



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

---

VOLUME 146 • NUMBER 062 • 1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

---

OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, December 7, 2011**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer**

## **CONTENTS**

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

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

The House met at 2 p.m.

---

*Prayers*

---

• (1405)

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for Toronto Centre.

*[Members sang the national anthem]*

---

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when Prime Minister Diefenbaker introduced the Canadian Bill of Rights, he said, “I am a Canadian...free to speak without fear, free to worship God in my own way...”.

We believe this freedom to worship or not to worship as one sees fit as fundamental and that supporting it will support all other rights and freedoms.

We understand that religious freedom requires a separation of church and state, but this does not mean that we must separate ourselves from God.

Freedom of religion does not mean public spaces and public discourse must be free from religious expression. We should not, in the name of tolerance, become completely intolerant of public worship in any form.

History has shown that societies that protect religious freedoms are those societies that prosper and enjoy all other fundamental freedoms. That is why we are committed to the office of religious freedom as part of our commitment to stand up for freedom at home and all around the world.

\* \* \*

### FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

**Ms. Denise Savoie (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, representing 2,000 democratically elected local governments, for bringing to Ottawa an important message last week about the value of working

collaboratively. It made a strong case for being at the table to help develop a federal infrastructure plan that ensures future funding is stable and addresses the needs of our communities.

Many regions, like Victoria, are looking for better ways to fund green infrastructure like public transit or secondary waste treatment.

Now would be a perfect time for the federal government to work with the FCM to establish an innovative sustainable capital fund, kick-starting integrated projects that solve several issues at once, and provide environmental, social and community-based economic benefits.

I congratulate FCM for its hard work in keeping our cities healthy and vibrant.

\* \* \*

### MAYOR OF WILLIAMS LAKE, B.C.

**Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Kerry Cook, the newly re-elected mayor of Williams Lake, B.C., got a strong message from the residents of that city in the recent civic elections.

Her voters said, “Kerry, we think you have done an incredible job as our mayor and we want you to continue with the great leadership you have given us”, and, they said, “we know of your dedication to Williams Lake and the people who live there and we know you're going to do whatever you can to make sure the town remains strong and vibrant and economically viable”.

Then they voted. In the three-way race against very strong opponents, Kerry Cook received almost 50% of the vote, a huge outpouring of support and acknowledgement of the great job she has done in her first term of office.

I congratulate Kerry Cook and I look forward to once again working with her and her council as we all strive to make Williams Lake an even greater place to live.

\* \* \*

### IRAQ

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, in the Zakho constituency and in Summel, both in the north of Iraq, the safety of Christians was yet again threatened by those pursuing a path of religious intolerance.

This time, terrorist gangs and extremists were incited to take to the streets as a demonstration against Christian beliefs. These demonstrations quickly and predictably turned ugly as the demonstrators looted and burned shops, liquor stores and banks.

*Statements by Members*

The result was financial losses for the area Christians and, for those who complained about their losses, further personal violence was doled out.

The Chaldean Syriac Assyrian people, and in fact all Christians in Iraq, are facing appalling acts of violence and religious persecution on a daily basis. Government authorities in Iraq are either unwilling or unable to protect this vulnerable minority group from violence that borders on systemic.

I condemn these practices and I call upon the government and all parliamentarians to take action to ensure that the international community does what it can to protect the Christians in Iraq.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

**CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, eradicating child pornography is something that is very important to us. In recent weeks, a children's support group has done an excellent job campaigning for harsher penalties for people who view child pornography.

Child Safe Nation and its Quebec equivalent, Protéger nos enfants, joined together to collect tens of thousands of signatures in Canada and Quebec from people calling on our government to strengthen laws against individuals who produce and view child pornography.

As we know, this is a huge challenge, since child pornography has no boundaries.

I would also like to thank Dr. Russel Eyestone, from Quebec City, who helped mobilize Quebecers on this issue.

\* \* \*

**POVERTY**

**Mr. François Pilon (Laval—Les Îles, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by taking this opportunity to wish the people of Laval—Les Îles a happy holiday season. Second, I also wish that all parliamentarians would come together and resolve to make this country a better place for our children. We are part of the same institution that, in 1989, promised to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000.

It is now 2011, and some 640,000 children are still living below the poverty line. Two of every five food bank users are children. We must also recognize that this government has never made the fight against poverty a top priority in any of its budgets and that the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow. For the happiness of our children, let us show some humanity and do everything we can to eliminate child poverty in Canada.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season.

[*English*]

**POVERTY**

**Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Delta—Richmond East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at this special time of year, as 2011 winds down to give way to 2012 and new beginnings, I ask all Canadians to pause and reflect on those who do not mark the year's end with abundance and to consider those who need the comfort of friends and the kindness of strangers, especially the children.

In my B.C. riding of Delta—Richmond East, echoed throughout Canada I know, I applaud the effort and the caring consideration shown by committed members of our many community service clubs and organizations, such as Delta Assist, the Richmond Food Bank and our three Legions in Ladner, Tsawwassen and Richmond that create and distribute food hampers for needy families.

I also want to recognize school initiatives and the opportunities they provide for children to share with other children.

Christmas is such a special time of year. I wish my parliamentary colleagues and all Canadians a joyous holiday season and a very merry Christmas.

\* \* \*

**RIDING OF KITCHENER CENTRE**

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this weekend in Kitchener, local resident Julianna Yau Yorