
| Genest-Jourdain | Giguère |
| Godin | Goodale |
| Gravelle | Groguhé |
| Harris (Scarborough Southwest) | Harris (St. John's East) |
| Hsu | Hyer |
| Jacob | Julian |
| Karygiannis | Kellway |
| Lamoureux | Lapointe |

Business of Supply

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Larose | Latendresse |
| Laverdière | LeBlanc (Beauséjour) |
| LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard) | Leslie |
| MacAulay | Mai |
| Marston | Martin |
| Masse | Mathysen |
| McCallum | McGuinty |
| McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood) | Michaud |
| Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue) | Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) |
| Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine) | Morin (Laurentides—Labelle) |
| Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot) | Mourani |
| Murray | Nantel |
| Nicholls | Nunez-Melo |
| Papillon | Patry |
| Perreault | Pilon |
| Plamondon | Quach |
| Rae | Rafferty |
| Raynault | Regan |
| Rousseau | Sandhu |
| Savoie | Scarpaleggia |
| Sellah | Sgro |
| Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor) | |
| Sims (Newton—North Delta) | |
| Sitsabaiesan | St-Denis |
| Stewart | Stoffer |
| Sullivan | Thibeault |
| Toone | Tremblay |
| Trudeau | Turmel |
| Valeriote — 127 | |

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee of the whole.

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Ms. Savoie in the chair)

(On clause 2)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: The House is now in committee of the whole on Bill C-29. Does the hon. member for Louis-Hébert wish to ask the usual question?

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Madam Chair, can the President of the Treasury Board confirm to members of the House that the bill is in its usual form?

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Madam Chair, the presentation of this bill is identical to the one used for the previous supply period.

• (1850)

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 7 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Bill agreed to)

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Mr. Speaker, the committee of the whole has considered Bill C-29 and directed me to report it without amendment.

(Bill reported)

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be concurred in at report stage.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say ye.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

[English]

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it I believe you would find agreement to apply the results from the second reading vote to the current motion, with the Conservatives voting yes.

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

Ms. Chris Charlton: Mr. Speaker, the NDP vote no.

Ms. Judy Foote: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals will vote no.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Plamondon: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois votes no.

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

(Division No. 96)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ablonczy | Adams |
| Adler | Aglukkaq |
| Albas | Albrecht |
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |
| Boughen | Braid |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) |
| Bruinooge | Butt |
| Calandra | Calkins |
| Cannan | Carmichael |
| Carrie | Chisu |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Daniel |
| Davidson | Dechert |
| Del Mastro | Devolin |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) |

| | |
|--|---|
| Dykstra | Fantino |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty |
| Fletcher | Galipeau |
| Gallant | Gill |
| Glover | Goguen |
| Goodyear | Gosal |
| Gourde | Grewal |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) |
| Hawn | Hayes |
| Hiebert | Hillyer |
| Hoback | Hoeppner |
| James | Jean |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr |
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) |
| Lake | Lauzon |
| Lebel | Leaf |
| Leitch | Lemieux |
| Leung | Lizon |
| Lobb | Lunney |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie |
| Mayes | McColeman |
| McLeod | Menegakis |
| Menzies | Miller |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | |
| Nicholson | Norlock |
| O'Connor | O'Neill Gordon |
| Obhrai | Oda |
| Oliver | Opitz |
| Paradis | Payne |
| Penashue | Poilievre |
| Preston | Raitt |
| Rajotte | Rathgeber |
| Reid | Rempel |
| Richards | Richardson |
| Rickford | Ritz |
| Saxton | Schellenberger |
| Seeback | Shea |
| Shory | Smith |
| Sopuck | Sorenson |
| Stanton | Storseth |
| Strahl | Sweet |
| Tilson | Toet |
| Toews | Trost |
| Trottier | Truppe |
| Tweed | Uppal |
| Van Kesteren | Van Loan |
| Vellacott | Wallace |
| Warawa | Warkentin |
| Watson | Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) |
| Weston (Saint John) | |
| Williamson | Wilks |
| Woodworth | Wong |
| Young (Oakville) | Yelich |
| Zimmer — 157 | Young (Vancouver South) |

Business of Supply

NAYS

Members

| |
|-------------------------|
| Andrews |
| Ashton |
| Aubin |
| Bélangier |
| Bennett |
| Blanchette |
| Boivin |
| Boulerice |
| Brahmi |
| Brosseau |
| Caron |
| Cash |
| Chicoine |
| Choquette |
| Christopherson |
| Coderre |
| Côté |
| Crowder |
| Cuzner |
| Davies (Vancouver East) |
| Dewar |

Business of Supply

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Dion | Dionne Labelle |
| Donnelly | Doré Lefebvre |
| Dubé | Duncan (Etobicoke North) |
| Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) | Dusseault |
| Eyking | Footé |
| Freeman | Fry |
| Garneau | Garrison |
| Genest-Jourdain | Giguère |
| Godin | Goodale |
| Gravelle | Groguhé |
| Harris (Scarborough Southwest) | Harris (St. John's East) |
| Hsu | Hyer |
| Jacob | Julian |
| Karygiannis | Kellway |
| Lamoureux | Lapointe |
| Larose | Latendresse |
| Laverdière | LeBlanc (Beauséjour) |
| LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard) | Leslie |
| MacAulay | Mai |
| Marston | Martin |
| Masse | Mathysen |
| McCallum | McGuinty |
| McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood) | Michaud |
| Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue) | Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) |
| Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine) | Morin (Laurentides—Labelle) |
| Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot) | Mourani |
| Murray | Nantel |
| Nicholls | Nunez-Melo |
| Papillon | Patry |
| Perreault | Pilon |
| Plamondon | Quach |
| Rae | Rafferty |
| Raynault | Regan |
| Rousseau | Sandhu |
| Savoie | Scarpaleggia |
| Sellah | Sgro |
| Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor) | |
| Sims (Newton—North Delta) | |
| Sitsabaiesan | St-Denis |
| Stewart | Stoffer |
| Sullivan | Thibeault |
| Toone | Tremblay |
| Trudeau | Turmel |
| Valériote — 127 | |

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[English]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.**Some hon. members:** Yea.**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.**Some hon. members:** Nay.**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1900)

[English]

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

(Division No. 97)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Ablonczy | Adams |
| Adler | Aglukkaq |
| Albas | Albrecht |
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |
| Boughen | Braid |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) |
| Bruinooge | Butt |
| Calandra | Calkins |
| Cannan | Carmichael |
| Carrie | Chisu |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Daniel |
| Davidson | Dechert |
| Del Mastro | Devolin |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) |
| Dykstra | Fantino |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty |
| Fletcher | Galipeau |
| Gallant | Gill |
| Glover | Goguen |
| Goodyear | Gosal |
| Gourde | Grewal |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) |
| Hawn | Hayes |
| Hiebert | Hillyer |
| Hoback | Hoepfner |
| James | Jean |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) |
| Kenny (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr |
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) |
| Lake | Lauzon |
| Lebel | Leef |
| Leitch | Lemieux |
| Leung | Lizon |
| Lobb | Lunney |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie |
| Mayes | McColeman |
| McLeod | Menegakis |
| Menzies | Miller |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | |
| Nicholson | Norlock |
| O'Connor | O'Neill Gordon |
| Obhrai | Oda |
| Oliver | Opitz |
| Paradis | Payne |
| Penashue | Poillievre |
| Preston | Raitt |
| Rajotte | Rathgeber |
| Reid | Rempel |
| Richards | Richardson |
| Rickford | Ritz |
| Saxton | Schellenberger |
| Seeback | Shea |
| Shory | Smith |
| Sopuck | Sorenson |
| Stanton | Storseth |
| Strahl | Sweet |
| Tilson | Toet |
| Toews | Trost |
| Trottier | Truppe |

Business of Supply

The Speaker: I declare to motion carried.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITIES ACT

The House resumed from December 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-10, An Act to enact the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act and to amend the State Immunity Act, the Criminal Code, the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and other Acts, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-10.

● (1910)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 98*)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Ablonczy | Adams |
| Adler | Aglukkaq |
| Albas | Albrecht |
| Alexander | Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac) |
| Allison | Ambler |
| Ambrose | Anders |
| Anderson | Armstrong |
| Ashfield | Aspin |
| Bateman | Benoit |
| Bernier | Bezan |
| Blaney | Block |
| Boughen | Braid |
| Breitkreuz | Brown (Leeds—Grenville) |
| Brown (Newmarket—Aurora) | Brown (Barrie) |
| Bruinooge | Butt |
| Calandra | Calkins |
| Cannan | Carmichael |
| Carrie | Chisu |
| Chong | Clarke |
| Clement | Daniel |
| Davidson | Dechert |
| Del Mastro | Devolin |
| Dreeshen | Duncan (Vancouver Island North) |
| Dykstra | Fantino |
| Fast | Findlay (Delta—Richmond East) |
| Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) | Flaherty |
| Fletcher | Galipeau |
| Gallant | Gill |
| Glover | Goguen |
| Goodyear | Gosal |
| Gourde | Grewal |
| Harper | Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) |
| Hawn | Hayes |
| Hiebert | Hillyer |
| Hoback | Hoepfner |
| James | Jean |
| Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) | Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) |
| Kenney (Calgary Southeast) | Kerr |
| Komarnicki | Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) |
| Lake | Lauzon |
| Lebel | Leaf |
| Leitch | Lemieux |
| Leung | Lizon |
| Lobb | Lunney |
| MacKay (Central Nova) | MacKenzie |

Tweed
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Zimmer— 157

Uppal
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to

Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Bellavance
Benskin
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brison
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Chow
Cleary
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Eyking
Freeman
Garneau
Genest-Jourdain
Godin
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Jacob
Karygiannis
Lamoureux
Larose
Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
MacAulay
Marston
Masse
McCallum
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray
Nicholls
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rae
Raynault
Rousseau
Savoie
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Sullivan
Toone
Trudeau
Valeriotte— 127

Andrews
Ashton
Aubin
Bélanger
Bennett
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brahmi
Brosseau
Caron
Cash
Chicoine
Choquette
Christopherson
Coderre
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Foote
Fry
Garrison
Giguère
Goodale
Groguhé
Harris (St. John's East)
Hyer
Julian
Kellway
Lapointe
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
Mai
Martin
Mathysen
McGuinty
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Nantel
Nunez-Melo
Patry
Pilon
Quach
Rafferty
Regan
Sandhu
Scarpaleggia
Sgro
St-Denis
Stoffer
Thibeault
Tremblay
Turmel

PAIRED

Nil

Business of Supply

| | |
|--|---|
| Mayes | McColeman |
| McLeod | Menegakis |
| Menzies | Miller |
| Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) | |
| Moore (Fundy Royal) | |
| Nicholson | Norlock |
| O'Connor | O'Neill Gordon |
| Obhrai | Oda |
| Oliver | Opitz |
| Paradis | Payne |
| Penashue | Poillievre |
| Preston | Raït |
| Rajotte | Rathgeber |
| Reid | Rempel |
| Richards | Richardson |
| Rickford | Ritz |
| Saxton | Schellenberger |
| Seeback | Shea |
| Shory | Smith |
| Sopuck | Sorenson |
| Stanton | Storseth |
| Strahl | Sweet |
| Tilson | Toet |
| Toews | Trost |
| Trottier | Truppe |
| Tweed | Uppal |
| Van Kesteren | Van Loan |
| Vellacott | Wallace |
| Warawa | Warkentin |
| Watson | Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country) |
| Weston (Saint John) | Wilks |
| Williamson | Wong |
| Woodworth | Yelich |
| Young (Oakville) | Young (Vancouver South) |
| Zimmer— 157 | |

NAYS

Members

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Allen (Welland) | Andrews |
| Angus | Ashton |
| Atamanenko | Aubin |
| Ayala | Bélangier |
| Bellavance | Bennett |
| Benskin | Blanchette |
| Blanchette-Lamothe | Boivin |
| Borg | Boulerice |
| Boutin-Sweet | Brahmi |
| Brison | Brosseau |
| Byrne | Caron |
| Casey | Cash |
| Charlton | Chicoine |
| Chisholm | Choquette |
| Chow | Christopherson |
| Cleary | Coderre |
| Comartin | Côté |
| Cotler | Crowder |
| Cullen | Cuzner |
| Davies (Vancouver Kingsway) | Davies (Vancouver East) |
| Day | Dewar |
| Dion | Dionne Labelle |
| Donnelly | Doré Lefebvre |
| Dubé | Duncan (Etobicoke North) |
| Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) | Dusseault |
| Eyking | Foote |
| Freeman | Fry |
| Garneau | Garrison |
| Genest-Jourdain | Giguère |
| Godin | Goodale |
| Gravelle | Groguhé |
| Harris (Scarborough Southwest) | Harris (St. John's East) |
| Hsu | Hyer |
| Jacob | Julian |
| Karygiannis | Kellway |
| Lamoureux | Lapointe |
| Larose | Latendresse |
| Laverdière | LeBlanc (Beauséjour) |
| LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard) | Leslie |
| MacAulay | Mai |
| Marston | Martin |
| Masse | Mathyssen |
| McCallum | McGuinty |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood) | Michaud |
| Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue) | Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) |
| Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine) | Morin (Laurentides—Labelle) |
| Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot) | Mourani |
| Murray | Nantel |
| Nicholls | Nunez-Melo |
| Papillon | Patry |
| Perreault | Pilon |
| Plamondon | Quach |
| Rae | Rafferty |
| Raynault | Regan |
| Rousseau | Sandhu |
| Savoie | Scarpaleggia |
| Sellah | Sgro |
| Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor) | |
| Sims (Newton—North Delta) | |
| Sitsabaiesan | St-Denis |
| Stewart | Stoffer |
| Sullivan | Thibeault |
| Toone | Tremblay |
| Trudeau | Turmel |
| Valerioté— 127 | |

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

[Translation]

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, December 1, 2011, the House shall now resolve itself into committee of the whole to consider Motion No. 9 under Government Business.

[English]

I do now leave the chair for the House to go into the Committee of the Whole.

* * *

ORGAN DONATIONS

(House in committee of the whole on Government Business No. 9, Ms. Denise Savoie in the chair)

The Chair: Before we begin this evening's debate, I would like to remind hon. members of how the proceedings will unfold.

[Translation]

Each member speaking will be allotted 10 minutes for debate, followed by 10 minutes for questions and comments. The debate will end after four hours or when no member rises to speak.

[English]

Pursuant to the order adopted Thursday, December 1, 2011, the Chair will receive no dilatory motions, no quorum calls and no requests for unanimous consent.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC) moved:

That this Committee take note of the importance of organ donations.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, CPC): Madam Chair, I would like every member of the House to think about someone they love. Think of what it would be like if that person's kidneys failed, or if a congenital defect was found in his or her heart. That kind of bad news is delivered to a Canadian home too often.

Let me tell members a story of one of our colleagues here on the Hill.

Business of Supply

In 2005, Garry Keller dropped 40 pounds without even trying. He was always tired, lethargic and when he woke up in the morning, he felt like he had already worked a 15-hour day. He was exhausted, but in reality his kidneys were already failing.

In May of that year, he was getting ready for work one morning when he almost passed out in the shower. That was a sign that he needed to see a doctor. He had some blood work done and shortly thereafter was diagnosed with kidney failure.

What was the likely cause? As a child he often suffered from bouts of strep throat. Doctors hypothesized that over a long period of time these strep infections eventually caused long-term damage to his kidneys. Overnight, his world changed.

Following the visit to the doctor, he required an immediate blood transfusion and hemodialysis, which was done at the hospital through arteries and veins. Within three months, he was able to switch to peritoneal dialysis after being trained by the great and professional team of doctors and nurses at the Home Dialysis Clinic at the Ottawa Hospital.

Since September 2005, he has been on dialysis every day for nine hours each night while sleeps. Due to great health management, he has also been able to work and maintain a full life during that time and has served in a number of roles, including chief of staff to two ministers in three portfolios. More important, he was able to marry his beautiful, strong and supportive wife, Anna, whom he loves dearly.

His doctors told him that he would eventually need a kidney transplant. If that was not bad enough news, he was also informed that due to his rare blood type, B, his wait might be longer than the average of four years in Ottawa and eastern Ontario. They were right. He has been on a waiting list for over six years.

As an only child, his family is small. While some family and friends offered to be donors, they were all disqualified due to familial histories of diabetes or other ailments such as high blood pressure. While dialysis has kept him relatively healthy, he has always known that it was not a permanent solution. The only solution was to have a kidney transplant.

After a recent health scare put him in the hospital for two days, doctors stressed, in a follow-up appointment, that the risk to long-term damage to his other organs and blood vessels would increase significantly the longer he remained on dialysis. They told him to reach out to friends, family and acquaintances to see if someone would step up to be a living donor.

Last week he took their advice and the response has been overwhelming. Not only have friends and acquaintances from across Ottawa responded to his call, but in some cases, complete strangers from across Canada have inquired about how they could be a donor.

In order to find a donor, he had to go as public as possible. The good news is that in addition to a number of people stepping forward considering to be donors, his situation has brought attention to the need for greater organ donation across Canada, both through living heroes as well as Canadians signing up to be organ donors if the unthinkable happened to them.

For Garry, hopefully there will be good news. However, for far too many, the good news will never come. There are far more people in need of donated organs in the country than there are donors.

The human body is a complicated piece of machinery made up of many parts. Our lives depend on many individual vital organs working together to keep us healthy. The failure of any one of these organs can cause serious harm to our health and even cause death. When an organ fails, there is always the hope that a donated one can be found. They can come from a person whose life could not be saved, or from a living donor.

We have a responsibility to make Canadians aware of just how great the need is for many organs. There is always a need for kidneys, livers, lungs and hearts for transplants, to name just a few. We have to demonstrate how donated organs save lives and change lives.

● (1915)

[*Translation*]

Although health care, and specifically organ donations and transplants, fall under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, we all have a role to play. The Government of Canada regulates safety issues around organ donations and transplants so that these operations are as effective and safe as possible.

The federal, provincial and territorial governments have contributed to a \$35 million fund to establish a coordinated national organ donor registration and allocation system. Money is also being spent to support best practices, and to educate and raise public awareness. Canadians are very aware of the need for organ transplants.

[*English*]

Nonetheless the shortage of suitable donors is still the greatest obstacle. There are long waiting lists for every major organ and for some they can be waiting for years. It is encouraging to note that advances in medical science are allowing more Canadians with organ failure to live longer. However, this is also contributing to the increase in demand for donated organs.

Part of the challenge in organ transplantation is not simply the lack of donors, it is the fact that not all potential donors are suitable matches for those in need of an organ. In order for a transplant to be successful, organ donors need to match on a wide range of clinical factors. For starters, they have to be the right blood type and have the right size organ for a person on the waiting list.

● (1920)

[*Translation*]

Organs transplants are not always possible due to the poor health of some potential recipients. Many—if not most—recipients have an underlying illness forcing them go on a waiting list. Before a patient can receive an organ, the patient's doctor has to determine how serious the illness is and how long the patient has been on a waiting list. In order to ensure greater compatibility between donor and recipient, the pool of potential donors must be increased.

Business of Supply

[English]

To do that, we have to make Canadians aware of the shortages and we have to get more people to sign their organ donor cards. Live donation is also an option in some cases. For example, we are born with two kidneys, but we can live a very healthy life with just one. Therefore, kidney transplants from live donors have been growing in recent years.

In the last 20 years, the number of live donors has doubled. The number of live donors, both related and unrelated to the recipients, has steadily increased in Canada for kidney, liver and single lung transplants. However, by far the most common live donation is of a kidney.

Advances in medical science are also helping to make it possible to use organs from older donors who in the past may not have been considered suitable donors. As well, we are finding that many older donors are suitable if they have kept themselves in good physical condition.

A single donor who is in good health has the potential to donate a heart, liver, two lungs, two kidneys, a pancreas and bowel to a number of different recipients. However, in reality, that is not always the case. Nonetheless, the number of multiple organ donations from a single donor has been steadily increasing.

Recent statistics show the number of transplants every year is roughly double the number of donors. The generosity of those who selflessly donate cannot be overstated. However, more work needs to be done to raise awareness of this issue and how Canadians can help.

To drive home just how important an issue this is, we need only to remember that roughly 200 people die every year waiting for an organ transplant. In other words, 200 lives could be saved every year if we could find a matching donor. As I mentioned, the provinces and territories are largely responsible for delivering health care, including organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

There have been many important initiatives across the country and I would like to acknowledge a few of them to give the House a sense of the great work that is being done.

In Manitoba, for example, the province is funding a team of hospital-based specialists in organ donation. That team is part of a Manitoba strategy to increase overall donation by more than 20%.

In Ontario there is a new online donor registration system that is proving to be very successful. BeADonor.ca is a new online registration system for donors and it is the first of its kind. It takes three minutes to register as an organ donor and those three minutes could save the lives of up to eight people.

A new national program called the living donor paired exchange registry is also helping to match donors with recipients and give new hope to people living with chronic kidney disease. The registry is a partnership between Canadian Blood Services and kidney transplant programs across the country. It was launched as a three province pilot in January 2009, but continued to expand to other provinces. With Quebec's enrolment in October 2010, it became a Canada-wide registry.

The registry recently passed an important milestone. It made its 100th match between a living donor and a recipient.

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Chair, I am glad we are having this important take note debate tonight. It is on a very important issue and it is very personal to thousands of people.

I was looking through material and research in preparation for tonight's debate. One thing I was interested to learn was there was a significant report from the health committee of Parliament in 1999. It made some recommendations and flowing from that, the Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation was established in 2001.

Although some work has been done, we really have not made much progress on the establishment of a national coordinated strategy for donations and transplants. Although individual provinces have their own programs, we are lacking in that regard.

I do not know if the parliamentary secretary is familiar with that 1999 report, but it made a whole series of recommendations. The first one was a coordinated pan-Canadian strategy and high quality provincial-territorial strategies and then it went on from there.

Would the parliamentary secretary comment on whether he thinks we have made the progress that should have made since 2001 when this council was set up and what more could we do in that regard?

• (1925)

Mr. Colin Carrie: Madam Chair, as far as are we there yet, I do not think we are. More needs to be done.

As I said in my speech, we do have a living donor paired exchange registry, which was a three province pilot, but with Quebec's enrollment in 2010, it actually has become a Canada-wide registry.

What we need to do, and this is why I thanked parliamentarians this evening for allowing this debate to happen, is make Canadians aware of the need. Far too many Canadians do not think that perhaps their lives could save up to eight people.

I mentioned that there is a new innovative online service in Ontario, BeADonor.ca. I want Canadians to start to look at that. I remember when I was younger, we had a driver's licence, and colleagues who are about my age might remember this, that we had to flip over and sign. For me that was a very difficult thing to do, to even think about my own fatality and losing my life, but I signed it because I thought it could make a difference.

It is a discussion that we have to have with our families because many times family members, when a horrible event such as the death of a loved one occurs, are not in the state of mind where they can make a decision. Therefore, if we discuss it with our families and let them know in advance what our wishes are, it can make a huge difference for up to eight people. We can save their lives as well as what other donations such as corneas do.

Business of Supply

Canadians treasure our health care system and we are very compassionate and generous in spirit, but the awareness is not there yet. Again, I want to thank my colleagues in the House for having this debate because it is important. It is making a difference, but we could certainly do more.

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Madam Chair, many of us have had friends and family, individuals whether through idiopathic disease or congenital illness who require a transplant or, as in the case the parliamentary secretary outlined, in a crisis situation. As he mentioned, these are challenging circumstances, one that hopefully no one in the House, their families witness or have to endure, but some may have to do that in the future.

Whether it be the organization that the parliamentary secretary has mentioned, BeADonor.ca, or the numerous others, whether that be at the London Health Science Centre where I used to work, at www.lhsc.ca/transplant, or the Gift of Life Foundation, these are all organizations that try to ensure that Canadians are aware of the opportunities in order to contribute to other Canadians.

Could the parliamentary secretary please go through some of those specific items that Canadians can do in order to contribute to this most meaningful cause, to ensure that other Canadians who need help have access to those organs that they desperately need?

• (1930)

Mr. Colin Carrie: Madam Chair, in her life before politics, my colleague had dedicated her life to kids. She has seen first-hand what the generosity of Canadians can do. I value her question. We should start on what we are doing here this evening. We are making Canadians aware that this is an issue. It is something Canadians do not think about. To start, each and every one of us has to make a decision ourselves as to whether this is something we feel comfortable doing.

As I said earlier, when I was young, it was something that I was very uncomfortable with; I did not even want to think about it. At the end of the day, however, I took those few moments and signed the back of my licence. Today there are other options available. My colleague mentioned www.beadonor.ca and the Living Donor Paired Exchange Registry. I think the most important thing we can do is to start talking about it and see the difference that we can make.

I have had the opportunity over the years to have patients who have received transplants and the difference is amazing. I have seen someone who was barely getting along make a huge change. It is like people are getting their lives back.

This is something where Canadians can make a difference. Each and every one of us has the opportunity to be a donor. People should take a few minutes, go to the websites and sign up. They should talk to their families about it. If, horribly, the situation arose and the family had to make that decision, the family would know that a part of that person could live on, and would allow another life to continue.

Ms. Libby Davies: Madam Chair, just as a follow up to my earlier question, in the same report that I referred to as background and research, one thing which bothered me was that it said that neither the CCDT, the Canadian Council for Donation and Transportation,

nor Health Canada has devoted much attention to public awareness. No campaigns have been conducted since 2001 and 2002. The report I am reading from is from 2009. Maybe something happened in 2009 or 2010, but if that is not that case, it is worrying that the public awareness, education and getting people to sign up which, as the member has just said is so important in this whole issue, was not done.

I wonder if he has any comment on that. This is one issue on which there is commonality in the House. This is a very human issue. It affects constituents across party lines, of course. If we can encourage better public information, and if this was one of the mandates of the council, it worries me that we are not quite up to speed on doing the public awareness.

Maybe because he is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health he has more recent information, but this report made it look like not much had happened since 2002, which is somewhat concerning.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Madam Chair, my colleague is correct in that there has been activity since 2009. I spoke about the Living Donor Paired Exchange Registry. It was launched as a three province pilot in January 2009. In 2010 Quebec signed on. It has become a Canada-wide registry. In Ontario, very recently www.beadonor.ca has come on line.

I would challenge the member and everyone in the House that we need to do more. This is something that day in and day out is not a high priority for people; people are working hard, running around, doing their jobs, looking after their kids. This is something on which we could make a true difference. As I have said, I have been honoured and graced to have treated patients in my practice who have had a transplant. The difference in their lives is huge. It is like giving them their lives back. It only takes a couple minutes to register. Each and every one of us should make that attempt.

• (1935)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Chair, I am pleased to participate in this very important debate this evening. In the rough and tumble of the life of Parliament, we can argue and disagree, but every once in a while an issue comes forward, and sometimes it is through a take note debate where there will be no vote, but at least we are able to express the concerns and issues we have around a particular issue. The issue of organ donation in Canada is a very important one. It is an issue that is deeply personal for the more than 4,000 Canadians who are waiting for organ transplants to save their lives.

Last year only 1,803 transplants were performed and there are many patients on waiting lists still. Unfortunately, the reality is that over 200 Canadians died last year while waiting for organ transplants. The greatest need is for kidney transplants. Seventy-five per cent of patients on the lists are waiting for kidney transplants.

Business of Supply

We are all touched by this issue in various ways. I think of Garry Keller and what he and his family are going through. Our hearts go out to him and the struggle he is going through health-wise, as well as looking for a potential donor. This is very critical. Human stories are very difficult to share and talk about, but they help us understand what it is we need to do as members of Parliament, policy makers and legislators. I want to thank Mr. Keller for speaking out, helping inform this debate and bringing a sense of urgency of what it is that needs to be done.

We only heard recently about this take note debate, but over the past couple of days I contacted a couple of people who are very involved in this issue. I contacted someone who undergoes kidney dialysis and someone who is involved provincially in managing the liver transplant program. I would like to make a couple of comments about what these folks told me. It is one thing for me to talk about what is in a report, but when people hear it from those who are directly involved, it is ever so much more meaningful.

An individual who has been on kidney dialysis wrote to me today and said:

—to encourage all willing donors to sign their licenses, yes, but also to go on-line to register. If someone is in hospital dying (which is usually the case) the donor info pops up on the screen so the doctor can see that you are registered. If a family member is not right there or does not know, organs are then wasted.

This person went on to say:

...why cannot a national registry be created/maintained with this data so if someone does need a kidney suddenly (which is almost always the case) that the list of potential donors can be quickly [connected] and the appropriate action taken.

This is someone who is undergoing dialysis. That point is well taken. We have to understand what is behind it and that we need to do more.

I received an email from someone who is very involved in the system and is working with people who need transplants. This person said:

Every day people die and almost as hard, people are unable to be productive, contributing citizens while they wait...who are too ill to work and contribute. This applies to dialysis patients as well in many cases - they exist, but can't work at the same level as they would normally if at all...

● (1940)

The person went on to make the point:

It brings great comfort to the family of the deceased person to think they have made a difference in saving a life. Organ donation is the ultimate recycling. It seems odd to me that Canada with its reputation of helping others has one of the poorest organ donation rates in the modern world. We need to find a way to engage our people in organ donation including the people who have come here from elsewhere - using language, culture and reaching out to all.

That was an email from someone who works in the system coordinating the list in a province.

Canadian Blood Services has said that Canada is one of the few countries in the western world without a national coordinated system for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The system as it stands today is at capacity and is struggling to cope with current needs and projected future demand.

I return to where I started, which is on the issue of public policy. We have a responsibility as parliamentarians to ensure that our government is actually following through on recommendations that

have been made. The Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation was set up in 2001. I have no doubt that this body, which acts as an advisory body to the conference of deputy ministers of health, has done good work. I am not disputing that. However, we have not made the kind of progress that is needed on an overall pan-Canadian strategy. In some provinces there are very good systems. I was just speaking with one of my colleagues from Quebec, who told me that in Quebec there is a very well-organized system. There is good public awareness. I hope we will hear from the member later in the evening. He could share some of the experiences of what he knows to be happening in Quebec.

The fact is, as with many issues, it is uneven across the country. This report was done in 1999 by the health committee to draw attention to the gaps, inadequacies, and lack of an overall policy. It is rather disturbing and worrying that here we are many years later and not an awful lot of progress has been made.

Those are very important questions. We are debating some of these issues as we look at the health accord that was signed in 2004. As we approach the new health accord in 2014, a lot of questions that Canadians, advocates, the medical community and the health community are raising are around accountability, follow-through, knowing that we have procedures and programs in place to ensure that the systems are working the best they can, whether it is for organ transplants or for any other medical procedure.

I have concerns that on this issue we are not doing everything we could do, even on the level of public awareness. Obviously, we have to encourage people to come forward and to sign up, either online or in the various other ways of doing it, depending on where they live. There has to be a public awareness campaign.

As I remarked earlier to the parliamentary secretary, according to this report from 2009, there has not been an overall campaign, a big public awareness campaign in terms of multi-media, since 2002. This is a very critical factor.

We need to make people aware, particularly in multicultural communities where people may not be very familiar or comfortable discussing this issue. Surely, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that this information is out there in culturally appropriate ways, in different languages, in local communities, as well as in national campaigns to make it clear and to encourage people to sign up either as a living donor or to donate their organs when they become deceased.

● (1945)

Sometimes these are not pleasant things to talk about but it is part of our life process and it is a conversation that we should open up. Maybe, as members of Parliament, we can help open this up. I implore the government to look at this report from 1999. This is a job not yet finished on a very important issue.

I want to end by expressing admiration for the 4,000 Canadians who are waiting for an organ transplant. I recognize the struggles, hardships and difficulties they go through, some of whom are not able to work or are in pain. They probably all have a sense of anxiety. We say to them tonight that we know this and we need to act and follow through.

Business of Supply

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Chair, I thank the member opposite for her comments tonight. We can honestly hear the concern the member has for kidney disease transplants and transplants of different organs, as well as stem cell transplants.

The issue of kidney disease is something that a lot of people are dealing with, as well as other organ transplant issues. When I put on a big event in Parliament on October 6, 2010, we were then talking about OneSwab, OneMatch, OneLife, which was a stem cell donation needed for cancer patients. Our government contributes to the prevention of kidney disease through the Canadian Diabetes Society, the aboriginal diabetes initiative and the integrated strategy on healthy living and chronic disease. Chronic disease is something the health committee is studying right now. My heart goes out to Mr. Keller because I can see the trauma that families go through.

What specifically and personally has the member done or intends to do to make people aware? This is bigger than government. Each Canadian must contribute in a very meaningful way. Could she please tell the House some ideas she has to personally contribute to this awareness program with regard to the need for kidneys?

Ms. Libby Davies: Madam Chair, the first thing we are doing is having this discussion and debate tonight, which is a very important element.

We represent 308 ridings across the country, from the north to the south, from large urban ridings like my riding of Vancouver East, to vast rural areas. One thing we could all do, and I will commit to do, is to get out more information locally. We have a great opportunity and an enormous privilege to communicate with their constituents. Maybe that is one thing we can all say we will do tonight, on an individual member of Parliament level, that we will send out information to our communities. In my case, because my community is very diverse and there are many languages, I would try to do that in a multilingual way.

However, I do feel that we need to go beyond that. This is a big issue that affects thousands of people. It is very important that we give some feedback to the government and say that more needs to be done at the national level in terms of public awareness and a coordinated system across the country, as I tried to describe in my remarks. I am not an expert on this, but we understand public policy and we know we need to put a system in place that works. We have very sophisticated technology these days. It is not rocket science. It is something that can be done.

Those are a few suggestions and maybe more will come up during the evening.

• (1950)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Madam Chair, as we are in committee of the whole, I think it appropriate that I share a remarkable experience that got off to a very rough start in 2000.

A person died somewhere, but his or her heart continued its mission. One of my constituents, a friend who lived close to me at the time and was the father of four children, developed severe heart

disease at age 32. That was Sylvain Bédard, who received a heart transplant 11 years ago.

Since that time, he has had a fifth child, and even has a number of athletic achievements to his name. He climbed Mont Blanc, near Chamonix. He climbed to 6,000 metres somewhere in Bolivia. It is a testament to his energy and an example of just how worthwhile the transplant process is. After 11 years, Sylvain Bédard is still in good health and remains an example to us all. He is a dynamo and his dynamism is highly infectious. He makes us feel like going to get some exercise.

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies: Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for sharing that very beautiful story. It makes us feel better when we hear those stories. For the people who made the donation of an organ, what caused them to do that? Was it because they had some individual knowledge through another family member, or was it because of a broader policy at work that connected with them?

That is what we want to get at tonight. We want to hear of many more situations where people became donors by signing up and they could literally give the gift of life to someone else. We want to hear more of these experiences and stories. We will only do that by encouraging a much better process and system in place.

I think the purpose of tonight's debate is to help illuminate that, to draw attention to what is going on and of the plight and the living situation of people who are waiting on donor lists to receive an organ. It is good to hear that story tonight.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, I am pleased to speak to this take note debate because it is an extremely important issue. I think about 4,700 people are currently on a waiting list for an organ donation. We know that some people die while waiting for an organ donation. This is again another preventable cause of death.

I know many people say that organ donations are in an experimental phase, that it does not really work, that if a person donates an organ it will not find it successful. Eighty to ninety per cent of organ transplantations are successful. This is an opportunity to actually save a life. It is important that we see it as that kind of preventive procedure where we can save a life, and that is really important.

I congratulate the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for bringing this forward today as a debate. I think we know why and there is nothing wrong with this. The 35-year-old chief of staff to the Minister of Foreign Affairs suffers from renal insufficiency. People get renal insufficiency from chronic strep throat. There are lots of ways people can get renal problems. They are very common and often chronic infections can cause this to happen. He has been waiting for seven years for a kidney. It is interesting to note that over the time that he has been waiting, he has been receiving dialysis. The cost of dialysis is extremely high. The pain of dialysis and the problem of having to be attached to a machine for hours on end is an extremely difficult thing for a person to be doing for seven years.

Business of Supply

Therefore, it is important to realize that this is not only something that can save a life, that can prevent a death, but it is also something that will help us to take our health care dollars and move them into areas where we can actually put more money in, instead of looking at cost effectiveness in the health care system. Getting someone an organ donation is a quick and easy thing to do.

I know that the gentleman in question, Mr. Keller, has launched a Facebook group called "Help Garry Find a Match". I think he said, somewhat tongue in cheek, that he did not mind if that match were a Liberal, an NDP or a Green. While he is humorous and is trying to put a brave face on this, the reality is that there are 1,095 people in Ontario alone waiting for a kidney, that 195 Canadians died while waiting for a transplant, and that Canadians' organ donation for deceased donors is 15 per million. We can compare that with Spain with 35 per million, Estonia with 26 per million, Belgium with 22 per million, the United States with 21 per million and Italy with 20 per million. We are only 15 per million. Is it that Canadians do not want to donate their organs? When asked, 90% of Canadians said no, that they want to help, that they want to donate their organs. The question then is: Why not?

I suppose there are two things. One, there are a lot of myths associated around transplantation, and two, it is a very complex thing to do. If we are going to do something about this, we need to not only talk about it here today, not only feel really sad and sorry and say fine words, but we need to put in place the procedures, the processes and the infrastructure to ensure we can make organ donation a reality.

One of the things people do not know is that there are organs that can be donated by a living donor. In other words, people can donate one of their kidneys today. They can donate part of their liver today. They can donate part of a lung or part of their small bowel that will allow them to continue to live, work and have a great quality of life even though they have donated part of that organ or an organ. However, there are organs that can be donated after death, such as the heart, liver, kidneys, pancreas, lungs and the small bowel.

Some of the reasons that people have put forward is that we live longer in Canada, we have fewer motor vehicle accidents in Canada or we have fewer homicides in Canada. I do not necessarily think those are reasons when we look at Belgium and Spain. They have pretty safe and long living citizens. I think it is the system that is at fault here. The system is extremely complex.

Another reason that people do not want to donate their organs is not only because it is complex, but there are lots of myths around this. A lot of people think their religion prohibits them from donating an organ. Most religions actually support organ donation. A lot of people think that if they donate an organ, it increases the costs to the family toward the whole cost of the donation. It does not at all. Donations are covered under the Canada medicare plan. It is covered completely.

● (1955)

Other people think that because they have signed a donor card or because their driver's licence says they can donate, it automatically happens. It does not. In some countries it automatically happens, but in Canada we also have to get the family to accept. They have to agree to the organ donation.

There are lots of steps we can take in looking at the issue of organ donation. Some people think that if they have a disease or are chronically ill or they are over 70 or whatever, they cannot donate. That is not true. There are many parts of the body that are still very healthy. If someone's eyesight is bad, they can donate their sclera. There are lots of things people can do. Doctors will assess chronicity of disease and the health of the organ before they do the donations, so people should not worry about those things and just go ahead and do it.

One of the things that is really disconcerting is that in 2001, as my colleague said, there was a national transplantation organization set up, which has now been rolled into the blood donation group. Eighteen million dollars was given over five years to deal with this issue. The problem is that nothing has happened.

We do not need to reinvent this wheel. This is what we could do, and it is very clear. Doctors, the Canadian Medical Association and lots of people have talked about what we should do. One of the things we need is a national registry. We need to know across the country who needs an organ and their level of emergency. Second, in emergency rooms and ICUs we need to know who has passed away and who has a valid donor. We need to match each other up across the country. We need to standardize donation and the management of the whole organ donation process.

We need to look at a national oversight agency. Here is a piece of infrastructure that would keep this kind of standardization process going, keep a national registry and match the needs across the country. They do it in other countries. The United States has had a national registry and an allocation mechanism since 1984. It is called the United Network for Organ Sharing. It has a national wait list and mandatory organ sharing for prioritized patients. Across the country there is a helicopter or a plane waiting to fly an organ right away to somebody who really needs it. They do it in a fair and equitable manner. They look at the critical need, how far away it is and the likelihood of the patient being a good match. Those are some of the things we need to do if we are going to set up a system.

We need to look at sharing of best practices. Ontario, for instance, has the Ontario Trillium Gift of Life, which is exploring new ways of looking at automatically donating one's organ without the family's permission if one has an organ donation card or if it is on one's driver's licence.

These are important steps we can take to move the system forward and put the infrastructure in place. This is not rocket science. There are things we can do, and at the same time we need to remember that the sooner we do it, the better.

Let us not have this take note debate tonight in vain. Let us not just do the things we always do, which is talk, talk, talk. Let us hope that the government of this country will put in place right away the systems that are needed. It has the money. It has \$18 million, but nothing has happened in the last five years.

Business of Supply

Let us get things moving. Let us move forward. All the structures need to be in place and all the doctors know what needs to be done. Let us get a third party group with knowledge and information to get this going.

● (2000)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Chair, I know we have to sometimes be reminded that the delivery of health care is in the domain of the provinces and territories. At the federal level, basically what the federal jurisdiction does is take care of the safety of the organs themselves.

Even though there has been a decrease in deceased donor donations, there is a rise in living donor donations. We can look to that in a very positive way to see the things that are being done across the country right now.

This debate tonight, as members opposite have stated in the House, is a very important debate because it raises awareness, especially when one of our own, Garry Keller, is in need of a kidney. When those close to us and our loved ones are affected, we want to raise the awareness. Again, each one of us can do a part.

I would like to ask the member opposite, as I did the other member, to tell us some things that she could do to create some concrete awareness of the need for kidney donations, and in particular right now, in terms of Garry Keller's kidney donation. I think this awareness exercise is very important, so what are some of the things that she could do personally to raise this awareness and to search for a donor?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, personally I could do very little unless I wanted to give Mr. Keller one of my kidneys. It is not about what I can personally do; it is about what the government can do.

It is one thing to say that the provinces deliver services, but everywhere that deals with organ donation, we have to be able to talk about a national registry. It was the federal government that put together the \$35 million over five years to look at pulling together some kind of national infrastructure to do this. It just has not worked because since then all the necessary work has not happened.

We need to talk about how we work with provinces. Obviously the doctors in the provincial systems will actually do the donation, the operation, and get the transplant done, but we need to have a registry so that if a doctor in Ontario knows someone needs a donation of a kidney and knows that Alberta has someone in an ICU who just passed on, we could get that kidney here quickly. This is the kind of thing we need to talk about. We cannot keep looking at small, narrow jurisdictions. This is the kind of thing that lends itself to federal leadership. The federal government cannot walk away from this. It started in 2001 to do something; it is time to move and to put the structures in place.

The CMA has given us great ideas on how to do it. I read them out and I do not want to read them out again, but there has to be an oversight of a third party that is able to do this. There has to be a national registry. There has to be standardization across the country for organ donation. It has to be done in a fair and equitable manner, but we need to know where there is an organ, where there is a donor and where there is a donee. We need to know it immediately. This is something that must happen as soon as an organ is available.

● (2005)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Chair, because the member for Vancouver Centre is from British Columbia, as I am, I wanted to say something about the program in B.C. Its new program was started in 1997, and was the first of its kind in Canada in that it created a new remote access computerized registry to record an individual's decision on organ donation.

Although we had a process before, it was really very flawed. First of all, it was only available to B.C. drivers, so it obviously missed a huge segment of the population. Most importantly, the information regarding organ donation was not accessible to health care professionals in an immediate and consistent fashion, and obviously we know that time is of the essence.

We have had a new system since 1997. It allows individuals to make an educated choice of, for example, which organs they want to donate. It gives a choice, which is then legally recorded.

It seems to me that B.C. has had a pretty good system. I appreciate the member's comments that having this consistently across the country is what is lacking. I do not want to single out any province and say it is not doing very well, because each province has tried to do it, but surely in this situation we can have a national registry, as the member has pointed out, and have consistency, so that we can get maximum results.

For me the biggest issue is to also raise awareness about organ donation generally with the public. Why—

The Chair: I must give the hon. member for Vancouver Centre time to respond.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, actually there is a website called the donation group. It talks about organ and tissue donation and about some of the myths that I mentioned, such as religion, chronic diseases, age, et cetera. It answers those questions and it points where to go if we are looking for donations. However, this is not good enough, because individuals and their families cannot make it happen. Even physicians cannot make it happen unless there is a matching list.

The member talked about British Columbia; it has a good program, and there is also a good one in Ontario, but she is absolutely right. One of the things we have to remember as a federation is that we cannot always say that this is so-and-so's jurisdiction. There is a role for federal government leadership in terms of setting up and creating best practices, creating a clearing house for best practices and creating a national registry to help someone needing an organ in B.C. to know that there is one in Alberta. Would it not be sad to know that someone could have had an organ and lived if they had known there was one in Alberta that he or she could get?

It is really important for the federal government not to shirk its responsibility in this area.

Business of Supply

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Chair, I want to thank the member for Vancouver Centre for her thoughtful and informed remarks. They bring to mind an event I attended in the summer, the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Mother Daughter Walk. I met a very lovely woman there, Janet Parr, who had the opportunity to give some of the opening remarks. She spoke to me later of the incredible need for organ donation. She herself has embarked on an incredibly onerous campaign to raise awareness in our community and elsewhere.

I thank my friend for her remarks about the need for awareness.

I read an interesting statistic that said 90% of Canadians have indicated that they would want to be an organ donor, but the system is too complicated. Could the member tell the House about those complications and what might make them uncomplicated?

● (2010)

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Chair, what is needed to make it uncomplicated is a registry of some kind. Then we would know how many people need organs and what types of organs are needed. It should be a registry that is linked to all the ICUs in the emergency rooms across the country so that we can find a donor. That is the simple thing to do.

When we talk about provincial jurisdictions, we should remember that it was a conference of federal, provincial and territorial deputy ministers of health in 2001 that set up the existing Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation as a national organ donation oversight agency. They put \$35 million over five years into it. The structure is already there; now we have to give it teeth, because it is obviously not working very well. I think it is very important that we have a conference of the deputy ministers of health right away to talk about putting some teeth into what is an already funded and existing structure.

Given that B.C. and Ontario have driver's licence and organ donation cards, we can look at how to mandate the fact that if I sign my organ donation card as well as my licence and have an accident, then automatically that organ is put into the system. We would not have to go to hospitals to get them to okay this, as it would have already been okayed.

Hon. Peter Penashue (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, CPC): Madam Chair, I thank the House for the opportunity today to talk about the critical importance of organ donation. I would like to talk about the role research plays in improving the lives of those Canadians who are receiving donations of lifesaving organs.

Our government recognizes the vital role that organ transplantation has played in improving the health of Canadians. We also believe in supporting research in order to help innovate in product development.

Canadians have been at the forefront of the worldwide organ transplant revolution. We have played major roles in every aspect of organ transplants, from surgical techniques to advanced research.

In February the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, or CIHR, hosted an important workshop that provided an opportunity for 60 members of the transplant community to gather and discuss key research challenges and opportunities. Ongoing research in this area

is critical as organ donation will continue to be a critical part of the health system.

I would like to tell members about innovative and groundbreaking research initiatives that are being funded by our government.

Over the past four years our government, through CIHR, has committed close to \$23 million to research kidney disease. For example, CIHR has invested \$3.3 million in examining whether specific therapy aimed at reducing viral damage to the transplanted kidney would have a better outcome than standard therapy.

CIHR provided funding of over \$825,000 to study the long-term medical and psychological risks of donating a kidney. This study will improve the ability to select the most suitable donors and will improve and enhance the information that is provided to Canadians interested in becoming donors.

Kidney disease takes a daily toll on Canadians and on their families. This disease can also be a cost burden on our health care system.

The Canadian Institute of Health Information, or CIHI, estimates the cost of dialysis treatment per patient, per treatment to be \$60,000. Over a five year period, the cost savings of a kidney transplant is approximately \$250,000 per patient. Another way to look at this would be to consider that the more than 15,000 Canadians living with transplanted kidneys means that \$800 million can be invested in other areas of the health system.

Therefore, ensuring that there is a supply of organs for transplantation is significant, not only for the transplant recipients and their families but also for our health care system.

Do members know that kidneys are the organs in highest demand and are also the most commonly transplanted organs? Three-quarters of the nearly 4,000 Canadians on the waiting list for an organ donation are waiting for a kidney. The fastest growing group of organ recipients is those aged 60 and older.

Our youngest citizens have also benefited from the expertise developed by Canadian surgeons in performing organ transplants in children and young adults. In 2010, 49 young Canadians received a kidney transplant. Today, transplantation has changed this reality and offers a new lease on life to a growing number of Canadians, both young and old.

Unfortunately, there is far more demand for organ transplantation than there are available organs. In 2010 more than 4,000 Canadians were on waiting lists for organ transplants, including those in Newfoundland and Labrador.

One of those Labradorians is Cassandra Rich, my niece from my home community of Sheshatshiu, whose story I would like to share with the House.

● (2015)

Cassandra is 21 years old and was born with kidney disease. Diagnosed at the age of three, she was referred out of province and when she was nine to a specialist in Nova Scotia. She typically spent approximately five months out of each year in a hospital in Halifax until she reached end-stage renal failure, requiring dialysis.

Business of Supply

Cassandra is worried most about the impact this has had on her mother, Christine, a single parent. With English as a second language and the isolation of out-of-province care, it has been difficult for Christine to be away from her reserve and her family for long stretches of time due to Cassandra's illness.

In addition to Cassandra's health problems, she also has a severe peanut allergy, making her medical issues that much more difficult and her mother's dedication to Cassandra's well-being that much more important.

Although her mother reassures her that there is nowhere else she would rather be, Cassandra carries with her a sense of guilt at the disruption her illness has caused in her mother's life. Cassandra travels 100 kilometres round trip, from our community to the town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay to have four-hour-long dialysis sessions three times a week.

When asked how organ failure has affected her life, she talks about how she can no longer take holidays, go in the bush with her family, or participate in activities like swimming due to the port in her chest. She is careful about what she eats and drinks and feels that people treat her differently and she cannot take part in social activities that other young adults her age enjoy.

Despite her challenges, Cassandra has kept up with her workload in school and graduated at the top of her class. She wants to be a pharmacist. Last year, she completed the aboriginal transition program offered by the university. She was recognized by the college for her courage and commitment to her education and positive attitude. She occupies herself by painting and working as a part-time secretary at the Sheshatshiu Innu School.

Cassandra has been on the organ transplant list for the past year. Ongoing dialysis treatment and becoming a successful candidate for organ transplant has brought with it a new set of medical challenges. The port in her chest, where the dialysis line is connected, must be changed every three months in the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, which is a two-hour flight from Happy Valley-Goose Bay. In addition to the quarterly journey to prepare for an eventual organ transplant, she undergoes medical testing, scans and blood work every two months.

Like all others on the list for organ transplant, Cassandra has no idea when a kidney might become available. She remains hopeful and has a bag packed and ready should she ever receive a call.

Cassandra's story is yet another example of how important the issue of organ donation is to all of us.

One area recognized as having potential for increasing the supply of lifesaving organs is the practice of living donations.

Living donations take place when a living person donates an organ or, in some cases, a part of an organ, for transplant in another person. Oftentimes, these donations occur among family members or may involve close family friends. Sometimes, however, Canadians choose to donate an organ, or part of an organ, anonymously or as a paired exchange, a selfless act that deserves our collective praise.

Organ transplantation has given hope to thousands of Canadians and their families. The advances that have been made in the field over the past decades are significant. We can certainly applaud the

role that Canadian research has played, and will continue to play, in organ transplantation to see the best outcomes for all Canadians.

It is now with hope that I encourage Canadians to seriously consider becoming an organ donor and that, more important, they make their wishes known to their families and loved ones.

• (2020)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Chair, my colleague's speech was very moving. I know when something like this happens, when there is kidney failure and a kidney donation is needed in one's family, or any kind of organ donation, it very much hits home.

The member mentioned the living donor exchange. It is a national registry. Our government has taken a real leadership part in it within the last five years. Donations are something that is extremely important to the community.

Could the member expand a bit on the living donor exchange that has been set up? This national registry that is very important to kidney donation.

Hon. Peter Penashue: Madam Chair, in addition to that question, the important question is around the accomplishments in research on organ transplantation in Canada.

In 2010 the Government of Canada, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, committed over \$10 million to research directed to transplantation. Every year thousands of Canadians receive transplants of solid organs. Transplantation is now the preferred treatment for end-stage organ failure and stem cell transplantation is an established therapy for many conditions and can be a cure certain cancers.

Regenerative medicine is a growing field in Canada. This emerging field is allowing scientists and engineers to create organs to be regrown from the patient's own cells. This research involves harnessing the power of stem cells, which can renew themselves and differentiate into many other cell types. This research field is early stages and will take time to fully develop.

However, some regenerative therapies are already being used in clinics today. As our understanding of stem cell advances, it is becoming clear that this field has the potential to transform medicine and provide treatments for the world's most devastating diseases.

Canadian researchers are making important discoveries about how stem cells function at the genetic level. This new knowledge will allow us to develop new therapies for important health issues, such as health disease, muscle disease, multiple sclerosis, vision loss, diabetes, brain and spinal cord injuries.

For example, Dr. Ren-Ke Li from the University of Toronto is working on identifying the optimal cell type and conditions for transplantation to regenerate damaged heart muscle. His research is using cell and gene therapy to promote blood vessel formation and to prevent the complications of heart surgery. If successful, cell transplantation should significantly improve heart function, increase patient longevity and quality of life.

Business of Supply

CIHR has also supported the research of Dr. Jevnikar and his team from the University of Western Ontario. They are looking at how and why organs and tissues are damaged during transplantation in order to find ways to extend the life of transplanted organs.

Despite current anti-rejection drugs, transplanted kidneys, for instance, may last only 10 years in half the patients. This research initiative will lead to innovative treatments that will improve the lives of transplant patients in Canada.

● (2025)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Madam Chair, it is very important to have these questions and comments on the record. I have to thank the minister because our government has recognized the need to continue to improve organ donation. So many people need it.

It is a symbiotic relationship where the provincial and territorial jurisdictions take care of the delivery of health care and at the federal level we take care of the health and safety of the actual organs. That is why our government, along with our provincial and territorial partners, asked the Canadian Blood Services to develop a plan for an integrated organ and tissue donation and transplantation system. They are currently review the Canadian Blood Services call to action.

Perhaps the minister could make some comments on this initiative, the call to action initiative which includes proposals to improve the performance of donation?

Hon. Peter Penashue: Madam Chair, the question that is more pertinent to the issue I have just raised is what the government is doing to address increasing kidney failures among Canadians. The Government of Canada directly contributes to the prevention of kidney disease through the Canadian diabetes strategy, the aboriginal diabetes initiative and the integrated strategy on healthy living and chronic disease.

Over the past four years, the government, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, has committed close to \$23 million to research directly related to kidney disease. The Government of Canada plays a role in the regulation of the safety of organs and tissues used for transplantation through the Safety of Human Cells, Tissues and Organs for Transplantation Regulations.

The federal government has already invested close to \$120 million in the past decade in areas of organ and tissue donation and transplantation to help prepare the ground for system transformation. This includes almost \$69 million in transplantation research from 2000 to 2010, close to \$49 million to CBS and to OTD processors, the Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Madam Chair, I would like to thank my colleague opposite for his heartfelt speech.

There are a lot of problems in terms of delays obtaining organ donations and transplantations, and very little research is carried out when it comes to recipient lists. While people wait, would the member opposite agree with the federal government investing money so that more research can be conducted in the area of recipient lists? Just as there is a need for donor lists, there is also a need for recipient lists, so that—

● (2030)

The Chair: Order, please. The hon. Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has the floor.

[English]

Hon. Peter Penashue: Madam Chair, I apologize. I missed most of the translation of that question. However, I will say there was an important transplantation workshop organized by CIHR in Montreal and certain positions came out of that.

Every year, thousands of Canadians receive transplants of solid organs, stem cells and pancreatic islet cells. End stage renal, liver, lung, heart, pancreatic and small intestine failures are now treated by organ replacement. For cancer, stem cell transplantation can be a cure. However, there are currently more than 4,000 Canadians on waiting lists for organ transplants, far more than accommodated by our current rate of organ donation. Achieving long-term survival accompanied by a good quality of life remains a challenge. The health and economic burden in Canadian society is steadily rising and the aging demographic creates increasing demand for donor organs.

In addition to these challenges, CIHR transplant workshop participants identified the need for improving both quality and quantity of living and deceased donor organs; improving our understanding of the immunological mechanisms and pathways mediating transplantation-related infection, inflammation and immunosuppression in humans; overcoming rejection and establishing the long-term tolerance to grafts; developing improved therapeutics to sustain graft survival with fewer adverse side effects, and expediting their uptake into clinical practice; establishing tailored transplantation policies and programs for children and other vulnerable populations; and developing national standards of clinical care and mechanisms for long-term follow-up of Canadian transplant recipients.

In order to address these challenges, CIHR transplantation workshop participants recommended that teams and networks would foster collaborations across the field of research; partner with public and private sector for the purpose of forging the necessary linkages among the transplant communities; support a common platforms, infrastructure, databases and operating procedures; and encourage training.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Madam Chair, I am very pleased to be able to speak today on the crucial importance of organ donation.

Business of Supply

Donating one's organs or tissues means giving the gift of life to someone who truly needs it. Obviously, consenting to donate one's organs is not an easy decision and a number of factors may also influence that choice. In any event, more and more people are dying while still waiting for an organ to be offered by a generous person. The gap between the number of organs available and the number of patients waiting continues to grow. The number of people desperately waiting for the telephone call that will change their life is also growing steadily. It is therefore important for us to discuss this, to think about it and to develop strategies that will improve the situation.

In spite of recent efforts to increase the number of organ donations, the number of organs available in Canada has stagnated. The two reports published in 1999, one produced by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health and the other by the National Coordinating Committee for Donation, led to only meagre progress and did not result in the adoption of a long-term, Canada-wide strategy orchestrated by the provinces and the federal government.

Canada is still far behind other countries such as Spain, France and the United States in terms of the number of post mortem organ donations. In fact, Spain's rate of post mortem donors is twice as high as Canada's. Of course, that figure depends on a number of other factors, including the traffic accident rate, for example.

According to statistics from Transplant Québec, a provincial organ donation agency, the number of organ donors fell from 151 to 119 between 2008 and 2010, while the number of people needing transplants rose from 1,159 to 1,241 in the same period. The trend is therefore very similar in Canada. We need to redouble our efforts if we want to be able to close that gap.

There are solutions to consider, however. On average, each donor contributed to nearly four lives, and a single donor can save as many as eight lives. Saving lives is therefore within the reach of all of us. So what can we do to increase the number of patients who receive an organ donation?

Because health is under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government can play a coordinating role in raising awareness and in initiating a dialogue with the provinces to establish a national organ donor registry and possibly adopt measures that have been successful elsewhere. We should also consider creating a more effective registry of recipients and way of searching for matches between the two registries. Establishing a national registry would therefore facilitate the process of identifying people who need a donation or people who are prepared to donate. The registry could be associated with income tax returns or the census form. Then everyone who worked on their finances at some point during the year would have to think about the importance of organ donation.

There is not always a lot of leeway in terms of time when an organ transplant is needed. The less time people have to wait, the greater the chances of success. Information is needed before a transplant is done, such as blood group, tissue type, the size of the organ, the urgency of the procedure, and so on. A national registry that was managed effectively could mean a higher success rate.

Let us talk about awareness building. There have been no further campaigns since the 2001 and 2002 national campaigns, which followed the recommendations from the two 1999 reports. The focus should instead be on a long-term awareness-building strategy in order to ensure, among other things, that health care professionals can discuss these matters with their patients and that families discuss organ donation more. Moreover, according to the doctors I consulted, families can sometimes be an obstacle to organ donation following the death of a loved one.

We know that doctors do not necessarily have the resources or the time required to make requests of the families of the deceased. More money should therefore be invested to give doctors the tools they need and to help health care professionals obtain family consent in order to proceed with the removal of organs from a deceased person.

• (2035)

This certainly is not the best topic of conversation around the dinner table at holiday time, but it is an important subject to discuss with our loved ones. If, upon reflection, you consent to donate your organs and tissue upon your death, it is crucial that you share your decision with your loved ones, which may also have a positive effect in terms of how others think.

Building awareness is important as it helps to debunk myths and address public fear. For example, many people are afraid that if they give prior consent, less effort will be put into saving their lives. In fact, this fear may explain the discrepancy between the number of people who are in favour of donation and the number who actually sign their donor card. In fact, this discrepancy may also be due to simple logistics, but if doctors were able to discuss this myth, people would be reassured and might be more likely to sign their donor card and discuss what they have done more openly.

Moreover, we could also encourage our provincial counterparts to explore the question of presumed consent. Canada currently uses a system based on explicit consent. In other words, consent cannot be presumed given unless the individual in question has signed an official statement indicating his or her consent.

In some countries, such as Spain, where the post-mortem donation rate is very high, consent is presumed, which means that it is assumed that the individual automatically agrees to donate his or her organs upon death, unless the person, while alive, has expressly refused organ donation. Those in favour of presumed consent argue that, according to polls, the majority of Canadians are in favour of organ donation, but very few of them complete their donor card. In short, although I am not explicitly suggesting that we should adopt this kind of approach, it is nevertheless worth serious and in-depth consideration.

Finally, the Health Canada standards for potential donors could be revised. Currently, these standards exclude homosexual men, because men who have had sexual relations with other men in the last five years are excluded. This is an outdated standard because we now have the tools required to screen for blood and organ diseases. There is a lack of dialogue in the medical and research community concerning Health Canada's standards.

Business of Supply

In light of the growing gap between the number of available organs and the number of people in need of an organ, we must act very quickly. We will have to be creative and work closely together with the provinces and territories. There are enough examples elsewhere for Canada to find practical and achievable solutions. Canada must develop a public awareness campaign to facilitate and encourage organ donation, explain how the organ donation process works, and do more to create a national registry of donors and recipients.

• (2040)

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Chair, I would agree that it is not only government, but it is also personal awareness of the need to sign the card to donate an organ because it is a gift of life to many people.

The Government of Canada contributes to the prevention of kidney disease as well, and that is done through the Canadian Diabetes Society, the aboriginal diabetes initiative and the integrated strategy on healthy living and chronic disease. That is one piece of it.

Tonight when we are talking about the actual national strategy for donation, I would like to draw attention to the living donor exchange, which is a national registry. Even though the availability of deceased donors has gone down somewhat, the living donor exchange, which involves a person who actually chooses to donate a kidney to another while still alive, is of paramount importance.

I would agree with the member opposite that it is an awareness thing. That is why earlier tonight I asked in the House, as the member for Vancouver East so eloquently pointed out too, what does each one of us as a Canadian have to do?

So it is a combination of both.

I would ask the member opposite to elaborate a bit more clearly on some more things individual Canadians could do, coupled with the partnership with government, to make this awareness more available. We do not talk about it over the Christmas dinner table, but maybe that is something we should do, because it is a matter of time when people need organ donations. Perhaps the member could expand on that thought a bit more for the House.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Chair, I thank the member opposite, who spoke about a number of topics.

Indeed, there are many people waiting for kidney transplants. Seventy-five per cent of patients on waiting lists are in need of kidney transplants. It is a problem. Even when there are lists of living donors, there are challenges when it comes to compatibility. What we could propose, for example, is to have a list of paired living donors. Someone who wanted to sign up to donate a kidney could be paired with someone who was in need of an organ. This way, two people would be put on the registry: a donor and a recipient. Every time, there would be two people put on a list.

We can work on promoting awareness at the individual level. We can encourage people to talk more about organ donation. Obviously, when we are healthy, we do not usually think about getting sick or having an accident and dying unexpectedly in some stupid way.

People do not necessarily take the time to sign their donor cards. For the time being, this is one of the ways we have available to give a precious gift to someone who needs a vital organ. We absolutely must talk about it.

The hon. member mentioned the holiday season, when family and friends often get together. This is a topic that must be talked about. There are no miracle solutions. We could work on the best ways to manage the registries and all the tools we have available. We could work with the provinces and territories to ensure that health care professionals are able to talk to families and that they have better resources to manage the information they are able to collect from patients and their families.

• (2045)

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for informing us about what is taking place in Quebec.

There has been a lot of discussion tonight about the need to talk to our families and friends at the dinner table. I do think that is really important. However, it is similar to the chicken and the egg situation. If people are going to talk about it, it is because they are aware. It is one thing if there are 10,000 individuals who are aware and have conversations. However, we need to have a massive public awareness campaign in order to have those conversations.

There is awareness about drunk driving because year after year there have been messages about it. For example, in B.C., the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia has a massive campaign. We have campaigns by groups in the non-profit sector, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving. We have police campaigns. There is a massive awareness and slowly, a shift begins to take place.

Of course, people have to have discussions before making a decision about whether to sign a donor card online, in person or at the auto insurance bureau. However, unless we have huge public awareness campaigns to deal with some of the myths about organ donation, I do not think we are going to make a lot of progress.

I wonder if the member would just comment on the need for some kind of huge public awareness campaign across the country.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Madam Chair, I would like to thank my NDP colleague for her important comments. Clearly, the federal government must promote a Canada-wide awareness campaign. The more publicity this issue gets, the more people will see the symbols of organ donation all over. This will start discussions, get reactions and generate debate. That is exactly what we want. However, the government must manage this campaign so that the debate is based on factual information and not on fear.

I mentioned myths. Many people think that if they sign an organ donor card and they become ill, they will not be given the same level of care because doctors will want to harvest their organs to give to others. That is not at all true. Health professionals treat all patients ethically and professionally in order to help them regain their health. Once these myths are debunked, people will feel safer and will know what will happen to their organs and how health professionals go about doing transplants. They will understand the odds of a donor being compatible with a recipient and the odds of success for transplant operations.

The more informed people are, the more confidence they will have in these procedures or operations. When people see the positive effects that organ donation has and how it helps others, they will have a stronger desire to get involved and to contribute. That is why it is important that the government get involved and demonstrate leadership in raising awareness of the issue of organ donation and the positive effects it has on the health of Canadians from all walks of life.

• (2050)

[English]

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Chair, it is heart-wrenching to see a friend, family member or colleague suffer from organ failure. The impact is significant on both the individual and the family.

Patients must spend hours hooked up to a dialysis machine instead of spending time with their loved ones. Parents know that their child must take a cocktail of drugs every day and spend time in the hospital rather than being out in the playground with friends. It is very worrisome. Organ failure also threatens individuals' autonomy and their ability to support themselves and their loved ones.

It is uplifting to hear and read the stories of people who get a second chance at life following a successful organ transplant. It is inspirational to know how it is made possible through the generosity and altruism of organ donors.

I would like to take this opportunity to underline the generous spirit of people who have already donated an organ or who have made the decision to do so, whether to someone they know or to a stranger.

A significant milestone was recently achieved in Canada on organ donation and transplantation. Just last week it was announced that the 100th successful kidney transplant was completed through the Living Donor Paired Exchange Registry.

This registry, which is the first Canada-wide organ donation registry, was launched two years ago by Canadian Blood Services in partnership with transplant programs across the country to help address the shortage of organs in need. This registry, with support of all the provinces, illustrates what can be achieved through cross-country collaboration.

Approximately 4,000 Canadians are waiting for an organ transplant. In 2009, there were approximately 1,000 organ donors in Canada and more than 2,000 transplants of solid organs were performed.

Business of Supply

However, many patients remain on waiting lists. Roughly 200 Canadians die each year while waiting for an organ transplant. Three-quarters of the 4,000 patients on the organ waiting list need a kidney transplant.

Unfortunately, there are not enough deceased kidney donations to help everyone who needs such a transplant. That is where the Living Donor Paired Exchange Registry comes in. This registry allows someone whose kidney is not compatible with a friend or relative in need of a transplant to donate to a stranger instead. The friend or family member in turn is matched with another person's incompatible donor. Basically it allows for what we call kidney swapping.

Although deceased donation is the type of organ donation most people are familiar with, it is also possible for a healthy living person to donate a kidney. This involves surgery to remove a kidney from the living donor and to transplant it into a patient who needs a kidney. A person can live a healthy life with only one kidney.

Kidney donation is the most frequent type of living organ donation. There are many advantages to live kidney donations. For example, a kidney from a living donor is usually healthier; it may function better and may last longer than a kidney from a deceased donor.

A living kidney transplant is the most successful of all transplant procedures. Not only do these transplants improve and save lives, estimates suggest the savings of a transplant over dialysis to the health care system are significant.

The 100th successful exchange transplant milestone reached by the Living Donor Paired Exchange Registry was just announced on November 29, 2011, exactly one year after it officially became Canada's first national organ donation registry with the last province joining in.

This achievement was made possible through the generosity and compassion of individuals who donated anonymously to anyone in need.

As of the end of October, the registry had 247 donor-recipient pairs registered in the system, as well as 25 non-directed anonymous donors. One of these donors is Ms. Erin Taylor, a 30-year-old emergency room nurse in Edmonton who was recently featured in *The Globe and Mail*. Ms. Taylor donated her kidney to a stranger in Vancouver. Her generosity triggered a chain of events that resulted in two additional transplants.

• (2055)

It is stories like those that reflect the generous spirit of Canadians and that inspire motivation to do something to help a fellow citizen, whether a friend, relative, colleague or a perfect stranger. In fact, Canada has been doing well compared to other countries in terms of recruiting live donors. We are among the top performing countries in this regard.

Business of Supply

In the last 10 years, living donors accounted for more than two-thirds of the increase in the number of organ donors in our country. While this progress is encouraging, we could be doing better, especially for deceased donor rates. This is where Canada lags behind other countries. At about 14 donors per million Canadians, our rate is less than half that of the best performing countries. As I said, that is in the deceased donor part of it.

It is not that Canadians are not compassionate and altruistic. Ms. Taylor's story and that of countless other Canadians prove otherwise. Furthermore, a public opinion poll released last year showed overwhelming support for organ and tissue donation. However, only about half of respondents had actually made the decision to donate their organs at the time of death. Taking the next step to actually register one's intention to donate is crucial to keeping pace with demand.

It is predicted that the need for organs will more than double over the next two decades. Further, at age 20, a person is approximately five times more likely to need an organ transplant in his or her lifetime than to become a deceased donor. With an aging population, with rising diabetes rates and ensuing risk of kidney failure, and with advancing medical technology that makes transplants more possible, it is important to keep up with demand. Just the fact that the number of Canadians living with kidney failure tripled over the past 20 years should be a wake-up call to us all.

We have seen the impact of one of our own parliamentary colleagues in need of an organ transplant in the prime of his years. The time to donate is now.

I understand that two new national organ registries are expected to be launched early next year, one for hard to match kidney patients and one for all non-kidney patients across Canada suffering end stage organ failure. This is extremely important and shows our government's leadership.

These upcoming registries, along with a living donor paired exchange registry, are good news for patients waiting for an organ transplant. However, without donors, too many patients will continue to suffer needlessly.

This government recognizes the need to continue to improve organ donation. There is no doubt about it. That is why our government, along with our provincial and territorial partners, asked Canadian Blood Services to develop a plan for an integrated organ and tissue donation and transplantation system.

Provincial and territorial governments are currently reviewing Canadian Blood Services call to action, which includes its proposals to improve the performance of the donation and transplantation system in Canada. That is how our government is showing massive leadership in this area. We expect these proposals to be made public in the spring of 2012. Again, our government acknowledges that we can and will continue to improve organ donation in Canada.

I invite all members to join me in encouraging our fellow citizens to sign the donor card and discuss their intention to donate with their loved ones. By taking this next step, we can contribute to the inspirational stories of patients getting a second chance at life. I must say that it is so critical because in my own family my husband had to

have a stem cell donor. I cannot say how heart-rendering it is to wait and wait for a donor.

I am very proud that our government has taken a giant step forward in collaboration with the provinces and territories to improve the donor registries that we need so badly and are developing so quickly in this country.

• (2100)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Madam Chair, does the Conservative member believe that the federal government can play a key role in awareness campaigns on television, in the print media, such as newspapers, or on posters that could be placed in hospitals and other public places?

This will get people thinking about organ donation. One strategy could involve having a place on federal forms where people could register as organ donors. If there were a Canada-wide awareness campaign, people would have to think about it. They could discuss it and would be more aware of organ donation.

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Madam Chair, as my colleague knows and what has been mentioned earlier, the actual delivery of health care is under provincial jurisdiction. The safety of the actual organs is in the federal jurisdiction. However, as I outlined in my speech earlier, the collaboration in all fields needs to be between federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions. Not only that, it needs to be with each Canadian citizen. That is why earlier I asked my colleagues what they can do. We need to have the big picture through the federal, provincial and territorial collaboration that is happening now.

It is happening now when we hear about the national living donor registry that is in place right now. I heard one of my colleagues say that nothing has happened in the last five years. Lots have happened in the last five years. More has happened in the last five years than ever before. This is collaboration between the federal, provincial and individual Canadians. We are all responsible to ensure that everybody knows that kidneys and other organs are needed to save lives.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Madam Chair, the thing about organ donation is that there is organ donation when we are living and there is post-mortem organ donation.

One of the problems we find with organ donations from living donors is that people tend to do this for family members who are in dire straits. It is a difficult thing for people to give up one of two organs because they are always afraid. They wonder what will happen to them in 20 years' time if they suddenly find they have a problem with the remaining organ and they do not have another one to kick in.

Business of Supply

Everyone has been talking about different ways of dealing with this issue. One of the ways would be for public education and public awareness. However, does the member see any incentives for encouraging people to want to donate organs? I know some countries have incentive plans. What does the member think?

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Chair, I know my colleague, being a medical doctor, is very well aware of the challenges that people have in this area. It takes every Canadian to be aware of the need for these organ donations and to put the fear factor away where so many people are afraid to donate.

I was quite surprised to find, when I came to Parliament Hill and out there in the community, how little I knew, how little the public as a whole knew and how little parliamentarians knew and know about organ donation or stem cell donation. As the member so eloquently put, often it is a family member, or something that happens within a family, that causes almost a forced awareness. In our busy lives there are so many things to do, with jobs and everyday life, that we often are not confronted with that.

This is a dialogue that needs to be here in Parliament on an ongoing basis. It needs to be between the provinces, the territories and the federal government, and, as we are doing this evening, we need to put the spotlight on the urgency of organ donation for our country.

• (2105)

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Chair, understanding that researchers met in Montreal awhile ago to discuss research in transplantation, what were the key challenges that were identified and what were some of the recommendations, if the member could enlighten us, on the CIHR transplantation workshop and how to best address the challenges through research?

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Chair, I would be very pleased to do that.

Every year, thousands of Canadians receive transplants of solid organs, stem cells and pancreatic islet cells. End stage renal, liver, lung, heart, pancreatic and small intestinal failures are now treated by organ replacement. For cancer, stem cell transplantation can be a cure. However, there are currently more than 4,000 Canadians on wait lists for organ transplants and far more than can be accommodated by the current rate of organ donation. Achieving a good quality of life for these patients remains a challenge.

The CIHR transplant workshop participants identified the need to improve both the quality and quantity of living and deceased donor organs, and improve our understanding of the mechanisms and pathways mediating transplantation related infection inflammation. These kinds of challenges have happened after an organ transplant. Even some of the drugs that are used toward ensuring there is no rejection is a challenge as well.

Overcoming the rejection and establishing long-term tolerance to grafts are an important aspect to this. Tacrolimus is a drug that my husband had some challenges with when he had his transplant. Further recommendations are developing improved therapeutics to sustain graft survival with few adverse side effects and expediting their uptake into clinical practice, establishing tailored transplantation policies and programs for children and other vulnerable populations, and developing national standards of clinical care and

mechanisms for the long-term follow up of Canadian transplant recipients. This was a very important workshop in Montreal.

Hon. Lynne Yelich: Mr. Chair, I wonder if the member has any personal stories.

Besides the staff member that we were talking about who is looking for a transplant, I have a friend who had a kidney transplant. It was very difficult because her daughter donated her organ and, to this day, she is very grateful. However, she has a very difficult time accepting the drugs.

Is there anything the member would care to share personally to remind people how important it is and that side effects and impacts of the drugs are indeed a problem. My friend has a lot of difficulty. Her bones are very fragile. I wonder if there is something that she would like to expand on in that area.

• (2110)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Chair, the effects of drugs from a transplant can be very horrendous. My husband underwent a stem cell transplant and waited a very long time to get a donor. Eventually, the donor came from abroad. The effects of drugs, like tacrolimus, which is one he took, can cause lots of things, like essential tremors. It can make the heart and kidneys very fragile. It was a stem cell to overcome cancer. There are many types. We have talked about kidney donations tonight but there are many other types of donations.

These are extremely big challenges and ones that people need to be aware of. That is why having this workshop in Montreal and going over these very important aspects of donation is of paramount importance.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Chair, it is not exactly a delight, but I am really pleased that we are having this very important debate tonight.

Organ donation is not what typical Canadians are running around thinking about, especially at this time of the year. They are busy working, some of them two or three jobs. They are busy trying to get ready for Christmas, looking after their children. Normally this kind of conversation does not enter our households unless we have a family member or a friend who is impacted.

For 4,000 Canadians who are waiting for an organ transplant to save their lives, tonight's debate is very critical, not only for those who are waiting for the organ transplant but for every member in the family and for all the friends. Therefore, the circle of concern widens.

For many of us, as we listen to the debate tonight, it brings home to us the importance of us shining the light on this issue. Who knows, one of us may need an organ transplant one day. We would never wish that on anyone, but we never know. That is the kind of conversation we need to have.

Business of Supply

Canadians are very generous and very giving. I am very proud that in Canada we do not allow the sale of organs for transplants. We have a lot to be proud of. Despite that, there is no incentive, but the incentive that exists is the one of giving that comes from the heart, and Canadians give. We have to find a way, not just in Parliament, but at every dining room table, at every water cooler, at every coffee stand, all over the country, where people are consciously having a conversation about organ donation.

I heard a colleague mention earlier that years ago there was a form we filled in and there was a mark on our driver's licence. We knew that we had time to think about it.

However, when we look at how many people are waiting for organ transplants and how many are actually performed each year, only 1,803 were performed last year and many people were left waiting. They go into the evening and their families never know if their loved one is going to make it to the next day, or to the next week. It is that kind of angst that we need to have a discussion about, because it is only when people hear about the real stories that they are then moved. That is how Canadians are. They hear of a need and they will rise to the occasion.

I must be honest that I am always in absolute awe of those who give one of their organs, for example, a kidney, while they are still alive. It always brings tears to my eyes because I cannot think of a greater sacrifice one would make for a loved one, or a stranger or a friend than to give one's organ, not knowing what the future holds in store.

When we look for heroes in our lives, those people are true heroes. With a bit more education, there would be more heroes. I remember a few years ago there was the case of a very young person needing a kidney and people from all over were phoning in, emailing, asking to be tested to see if they were compatible.

I think that kind of generosity will occur once people get engaged in this conversation. When the light is shone on the real impact on the lifestyle of that person who is waiting and the impact it has on his or her family, it moves people. It is going to move them far more than technical reports and appeals from politicians, even parliamentarians. Most of them are not going to be moved by us. We can shine the light on those stories. We can send communication out and we should.

• (2115)

However, at the end of the day, what moves Canadians to give is when stories touch their heart. That is one aspect of what we need to do. The other aspect is the absolute need for an integrated, coordinated national registry, not only of the donors but the recipients who are waiting for an organ as well.

I absolutely agree there needs to be some form of an independent panel that makes the determination if a kidney becomes available and there are six or seven people who are a match. I would not want to make that decision. It should not be made by a roll of a dice or by who made the first phone call.

Those people need to be skilled, to have the medical knowledge and the expertise so they can make the determination, giving it to the person who is the most needy at that time. We are going to get into the situation where six or seven people match and there is only one

kidney. That decision has to be made. I would hate to see those kinds of decisions being made by who got an email in first. That is not how this should be.

We are not talking about widgets, or buying flowers or buying groceries or a TV set. We are talking about a life-giving organ. Because of that, I would really want to there to be some very tight guidelines.

All of us have stories of people in our lives who have waited for organs or who suffer some form of kidney failure and need dialysis. I have a very dear friend, and I do not know how she has managed over the last great number of years, going in, having dialysis and getting right to work. She is leading a productive life, supporting her kids, while all the time she is waiting for a donor.

I think this is where I absolutely agree that we do have a role as parliamentarians. We all do have outreach. We all connect in our communities. It is something we can do to create and encourage space for these conversations to occur. These are not the kinds of conversations that are Twitter friendly. These kinds of conversations have to be much deeper.

When I go home and sit down with my grandchildren, it is a conversation I want to have with them. By having that conversation with them, they will then start to think about this and will have that conversation outside as well. If all of us were to commit to start that circle of conversation and watch that circle grow, it would be great. We are going to have an opportunity to go to so many events.

I would not really recommend, if members are out for at Christmas do and somebody is about to toast, merry Christmas or happy new year, that they say "Stop, let us talk about organ donation". We all know we have to find the right moment, and we will all do that.

There is a quote from the Canadian Blood Services that I would like to read into the record. It states:

Canada is one of the only countries in the western world without a national, coordinated system for organ and tissue donation and transplantation...The system as it stands today is at capacity, and is struggling to cope with current needs and projected future demand.

It is really important that even though health care is a provincial issue, and we all know that, that organ donation in Canada also has to be a national issue, coordinated with the provinces. We have a huge country with a huge geography, but we have a very small population. When a country has a very small population, a national strategy becomes really critical.

I would invite all parliamentarians, as they go into their communities, to look for spaces to create this conversation. Let us have the will here to have a national registry.

• (2120)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, is the member aware that there is a national registry? The living donor exchange is a national registry.

The delivery of health care is a provincial matter, but the federal government takes care of the safety of the actual organs. Our government, along with our provincial and territorial partners, has asked the Canadian Blood Services to develop a plan for an integrated organ and tissue donation and transportation system. That speaks to what my colleague said in her speech. She is extremely aware that this has to be done.

Perhaps my colleague could expand on that because this request has already been made by our government. I do not know if my colleague is aware of that or not, but it should reinforce the need for this to happen. I am proud our government is doing that.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Absolutely, Mr. Chair. We have taken some steps in the right direction. The reason we are having this debate tonight is because we need to do more. Because we need to do more and do it more quickly, we have given up our evening to take part in this important debate.

I am not saying that the provinces are being cut out of this. They have a role to play, but so does the federal government, civil society groups, parliamentarians and Canadian citizens.

It is of very little solace to a person who is waiting for an organ to know that we have a long-term plan. We need to make plans, but we also need to move quickly so thousands of people are not kept waiting.

One of the key areas, and my colleague from Vancouver East covered this earlier as well, is for us to raise awareness, to create space, so we can have these conversations and raise our consciousness about this.

There is going to be cultural sensitivity about this and we need to take a look at that. However, more than cultural sensitivity, there is also personal fear sensitivity. We all have some of those fears, so we need to shine the light on those and have honest conversations about them.

• (2125)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my colleague for speaking so openly and from her heart about organ donation. She talked about raising awareness, about information and public education, and about creating space to have conversations. Does she think the federal government should play a role as catalyst in the campaign to raise awareness about organ donation, as the reports suggested in 1999? We need a long-term campaign to raise awareness. There have been only two, one in 2001 and one in 2002, and then nothing. No more has been said about it. Organ donations are needed every day of every year. An awareness campaign has to go on over a long period of time.

Health Canada has a very clear mandate to design and carry out awareness campaigns. This is one of the actions the government can take within its jurisdiction, in partnership with the provinces and community organizations, which can circulate this sensitive information and give people accurate information. An awareness campaign would debunk myths and reassure people about organ donation, and presenting them with personal accounts or scientific

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information would enable them to understand the benefits of participating in an organ donation program.

[*English*]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague for taking part in this debate and for the excellent question that she asked.

I absolutely agree there is a role for individuals to play, but there is also a role for government to play. Sometimes we wait until we are almost at a crisis point before we think it is a good time to have that conversation.

When somebody is in the emergency room or the intensive care unit and the family is gathered around to say their final farewells, it is not a good time to be talking about organ donation. If I were in that situation, I would be more concerned about saying my farewell to my loved one lying in the bed. The last thing I would need at that moment, no matter how logical and necessary it is, would be to talk about this. It is why a registry, getting consent and being prepared are so important.

We often hear of ambulance chasers in other countries who are looking for organs. We are not that kind of a country. We do not do that here. Because of that we have an extended duty to encourage the conversation to raise Canadians' awareness. I believe that once Canadians know, they will listen to their heart and give up parts of their bodies to help their loved ones and strangers.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Mr. Chair, I would like some clarification and to ask a question.

The member opposite was talking about the first phone call and that the first person served gets the kidney. Organ donation or stem cell donation are a little more complicated than that. To get a match is extremely difficult.

We searched far and wide in our family. It was two and a half years before my husband actually got a match. It was five years from the time he first learned of the cancer. Then all sorts of things have to be done. Is it a compatible match? All sorts of things happen. It is not first come, first served at all. It is a registry.

As I said in my speech, there are two registries that are forming in Canada. One is for the hard to match kidney, and one is for all non-kidney patients across Canada. On top of that, there is the living donor registry.

However, we need to do more and that is why we are here tonight. That is why we are putting the spotlight and focus on it.

Is the member aware that this will be a good step forward? Is there anything else she would like to add to that?

• (2130)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Chair, first of all, I thank the member for that clarification. When I was talking about first come, first served, I meant after all the assessments had been done. If there should happen to be three or four matches, there should be a clear way to determine who gets the organ.

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We are all here to talk about what we can do together. This is not about what one person or another has done. For me this is about how we take this forward in a collaborative manner. The lives of people's loved ones are at stake.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Chair, I too am very pleased to be participating in this debate this evening.

Canadians are familiar with the inspiring stories we hear of organ transplantation today, stories of generous donors like Debbie Pemberton of British Columbia. The *Vancouver Sun* reported that she became a living donor when she donated one of her kidneys. Debbie's gift was in memory of her nephew, whose organs were donated when he died at the age of three.

Many of us in this chamber will know of people who have benefited from an organ transplant. Some of us may even have family or friends who have received a successful transplant. Unfortunately, we are also familiar with the stories of patients who are unable to find a suitable donor in time, or patients who spend years on transplant waiting lists for a suitable donor. We know that Canadians desperately in need of organ transplants would benefit immensely from an increased availability of organs, as well as cells and tissues, in Canada. What we may know less about is how the government contributes to protecting the interests and health of organ recipients and their donors.

It is important to ensure that the risks of organ donation are understood and managed. We not only need to ask ourselves how to increase the supply of organs, we also need to consider how we as a society ensure that organ donation is safe. The safety of human organs for transplantation is a responsibility that is shared among the federal, provincial and territorial governments and health care professionals. The government supports a strong and safe system for organ donation and transplantation. In particular, Health Canada has acted to put in place strict science-based regulatory requirements which help to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV, hepatitis C and hepatitis B. These regulatory requirements help make the Canadian transplant system one of the safest in the world.

The federal government is responsible for overseeing the safe processing and distribution of donated organs. To meet this responsibility, Health Canada put in place the safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations. The intent of these regulations is to minimize potential health risks. They contain requirements relating to important issues such as the screening and testing of donors, record keeping, and the investigation of adverse reactions. Each of these requirements has a direct impact on organ safety.

In all decisions regarding organ donation, the safety of recipients of transplantation is paramount. The safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations is one of the tools used to achieve this objective. The regulations also ensure patients and their doctors have the latitude to make decisions based on the medical imperatives they face.

Donor screening and testing also fall under the mandate of the federal government. Canadians can be confident that these federal regulations and standards in donor screening help to prevent the risk of transmitting infectious diseases to recipients. The safety of human

cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations require organ donor organizations and organ transplant establishments such as hospitals to register with Health Canada. They must comply with the regulations and meet minimum safety standards.

They are also subject to inspection by Health Canada officials. These establishments must show the organ is safe for transplantation. This is based on predetermined criteria that can be found in the regulations. Minimizing the risk of transmitting infectious disease is not only important to the recipient, but also to Canadian society as a whole. I am speaking here of preventable cases of HIV, hepatitis C and hepatitis B.

Safe transplantation reduces the risk of transmission of these diseases, the heartbreak this presents to patients and the burden such transmission would place on the Canadian health care system. In the event that a suspected transmission of disease through organ transplantation is reported, the federal government also plays a role by investigating and ensuring appropriate steps are taken to address the incident.

● (2135)

As we all know, the availability of organs for transplantation is much lower than the demand for those organs. This is a pressing concern for patients, their families and the medical community. For some patients, having to wait a few extra hours for an organ can mean the difference between life and death.

Health Canada is aware that the right balance between the demand for safe organs and the need to ensure their availability for transplantation is essential. The safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations were designed to enhance safety but not present a barrier to organ transplant.

Organ transplant recipients all have at least one thing in common: they have a significant health issue that threatens their life or quality of life. The reality is that most organ recipients face a long recovery period. They may also face a lifetime of medical interventions, including medications to prevent their bodies from rejecting transplanted organs. These medications generally suppress the body's own immune system, reducing its ability to respond to and fight infections.

This is not an easy subject we have before us this evening. Organ transplantation presents many challenges and responsibilities for patients, the medical profession and for society. Each year, some 2,000 organs are transplanted in Canada. However, we continue to have a chronic shortage of organs available for transplant. Every year, up to 300 Canadians die while waiting for donated organs.

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I am sure that all members of the House agree that organ donation either from a deceased donor or by a living donor is a highly personal decision for donors or for families faced with the death of a loved one. Today we can help them with that decision. We can ensure that Canadians understand that one additional organ and tissue donor can help up to 80 Canadians improve their health or perhaps save a life. This is because organ and tissue donation today is about more than the high profile cases we see in the media. It is also about cornea transplants, bone grafts, skin, tissues and much more.

Think of what we could achieve if each of us is able to help one family. Think of the Canadians who are on waiting lists today who could enjoy improved health or even the gift of a prolonged life. Even better, think of a Canada which is able to provide organs and tissues to the global donations network.

Canadians can achieve these goals. I encourage every member of the House to do one thing today, even if it is only to post the link of Canadian Blood Services on his or her website to help Canadians better understand how they might help strengthen the organ and tissue donation in Canada.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, my colleague made a very insightful speech on this very important topic.

The federal government is responsible for the safety of donated organs from the perspective of product safety. The safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplant regulations, the CTO regulations, came into force on December 7, 2007. How did Health Canada consult with stakeholders on these new regulations?

• (2140)

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for the insight that she has provided on this very important issue, certainly from her own personal experience.

The safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations, or CTO regulations as my colleague referred to them, came into force on December 2007 as she stated. The purpose of the CTO regulations are to minimize the potential health risks to Canadian recipients of human CTO. Prior to the coming into force of these regulations, Health Canada had extensive consultations and communications with stakeholders to provide guidance and clarification on the basic safety requirements with regard to the processing and distributing of human CTO used in transplantation. The CTO regulations are based on the national standard and were developed using a risk-management approach, as well as information obtained during extensive consultations with the provinces, territories and transplantation experts. The national standard has been made available and is a model for other nations through international regulatory co-operation.

Following these extensive collaborations with experts in the field, federal and provincial governments and interested stakeholders on the content of proposed regulations took place. The national standard was published in June 2003 by the Canadian Standards Association, the CSA.

To meet the requirement for public consultation in the development of national standards, the CSA posted each of the draft standards on its website for a 60 day comment period, in addition to

distributing copies to individuals and organizations who expressed an interest. As they were drafted through a consensus development process, the national standard met the requirements of the Standards Council of Canada, having provided multiple opportunities for Canadians to express their points of view and/or their concerns about these standards.

Health Canada then began to draft federal regulations around these standards to make portions of them mandatory by law under the Food and Drugs Act.

Significant consultation with stakeholders occurred during the entire regulatory drafting process. The regulations were published for a 75 day consultation period prior to their implementation.

[Translation]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Chair, my Conservative colleague and I both sit on the Standing Committee on Health. I expect that she is familiar with the latest science and is sensitive to all health-related matters.

What is my colleague's opinion about the fact that men who have had sex with another man in the last five years are systematically considered to be in the at-risk group for organ donation?

[English]

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Chair, we know there are many groups at risk when it comes to transplantation and the issues that individuals face within their lives. We also know that organ transplantation presents challenges and responsibilities.

Many of us know of individuals who have benefited from an organ transplant and we know there are those who continue to wait for organ transplants. We know that Canadians would benefit immensely from an increased availability of organs as well as cells and tissues in Canada.

What we need to do is balance the increase in the supply of organs and ensure that organ donation is safe. Our government is very aware that striking the right balance between need and safe transplantation is essential.

• (2145)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would like to follow up a little on the question my colleague asked.

We know that people who have had homosexual relations are discriminated against when it comes to giving blood. I was gratified by my colleague's comment. However, I did not think that the hon. member's reply was very clear as to her position on this subject.

Will homosexual individuals who have had homosexual relations in the previous five years continue to be discriminated against? Is she considering having a plan for the future so these people can be on an equal footing with others?

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[English]

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Chair, I take the debate we are having very seriously. This is a very important and sensitive issue. As I mentioned earlier, our government supports a strong and safe system for organ donation and transplantation.

In all discussions regarding organ donation, the safety of recipients of transplantation is absolutely paramount. Canada's transplant system is one of the safest in the world and we have accomplished this by putting in place the safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations. These regulations include a number of things, including minimum safety standards, compliance, inspections and predetermined criteria to demonstrate the organ is safe for transplantation.

As I said earlier, I take the debate we are having this evening very seriously. We know this is an important, sensitive and very timely issue.

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Chair, I am interested in how we can make Canadians more aware. We can all agree that awareness must be part of the solution. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research is doing its part and having participation in a forum in Montreal was definitely a very good step.

However, I believe that awareness is critical. Would the member like to expand on how we could help make awareness first and foremost?

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Chair, first and foremost, I agree with my colleagues who have mentioned the need to have conversations, the need to create a space to have the conversation, not only formally but informally. I receive my licence in the mail and one of the first things I do is fill out the donor card and have the conversation with my family to let them know that I am willing to be a donor.

Everyone, from the Minister of Health, to officials, to front line health care workers, acknowledge that this is a very important and sensitive issue. That is truly why our government is committed to working very closely with our provincial counterparts, health providers, researchers and, most important, with patients and donors to improve the system and the process, to strengthen organ and tissue donation in Canada and to ensure that people are aware of this very important need and how they can become donors.

[Translation]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor. This evening we are discussing organ donation in Canada. This is a fairly broad topic that can cover a number of areas. I will try to cover as many as possible this evening.

First of all, in Canada there is currently a shortage of organs for people with serious injuries and those suffering from a chronic condition who need a new organ to maintain internal circulation. I will give an overview of the situation. At present, there are 4,000 Canadians waiting for an organ transplant in Canada. That is a large number of people who are waiting at home or in hospital. For example, 75% of the people waiting for an organ require a kidney transplant. They have to go to hospital several times a week for dialysis, which really complicates their lives.

For those not familiar with dialysis, it involves spending several hours at the hospital hooked up to a machine. Because the person's kidneys do not work properly, the blood is filtered by the machine to remove waste products that would ordinarily be eliminated by the kidneys and the excretory system.

Just imagine having to go to the hospital several times a week for dialysis. These people must be on friendly terms with hospital staff, but it does restrict their lifestyle. Imagine having to organize your life around spending time in hospital and the money that is invested in very expensive equipment. We are very lucky because, in 2011, there are machines that are artificial replacements for kidneys. However, the cost of this technology is very high. Ideally, the best scenario would be for everyone to sign their organ donor cards. I am very pleased that the Conservative member who spoke before me mentioned that she has signed her donor card. So have I.

If every Canadian did their part for our great health care system, many people could benefit. In the event of one's death, donating organs that are still viable is a beautiful, selfless act of giving. It allows people to live much longer or to have a better quality of life.

The situation is rather grim right now. At present, some 4,000 Canadians are still waiting for organ donations. Last year, there were 1,803 organ transplants, out of the 4,000 people who are waiting. Every day, every week, every month, every year, the list grows longer. What should we do as a society to solve this problem?

We need a public awareness campaign to convince people that signing their organ donor card could help a lot of people. There is a reason it is also called a gift of life. It is a beautiful gift that is passed on from someone who dies to another person, to people he or she does not even know.

Some myths persist about organ donation, but I will try to debunk some of them. People who are afraid of signing their organ donor card are often afraid that all of their internal organs will be stolen. That is truly not the case. The family is consulted at the hospital when the time comes to make the decision about whether the viable organs of a loved one are to be donated. The solution is for everyone to talk to their families about it, so that they are prepared to give their consent for the donation.

I encourage everyone to sign their organ donor card. I also encourage the federal government to launch an awareness campaign to urge Canadians to make this meaningful gesture. Beyond that, however, there are some problems with Canada's organ donation program. I would like to quote Canadian Blood Services.

● (2150)

This is what Canadian Blood Services thinks about the federal government's lack of leadership on creating a national, coordinated system for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. It says:

Canada is one of the only countries in the western world without a national, coordinated system for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The system as it stands today is at capacity, and is struggling to cope with current needs and projected future demand.

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Yes, more people need to sign organ donor cards, but the government also has to do its part and set up a national, coordinated system. There is currently a lack of leadership compared to many other developed countries that have implemented a national, coordinated system for organ donation that works quite well. As a result of this lack of leadership, the system is broken and could be vastly improved.

There is a third aspect. I touched on it a bit with the hon. Conservative member. There is discrimination when it comes to the rules for organ donation. I have already mentioned it, but it bears repeating. Men who have had sex with another man even once in the past five years are automatically deemed to be in the at-risk category for organ donation. This includes many additional complications compared to heterosexual men and women who have had multiple partners over the course of many years, yet who are not deemed to be in the at-risk category. The reason I bring this up is because we are talking about discrimination.

I will share a short story. Imagine a couple, two men who have been together for 20 years in a monogamous relationship. They love each other very much and having sex is part of their private life. Even though they have been together for 20 years and they have had no other sexual partners, if one of them wants to donate his organs, every one of his organs is deemed to be at risk. In contrast, a heterosexual person who engages in high-risk behaviour—we know there are people who are not very careful—will not be put in the at-risk group. As a man who has been having sex with his male partner for the past two years, I find it discriminatory that my organs are deemed to be at risk, unlike my New Democratic, Conservative and Liberal colleagues, my colleagues from every party, whose organs are not at risk.

This is governed by the regulations of the Canadian Blood Services because it is the organization that makes these decisions with the support of the government.

The reason why this discrimination is very troubling is that scientific studies prove that there is no reason to have this discrimination in the regulations. I understand why this measure was initially introduced in the 1980s. It was to restrict donations of blood and organs from homosexual men because of the AIDS epidemic. However, in recent decades there has been such progress that both blood and organs can be tested within two weeks to determine if they are affected or if an infection is present.

For organs to be considered to be at risk for five years is very discriminatory. It does not encourage the homosexual population to contribute and make organ donations. Just imagine being in the shoes of the people who discover that their organs or blood are not valued by the authorities that make the regulations for this matter.

In conclusion, establishing a national, central organ donation registry, in co-operation with the provinces and territories, is very important. That is the main conclusion of the document entitled *Organ Donation and Transplantation in Canada*. I recommend that the Conservative government establish this type of registry and, at the same time, conduct an awareness campaign to encourage organ donation.

● (2155)

[*English*]

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for being here tonight to contribute to this very important debate.

A national registry was brought up. I wonder if the member is aware that the living donor registry is a national registry? Is the member aware that provincial jurisdiction is around the delivery of health care, and the federal jurisdiction is for the safety of the cells and the organs?

We have to work collaboratively with all parties, and that includes the public. The safety of the organs is of paramount importance to a recipient. When patients need a donation, the first thing is that they are afraid. They are afraid that something is going to go wrong. They have the organ or stem cell donation to deal with and the effects of the drugs.

What recipients want is a collaboration among all parties. Ultimately the doctors on the ground and the medical experts are the ones who look at the variables around that donation to see if this is going to work.

Did my colleague hear earlier that there are two new registries coming up? One is for very hard to match kidneys and one is a non-kidney registry. Is the member aware of that? Does he think this is a step forward?

Having said that, what else does the member think could be done?

● (2200)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin: Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the Conservative member for her question. She is another member of Parliament who is devoted to the cause of health and she chairs our Standing Committee on Health.

I am really pleased that the government is taking more steps forward with these two new measures. The last time that this issue was addressed was in 2007. Technology and science have once again come a long way, and it is time to move forward at this new level.

Earlier, I did not address the issue of the compatibility of the organ donor and the recipient. For example, if I donated my kidney to a stranger or a member of my family and it was rejected, for one thing, I would have lost my kidney and, for another, the recipient would then need to find another donor. It is therefore a good thing that technology and the new measures will help to ensure that organ donors and recipients are more compatible. This is a step in the right direction.

Now, all we need is a better campaign to raise Canadians' awareness. Many of these discussions take place around the dinner table when people are talking. Sometimes, doctors ask their patients if they have ever considered organ donation. The federal government, particularly Health Canada and the Canadian Blood Services, could play a role. The purpose of a campaign is not necessarily to provide funding but to raise awareness. That can be done in many ways, some of which are inexpensive.

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Once again, I have a recommendation to add. We must look at the scientific data that clearly shows that other countries are well ahead of Canada in this regard. They have removed the discriminatory regulation requiring five years of sexual abstinence in order for organs to be considered viable.

[*English*]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Chair, I would be interested to know if the member has any examples of jurisdictions he spoke about that do campaign to elevate awareness?

Does the member have some examples he could cite that we could use as examples of how to inform the public to the extent necessary when there is such a shortage and to make sure we do not compromise the integrity of the organ donation program?

• (2205)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer this question.

I have an excellent example from Nova Scotia. That is not my home province but in Canada's federal government we must look at our provincial partners' best practices. In 2006, the Government of Nova Scotia created the Legacy of Life: Nova Scotia Organ and Tissue Program in order to raise public awareness of the importance of organ and tissue donation and to encourage people to sign up as donors. The federal government could draw inspiration from this wonderful provincial initiative. It could even work in partnership with the provinces.

The people of Nova Scotia can register to be organ and tissue donors by signing their provincial health card. The same is true in Quebec, but I wanted to give a second example. Even if someone has signed their card, health professionals must still obtain the family's consent, as I mentioned earlier, in order to be able to harvest any organs or tissues when someone dies. That is a good example. There are many others, but since we are almost out of time, I will stop at that one for today.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, my NDP colleague raised a good point at the end of his response after he made his speech. He talked about the importance of the federal government's role in this issue. What I love about the federal government is that the provinces can have their own programs within their jurisdictions. But the federal government can play a big role. It can be a leader on this issue and enable the provinces to better develop their programs.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the role the federal government could play in the issue we are talking about today.

Mr. Dany Morin: Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Sherbrooke, for his question.

I am not an expert on organ or blood donations. So I will let the experts speak to this. I will say however that Canadian Blood Services has existed for many years and is the expert in this field. CBS has conducted research, focused on the issue and looked at all angles for many years. Canadian Blood Services finds it appalling that Canada has no coordinated national organ and tissue donation

and transplant system, and goes so far as to say that, currently, although our system is effective in terms of pairing donations, the system is saturated and is having difficulty meeting current and future needs.

For the edification of my NDP colleague, what is even more deplorable is that—and I do not wish to blame anyone at either the provincial or federal level, or even the system per se—200 Canadians were unfortunate enough to die last year while waiting for an organ transplant. I hope that this information will encourage the federal government to move forward, to be innovative and to make me proud to be Canadian.

As a society we must do something, because it does not make sense that so many Canadians linger on waiting lists and, in the end, do not receive the organs that would help them and extend their lives.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is a pleasure to join in this discussions, which is the first take note debate I have had the privilege to participate in since I was elected in May. For many Canadians, the issue of organ donation is not a debate, a theoretical discussion or an interesting topic. It is a matter of life and death. We are here to talk about the work that the Government of Canada has done to co-ordinate organ donation and to talk about the future.

I have a couple of personal stories of how my own life has been affected by the issue of organ and tissue donation.

My mother's cousin, Ben, was someone we saw once a year. I lived on the mainland of B.C. and he lived overseas on Vancouver Island. He was a young man who joined the military out of high school and really enjoyed military life. He developed a disease in his liver and got sick. Eventually, he needed a liver transplant. After anxious months, he received a liver transplant, which gave him a new lease on life. Unfortunately for Ben, he has since passed away, but he received more than a decade of additional life because someone gave the gift of an organ to him.

Another example relates to my former employer and a former member of the House, Grant McNally. He served here from 1997 until 2004. Shortly after he was elected, he found out that his only son, Graedon, had leukemia. Graedon went through chemotherapy and other treatments at BC Children's Hospital. After many rounds of chemotherapy and some relapses, he needed a bone marrow transplant.

Through the anxious process of trying to find a match on the public registry, it was eventually determined that his sister, Jordana, was the best match. They underwent the surgery and Graedon received the gift of life from his sister. Again, there is not a happy ending to the story. Earlier this year, Graedon passed away after a dozen years of fighting that disease. However, he was given many more years of life with Grant, Wendy and his sisters because of that donation.

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As parliamentarians, we can further the cause of organ donation through education. We need to talk to one another as a society and as family units about organ donation. We need to have that conversation with our loved ones so that if the unfortunate situation ever presents itself to us, we know what our loved ones are thinking and what their wishes are.

We also need to have a discussion about healthy living and chronic disease. As the chair of the health committee and others on that committee who are here tonight will know, the health committee has just gone through an extensive study of chronic disease and disease prevention. Health promotion and disease prevention are important at all stages of life and all stages of health care.

● (2210)

Prevention is important when we are healthy. It is just as important when we are managing a chronic disease. We know that a healthy lifestyle is essential to the success of a transplant. We heard at health committee many examples of diseases that are preventable. For example, we need to educate Canadians on the dangers associated with obesity. We know that chronic illnesses can lead to organ failure and many will result in the need for an organ transplant. As we have heard tonight, there simply are not enough donors for everyone who needs an organ transplant.

The Government of Canada is working in collaboration with our provincial and territorial colleagues who are primarily responsible for the delivery of health care services. However, the federal government does have a role. As the chair of the health committee has indicated, we are taking that responsibility seriously.

A year ago, Canada's health ministers endorsed a declaration on prevention and promotion. It emphasizes that prevention is everyone's business. Partnerships that go beyond the health sector are essential to stem the rising rates of chronic illness and keep Canadians healthy. We have also participated in international summits.

During the recent health ministers' meeting in Halifax, the commitment of federal, provincial and territorial governments to work together on disease prevention was the first priority. One of the things they talked about was curbing childhood obesity. We know that if chronic illness or chronic disease starts at a young age, there is potential for a lifetime of chronic illness.

We have a strong foundation, and our success in preventing chronic illness will have an impact on the need for organ transplantation in Canada.

We know that if people adopt a healthy lifestyle—Graedon who I talked about was just a young kid, so his lifestyle had no impact on his need for a tissue transplant—some diseases, 80% I think, are preventable.

Organ transplantation is a gift that we are proud of as Canadians. Each year in Canada there are approximately 2,000 organs transplanted and more than 90,000 tissues distributed for transplantation. The success rates for many types of transplants, such as heart transplants, are high and continue to get better. I know my colleague spoke about the investments in the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and how important research is in continuing to make these medical advances. Even a few decades ago, who would have thought

that the medical advances in organ transplantation we see today would be available to Canadians? It is incredible to me that we can take an organ out of a donor and put it in someone who needs it, that medical teams can work together to save a life. I do not have a medical background, but the research, technology and procedures that have been developed are simply mind-boggling.

The government has put in place a system known as the cells, tissues and organs surveillance system. This system, developed in conjunction with Health Canada, monitors adverse events. It is an important tool in providing a robust reporting system in Canada.

Obviously, there is more to be done. We are working with our partners to promote healthy aging and prevent the onset of chronic disease. We will continue to take steps to improve the health and well-being of Canadians.

I want to encourage Canadians who are watching this debate to have those conversations with their family, make their views known, make sure their family knows what their desires are. Let us do more to promote organ transplants in Canada.

● (2215)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Chair, it makes me happy to see so many colleagues from the Standing Committee on Health here today. Moreover, this evening we will have an opportunity to discuss an issue that has hitherto not been discussed in the committee, and that is organ donation. I hope that the repetitive nature of my question does not upset anybody. I was not entirely satisfied with the response from my Conservative colleagues.

Does my Conservative colleague believe that Canadian Blood Services' current rule, which puts any man who has had sexual relations with another man in the past five years in the at-risk group, is discriminatory?

● (2220)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Chair, I thank the member for his contribution to the health committee. As I said before, I do not have a medical degree and I do not pretend to be an expert in the area of organ transplantation. I defer to the experts at Canadian Blood Services and in the medical community to determine who may or may not donate an organ or who may or may not be able to receive one. Those are very difficult questions and I certainly would expect that those decisions would be based on the best evidence available.

We know that this issue of organ transplant is very important. It is too important to get into the weeds on the issue. We want to ensure that the best available scientific evidence is used to determine who can give and who can receive an organ.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Chair, while my colleague has suggested that he is not a medical doctor or an expert on organ transplantation, he certainly is a valuable member on the health committee.

Business of Supply

We know that the Government of Canada is taking action on a number of fronts, consistent with the federal role to support disease prevention. Investments in research, best practices and community efforts to establish policies and programs that promote disease prevention and support Canadians in their efforts to adopt healthier lifestyles are key to the federal government's leadership in this area. We have been conducting a study on this at the Standing Committee on Health.

Could my colleague elaborate on how the Government of Canada is supporting Canadians in adopting healthier lifestyles so that serious chronic illnesses can be prevented? Why is this important in the context of a discussion on organ donation?

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Chair, it is a pleasure to serve with the member on the health committee. We are doing good work hearing from experts from all over the country. As I said in my speech, we know that 80% of heart disease, diabetes and lung diseases are preventable. That is a pretty compelling statistic, based on an analysis by the World Health Organization.

Four risk factors result in most of the chronic diseases that we see: smoking, physical inactivity, poor eating and drinking too much alcohol. We heard about those risk factors today in the health committee. We are taking action that is consistent with the federal role. Our investments in research provide the evidence needed by governments, communities and individual Canadians to make necessary changes to their lifestyle. In so doing, they can adopt a healthier lifestyle and be able to prevent the diseases that can lead to the need for a transplant.

We will continue to work in our role as a federal government to educate Canadians and to invest in research. We believe that is the job that we have been asked to do.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, I think that we agree on one point and that we are all on the same page when it comes to the figures before us today. We are in a crisis situation because we currently lack sufficient organs to meet needs. That much we agree on, however we also agree that action must be taken. On the other side of the House, members can be heard saying that things need to be done at a more local level, with family doctors and our loved ones, and that we have to discuss this with our families.

I would like the member to also speak about the exact role of the federal government and what the government intends to put forward. This evening, we are having a take note debate to discuss this issue, but does the government have a plan to build public awareness rather than leaving it up to those watching the debate today to talk about the issue with their families? The government should take stronger and firmer action to build awareness. A national strategy is required to enhance organ donation and to build awareness around the issue of concern to us today.

• (2225)

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Chair, certainly the tack that our government has taken, when dealing with the provinces on health care, is to work collaboratively with them to develop strategies that will respect provincial jurisdiction, while at the same time

recognizing there is a coordinating role for the federal government to play.

The chair of the health committee spoke earlier today about specific interventions that the federal government was taking with the registry of donors. Those are good examples of what we can do, while at the same time respecting the provinces and their unique role in the delivery of health care services.

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Chair, would the member like to expand on what kind of investments our government is making to help prevent chronic diseases like cancer and if our government is being innovative in its approach in preventing chronic disease in Canada? The member spoke quite a bit about chronic disease.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Chair, our investments include initiatives such as the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, which is accelerating cancer prevention and ensuring that cancer programs in all jurisdictions have access to the best information on cancer control.

We are also making investments in innovative approaches to prevention. We want to ensure that best practices are shared. Part of the role of the federal government is to promote that innovation and make strategic investments. We know we have a role to play in working with the provinces on issues like organ donations and prevention and management of chronic disease.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to this debate and it is a good thing we are discussing the issue. I would like before we rise for the evening, however, to come up with some really concrete solutions to this problem.

I have heard people ask, first and foremost, how we get Canadians who have stated clearly that they want to donate, to donate. Ninety per cent say they want to donate, so the big question then is why are they not donating?

What are the things the federal government can do to help them to donate? We should have some concrete solution to that. I would like to suggest one.

Many people have touched on it, and it has to do with looking at some sort of public awareness and public education campaign, which could be done on a website, through articles in newspapers, sending out brochures to physicians or to the public in the way that Health Canada does when it wants to get some issue on board. That is one of the things we could do.

We could let people know that in fact transplants can be 90% successful. What are the ways in which they can offer their organs. Some of them can donate while they are living. Some of them can donate post-mortem. The disease has absolutely nothing to do with it. Their chronic illness has nothing to do with it. Their age has nothing to do with it. In fact, once the organ is set for donation, that is where the people, the physicians and donation and transplantation team, look at that tissue or organ and decide whether it is healthy, whether it is appropriate and whether it is a match or not.

Business of Supply

Those are not things for the government to worry about. The government should just help to walk people through the ways in which they can donate and make it as easy as possible. That is just one thing.

We could dispel some of the myths that we know people have with regard to transplantation, religious reasons, et cetera. Transplantation is a big issue. Most people see their organs as a personal part of themselves. Interwoven within that sense of wanting to be able to give freely and generously to save someone else's life, there is that sense that we are removing a piece of ourselves. There are many cultures that associate that with being an important part of when we pass on and whether we want to be intact or not.

Dealing with some of those issues, dispelling some of those myths that most religions do not agree with organ transplantation when in fact they do, is another thing.

There has to be an easy way. There are ways in which the provinces have, as we well know, through transplantation documents or through a driver's licence that we can donate. Many people know about that, but they are also very concerned because again, most people do not like to think there will come a time when they have a traffic accident and have to donate their organs. We are asking people to think ahead.

The ability to help people understand that this is a life-saving thing they are doing, that this is one way of preventing death, is something that would make a lot of people think differently. Public education and public awareness is the first piece.

The second piece in any kind of strategy would be to have the infrastructure and to make it a one stop shopping area. Practically every country in the world has it, including countries that have federal systems like the United States. We have already seen that the council of the ministers of health met in 2001 and set this up. In 2008 it met again and put money into the whole blood system to deal with the issue. The will is there. Let us get it to become a structure that works.

The next thing we need to do is to find out how we match donors across our vast country and how we match people who are in intensive care units and in emergency departments so we have rapid matches, because time is of the essence in donation. That is a really concrete things we can do.

I heard people talking today about the safety of donations. There is enough information now and we have enough scientific evidence, and this should be done on a evidence-based basis and not on a moral, personal or subjective basis.

I heard the question about gay men who had been active sexually donating either blood or organs. The United Kingdom and all other countries have said that given the next tests we have that can predict HIV or hepatitis C very early and very accurately, that we do not need to look at this five year plan that had been set up. In fact one could look at very clear ways of finding out almost nominally in a very objective manner whether this was a piece of an organ or a tissue that could be donated safely.

● (2230)

This is something that scientists and physicians know how to do. They are doing it around the world. Canada just has to get in step and in line with that. We have had the Canadian Medical Association and other surgeons tell us the international criteria. Therefore, let us follow international criteria. Let us be clear that we are not lagging behind in terms of the decisions that we make because these things change regularly.

Safety of donations is another piece.

In the end, we have money within the system we have already, so let us look at a national registry. Let us also ensure that we have a third party that is set up to look at how we standardize procedures. We are not talking about making one province do what another province does. We are talking about clinical procedures, clear safety procedures and other scientific procedures. There should be standardized procedures for having a registry of donors and a registry of donees. There should be standardized procedures for matching. There should be standardized procedures for moving organs from one place to another rapidly. That is very simple thing to do. It is something we can get the third party to set up, talking to all of the transplantation teams and finding out what is the best way to get this to work. This is not rocket science. This is something that can be done.

Everyone has been very clear. We are on the same page and everyone wants this to happen. Everyone knows that if we can save a life, we should be able to do so as clearly as possible. Everyone understands what provincial jurisdictions are. However, everyone understands as well that there is a huge role here for the federal government.

Best practices is another item. If there is a place where provinces can go to check out what other provinces are doing things and what new things are they doing, we will not have to reinvent the wheel every time. Best practices is not an intrusive thing. It is an information database.

Let us get those things in place. Let us get this moving. Let us get people to understand that it is something they must do, that they need to do it and that it is not complicated. It does not cost them any money. It does not infringe on their religious and cultural beliefs. It is a very simple one-stop shopping thing to do.

Some countries have been doing some interesting things. Israel, for instance, has just started an offering incentive. Israel is suggesting that if people indicate they will donate their organs, then if they get sick and need care right away, they will be first in line in terms of getting care themselves when an organ is there. It is kind of an incentive. It is not buying an organ, which I think is very unethical to sell organs on the market.

We need to look at that. How does Canada play a role internationally in ensuring that organs are not for sale to the highest bidder and that kind of black market thing? We have a huge role to play, internationally, ensuring that this is so through the World Health Organization.

Business of Supply

At the same time, there could be incentives. No one knows how the Israel incentive is going to work because it has just started, so let us look at this best practice and see if it works. This is something we should do.

We know that Denmark and other countries have different incentives, where if people do not say they do not want to donate their organs, then they are automatically donated. However, that does not seem to help the number of organs on the market, so I do not think that has been proven to be a best practice. The United States does not do that and it has a larger percentage per million of people who donate organs than in Denmark.

Let us not just pick everything. Let us just pick the things that work. Let us look at what other countries do. Let us emulate good practices. However, let us do something, please.

• (2235)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to go back to the February 2011 CIHR transplantation workshop held in Montreal with 60 participating members from the transplantation community and potential partners who provided valuable information on how best to address the current challenges in the field of transplantation and improve related clinical outcomes through innovative research programs.

I would like the member to expand on one of the recommendations by the group of 60 participating members. They recommended teams and networks that foster collaboration across the fields of research in partnership with public and private sector partners be formed with the purpose to forge the necessary linkages among transplant communities, support common platforms in infrastructure databases, operating procedures and encourage training. It seems to me that this is a very important recommendation.

I know the member opposite is a medical doctor so I think she could address this very eloquently in terms of the importance of what these linkages would be.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Chair, what I have been saying is that we do not need to reinvent the wheel. There are already many ideas on the table. People who know and have expertise in this issue are telling us what other things we could do.

I think what this group is talking about is the standardization of procedures, of getting together to look at how we standardize across the country, how we pick donors, how we match, how we get the process moving cleanly and clearly so we are able to get the organ to the donee as quickly as possible and that everything is safe and securely done and that everyone is on the same page in terms of the best practices.

While we are debating here, I would like to see us all agree that we will do something because the work has been done and the suggestions are there. Let us all have the political will to get it done because it is about saving lives.

• (2240)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, in my colleague's speech—and when she answered questions—she urged members and the government to take action because the situation is, to say the very least, urgent.

A question was asked of the Conservatives, and I would like to ask the same question of the Liberals. What do they think about the fact that people who have had sexual relations with a person of the same sex in the last five years feel excluded—and they are, in my opinion—from the system?

Does she believe that the Liberal Party could address this situation? How could we achieve equality among all persons in Canada, specifically in the area of organ and blood donations?

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Chair, I think I did speak to that in my speech. I said that looking at equitable access is really important. Within the last three or four years, there is the ability to have clear and accurate tests done on HIV testing. When I was practising medicine a long time ago, even six or seven years ago, there were a lot of false positives and false negatives. They test were not as accurate then. Now the tests have become very accurate. We need to be able to rely on the tests to tell us whether we should allow donation of an organ or not and not be based on any subjectivity as who is donating the organ, is the organ safe, has it passed all the tests, is it a clear and safe organ to be transplanted.

Other countries have in the last year been moving in that direction. The five-year waiting time is not any more acceptable by most countries. The United Kingdom recently joined in on this. It is talking about moving this agenda forward and looking at a maximum of about a year for that type of donation.

The Liberal Party feels strongly about this. We are the people who brought into the House the amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act for looking at sexual orientation as a prohibitive ground for discrimination and moved all the legislation thereafter, including same sex marriage. Therefore, for us, the issue of equity, fairness and the use of non-subjective, evidence-based guidelines for how we treat people and how we make decisions is always at the forefront of what we do as Liberals.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Chair, I would like to thank my Liberal colleague for pointing out that organ donation legislation in England is now ahead of Canada's when it comes to persons who have had sexual relations with an individual of the same sex in the last five years.

I would therefore invite the Prime Minister to speak more regularly with his British counterpart. Why has the United Kingdom passed this legislation and progressed on this issue when the scientific evidence is the same in Canada as in England? Scientific evidence abounds in 2011. I hope that the Conservative government will at last show leadership on this issue.

I have a question to ask my Liberal colleague, who is a doctor by profession. Perhaps she raised this issue with her patients in the past. In her opinion, why is the public, generally speaking, so disinclined to donate their organs? Given her professional and medical experience, can she tell us why people are so reluctant to donate their organs?

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Chair, I think there are about three or four reasons why.

Business of Supply

First, people are reticent to donate organs because they are reticent to donate organs, especially living donors who ask where they would be left if they gave one of their kidneys and something happened that made their other kidney go wonky. Therefore people are reticent. It is a natural feeling. However, this is where it needs to be discussed, one on one, to understand that this is not a huge risk.

Second, a lot of people feel it will cost them money. This is a very interesting myth. People think that if they do this then they will have to bear the cost of the whole transplantation, when it is covered under medicare. People need to have that explained.

Third, a lot of people think there is an age limit to donation. I was reading the other day about a 102-year-old woman who donated to one of her grandchildren, and the organ was fine. There are some organs that can still be donated by people, the sclera on their eyes, et cetera. Age really has nothing to do with it, because once the organ is there then all of the people on the transplantation team decide whether that organ is a match, whether it is a safe organ, et cetera.

However, something that is very important is the ability of physicians and primary care providers to sit down, one on one, and talk with their patients about death, life and organ donations. It is not an easy thing to do, so there needs to be some kind of education of physicians and primary care providers to put this on the table and find ways to donate, to discuss it in a sensitive manner, to be able to answer some of the questions patients may or may not ask, or to be able to sit down with a family and talk about this. These are some of the things we need to look at clearly and to decide.

As well, as I said, this is being done in Ontario right now, or the Trillium Gift of Life Network is thinking of doing it, explaining to people who have already signed a donation card or their driver's licence that it is not necessary to go and seek family approval after that. It is a discussion that must happen. Most families say that because it is their mother or father they do not want to allow it, because they do not believe that when the mother or father agreed he or she was thinking clearly. However, sometimes we have to respect the wishes of people, and that needs discussion at the level of the physician and patient or primary care worker and patient.

• (2245)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Chair, it is an honour to have the opportunity to speak tonight to this important issue of organ and tissue donation.

My comments tonight will no doubt come from a different perspective than most of those who have already spoken. I do not serve on the health committee, nor do I presume to be an expert on organ transplant issues. So I ask for the indulgence and the patience of my colleagues as I share some of my personal journey over the past seven months.

On May 2, election night, as my wife, Betty, and I were watching the early results of the election, along with a campaign volunteer, Betty suddenly experienced a headache. Within seconds she collapsed to the floor, and while she was breathing normally and had a strong pulse, there was no response. Minutes later, following a 911 call, local volunteer firefighters from the New Dundee detachment were on the scene to provide assistance, and they were followed very closely by EMS personnel. Betty was taken by ambulance to Grand River Hospital, placed on life support, and

immediately transferred to a major health centre for more specialized care.

ICU personnel and surgical specialists cared for her and explained in some detail that Betty had experienced a spontaneous intracranial hemorrhage and that, in spite of surgical intervention attempting to stop the bleeding, their best efforts had been unsuccessful. The intense bleeding had applied extreme pressure to sensitive brain tissue and brain function had ceased. After consultation with neurosurgeons and ICU doctors regarding Betty's neurological death, we now were faced with the question of the possibility of organ and tissue donation.

We were then introduced to a team of very compassionate personnel representing the Trillium Gift of Life Network. They presented the options to us and provided the answers to all the questions that were raised by me or by my three adult children. There was no doubt in our mind as to what Betty would want to do. We knew that she would want to continue giving in the same spirit of generosity in her death as she had always done in her life.

Betty and I had also discussed this issue openly each time we renewed our driver's licence and had always both agreed that should anything happen to either of us, which would open the question of organ donation, we would want to help in that way.

As I reflect on the difficult journey of our grief over the past seven months, that journey has been made less difficult by two key factors: first, our personal faith journey as followers of Jesus Christ; and second, our decision to follow through on Betty's wish that upon her death, if possible, her organs be donated.

I will briefly expand on both of those factors. As it relates to the tragic, premature loss of life, there are no easy answers, but these past seven months have been possible because we possess a profound sense of hope.

As I said just a little over a month ago in the chamber in regard to suicide prevention and Bill C-300:

Hope is dependent on having a sense of connection to the future, even if that future is very short-term.

Hope is the oxygen of the human spirit; without it our spirit dies.

This is a quote from Margaret Somerville of McGill University.

Each of us can relate to the importance of having hope in our lives. That hope may be a very short-term hope, such as getting through grade 5, or graduating from high school, or getting a driver's licence for the first time, or the upcoming weekend trip. For people of faith, a longer term hope, in fact an eternal hope, is ours because of our belief in the reality of the resurrection.

A colleague in this chamber recently used the phrase "death shall have no dominion", crediting the phrase correctly to Dylan Thomas. In fact, this phrase finds its origin in the scriptures in the Book of Romans, chapter 6, verse 9, in the context of Christ's victory over death, a victory offered to each of us. My ultimate hope is in this reality that I will again see my wife, Betty, who left this earth just seven months ago yesterday.

Business of Supply

I will return for a moment to that hospital. It was clear that Betty's physical life was over. Brain activity had stopped completely. We knew instinctively that the Betty we had come to know and love was no longer there. Her spirit was still very much alive but her body was only breathing with mechanical help. What to do?

Again, our faith has its foundation in the Christian scriptures, which uses many different metaphors for the physical body. It is referred to as a tent, a house, a temple, or even as clothing for the spirit within. So if the person who lived in that temple or had occupied that house or camped in that tent was no longer here to need any of those things, why would we not share them with someone in need?

● (2250)

Why not help out one of those thousands of people who are currently on waiting lists for a specific organ? Many of those waiting are still in the prime of life. An organ donation can make the difference between life and death. Our decision, while not easy, was made lighter by knowing that someone else would possibly receive the gift of life even as we journeyed into our own grief and loss.

Was there a downside to agreeing to organ donation? Yes, there was. We had to prolong the inevitable by agreeing to multiple tests in order to determine if in fact the organs were healthy and suitable for transplant. There were detailed personal history questions in order to mitigate any risks to potential recipients.

Let me assure members of this House and Canadians that they can rely on the safety of organ transplants in this country. This is because of Canada's strong organ transplant community and Health Canada's work in establishing rigorous safety requirements through the implementation of the safety of human cells, tissue and organs for transplantation regulations.

Today in 2011 Canada is now seen as a leader in the area of transplantation safety. This is reflected in the fact that our standards are recognized by the World Health Organization.

The additional tests required the continued use of mechanical means to keep her breathing for another day or more in order to conduct those tests, and then to allow arrangements for transplant teams to be put in place.

All through this, however, while sitting at Betty's bedside, meeting with family and friends in the intensive care waiting room and having Trillium Gift of Life personnel work through our intense grief with all of us, we were carried by our faith and by the knowledge that some good would come out of this very difficult time.

Over the past seven months, the resources of Trillium Gift of Life Network have been incredible. The network followed up regularly with letters of support, offering access to resources, letting me know the health of the organ recipients. Five people have received the gift of life through organs that were transplanted: heart, liver, lungs and two separate kidney recipients. In addition, others have also benefited from the gift of her eyes, bone and vessel tissue which will aid in the transplant process.

Trillium Gift of Life has also sent lists of books and other resources written for people who have experienced the loss of a loved one. One of those books on the recommended reading list is

entitled, *A Grace Disguised*, written by Jerry L. Sittser. I highly recommend this book for anyone grieving. I have purchased more than 20 copies of it and have shared it with family and friends.

We know the need. Four thousand Canadians are waiting for organ donations at any given point. In Ontario alone, over 1,500 people are waiting for a life-giving transplant. Over 1,000 of those people are waiting for a kidney transplant. It is easy to register one's intentions to donate. In Ontario, one simply goes to the website beadonor.ca. Elsewhere in Canada, one goes to www.transplant.ca.

Right now only 20% of Ontario residents have registered their intent to be an organ or tissue donor. Why not go online now and register? In addition to registering, it is important to discuss this matter with one's family members. I ask everyone to please discuss it with them, too. This decision could very well save a life and offer hope.

I know that because of our decision to donate there are now at least five people enjoying fuller, richer lives and even more who are benefiting from tissues transplanted. We are in a death-denying society. No one wants to think he or she will die before 80 or 90, and because of amazing medical advancements many people will live to that age or even beyond. However, we have no guarantee as my family discovered so quickly and with no warning of any kind.

Thousands of adults and children are counting on us and their fellow Canadians to give the gift of life. It is time we as a nation closed the gap between the need for lifesaving and life-enhancing organs and the supply of organs available. Why not take steps now to make a difference? It could be anyone, a son or daughter or granddaughter, who will be the recipient of someone else's good decision to donate their organs.

This past weekend I walked in a Christmas parade with a heart and double-lung transplant recipient. I met many other recipients who have been blessed with the gift of life through organ transplants.

I know that every one of the recipients is extremely grateful for the fact that someone else took the time to register to be a donor, and now they as recipients are enjoying the gift of life.

● (2255)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague for his excellent speech and for sharing his personal experience. I have a rather simple question for him. I may have missed it, but I have not heard any mention of organ trafficking since the beginning of the debate. This is a serious problem around the world. Make no mistake, it happens in Canada too. People sell their organs on the black market. This topic was not brought up today, and I would like to know what the government thinks about this problem.

Business of Supply

In Canada, there are not enough organs for the people who need them, and there are some people who traffic organs, which is illegal, of course. I would like to know what the government plans on doing to resolve this situation. I think it is something very serious. The government should play a role in taking these organs and giving them to people who need them, and in ensuring that the traffickers who make money from this illegal trade are punished appropriately. I would like to know what my colleague thinks about that.

[English]

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Chair, as I indicated at the outset of my speech, I do not profess to be an expert on organ donation and transplantation, but I know that Canada has some very stringent guidelines in place as it relates to the safety of transplants. In fact, I mentioned in my speech the safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations. These regulations outline some of the most safe and medically sound methods of organ donation and transplantation.

The safety of organ donation and transplantation is a responsibility shared by numerous parties across Canada. I believe there are some 37 registered organ transplant programs in Canada. Operators of these programs are responsible for declaring that the organs they distribute are safe for transplantation in Canada. We have some very stringent guidelines in place. I share my colleague's concern that we certainly do not want to open up the possibility of a black market for access to organs for transplant purposes.

• (2300)

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Chair, I have to say the member's speech was possibly the best one I have heard in a long time in Parliament. It was very profound. Our hope is in the Lord and that is the most important thing. I find it ironic that I am standing in the House of Commons at this late hour and my colleague, who spoke so eloquently, had a wife who gave life to five people. I stand beside him as a very grateful person because a donor graciously donated stem cells so my husband could live.

In this country we foster a lot of confidence in the safety of human organs for transplantation. As we know, the federal government is responsible for the safety of donated organs from the perspective of product safety. The safety of human cells, tissues and organs for transplantation regulations came into force December 7, 2007, as was mentioned earlier.

Does the federal government regulate how donor organs are allocated across Canada? That is the other aspect to it.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague for her kind remarks about my speech. Certainly my colleagues in this House have been there for me through these past seven months in incredible ways. Their compassion, understanding and periodic questioning of how I am doing has been an immense encouragement to me.

My understanding is that the federal government does not regulate the allocation of the organs. We talked many times throughout our debate tonight about the areas of provincial jurisdiction, which we respect in this government, but transplant programs across Canada do share organs so that the most urgently ill patients in the country can have transplants first.

I think this is an important issue. When we think of the people who have been on waiting lists, sometimes for many years, coming to the end of their ability to continue dialysis or some other method of medical treatment, it is important that the most crucial needs be met first. Those who may be nearing the end of their medical treatment and are unable to continue on with that process are offered the gift of life and would be the first on the list to access those transplants.

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Chair, I want to acknowledge my colleague for taking us through the process in his speech.

Everyone who spoke tonight knew of someone who needed a transplant. However, we had not heard from anyone tonight on what it is like to donate or to be part of a transplant situation.

The member was first made aware through the hospital, and he had made a decision with his wife, using their driver's licences, that this was something they agreed to do. Are there other ways of creating awareness that the member can think of now, in retrospect, knowing what he went through? Are there other things that could be done to make people aware of how important this is?

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Chair, once a person goes through a situation like this, he or she becomes aware that there is so much more that could have been done. From here on, there is so much more that we can do.

Members of the House all have access to a regular communication piece that they can send out to their constituents. What would be wrong with raising that issue in a corner of a householder, maybe a quarter of a page, to point out that there is an urgent need and a long waiting list of potential recipients?

In these last weeks as we approach the Christmas season, I have partnered with the Trillium Gift of Life Network in some of the Christmas parades. This is an Ontario organization that does an excellent job of coordinating tissue and organ donations and organ transplants. It did an incredible job of working with us through those gruelling hours of grief. We have partnered with them in spreading the word. In our Christmas parades we handed out little cards with a Life Saver stapled to them. I do not know how many hundreds of people will have received that little card with a Life Saver stapled to it with the website address: beadonor.ca.

I think these are simple yet potentially very effective ways to spread the word and raise awareness. All one has to do is find the website and click on it. Once one is in that registry, it lists the different groups across Canada that are doing this kind of work.

I think if we started to brainstorm for a few minutes, even at committee level, we could come up with many more creative ideas as to how we, as members, could begin that discussion and then perhaps work with community partners at different levels of government to spread the word.

Business of Supply

• (2305)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Chair: Debate resumed. The hon. member for Sherbrooke has six minutes remaining.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Chair, I am pleased to conclude tonight's debate. It is an honour for me to speak about this subject. Unfortunately, I am not a member of the Standing Committee on Health like most of the members opposite, but it is a subject that is very important to me. As I close the debate, I would just like to summarize briefly and provide some statistics showing that Canada is experiencing a crisis with regard to organ donation.

As most of my colleagues have mentioned, over 4,000 Canadians are waiting for organ transplants to save their lives. Last year, only 1,803 transplants were performed. There are many patients on waiting lists. One rather alarming statistic shows that over 200 Canadians died last year while waiting for organ transplants. The figures are truly alarming. We cannot let 200 people die while waiting for transplants. That is unacceptable in Canada. Whether it is one person or 200 people, it is too many.

The government suggested that we have today's take note debate. Unfortunately, I did not hear the government come up with many new ideas or new ways of doing things. Members spoke at length about the fact that this is a problem that must be solved. However, the government did not propose any actual solutions. At this juncture, and in light of the statistics that clearly show that this is an urgent situation, the government must take action while respecting provincial jurisdictions.

In fact, every province has different ways of dealing with this issue, and the federal government must take the lead while respecting the provinces. It is the role of the federal government and the government members to assume leadership, move forward and help the provinces improve their system so that Canadians are even better served by their provincial and federal governments. This brings me to a quote from Canadian Blood Services:

Canada is one of the only countries in the western world without a national, coordinated system for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The system as it stands today is at capacity, and is struggling to cope with current needs and projected future demand.

Those are not my words; they come from Canadian Blood Services. CBS has the experts in this field. That is fairly serious for a developed country like Canada, such a forward-thinking country, although it is less so with the current government. We have to change this as soon as possible. If Canada is the only country that still does not have an adequate system for addressing this problem, this should be corrected as soon as possible. I encourage the hon. members from the government to bring forward some solutions, and not just talk about it but really address the current situation, truly take action and become leaders in Canada.

I would also like to address something else. I asked hon. members from the other parties a few questions about the fact that people who have had sexual relations with members of the same sex often feel very excluded in the organ donation and blood donation systems. I have often heard people talk about that in my riding of Sherbrooke.

• (2310)

Those people do not feel like everyone else. It is terrible that some people in Canada do not feel equal to others. As my Liberal colleague said, technology and science have become so advanced that a single test can tell us with almost 100% accuracy whether a person is infected or not.

With modern technology—and my colleague who is a doctor by training knows this full well—it is time to give the government the chance to resolve this situation and allow people who feel excluded from the system to feel equal to me and everyone else in Canada. I encourage the government to take action to resolve this situation as soon as possible. I hope this will be done very quickly.

The Deputy Chair: It being 11:13 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 53(1) the committee will rise and I will leave the chair.

(Government Business No. 9 reported)

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): It being 11:13 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 11:13 p.m.)

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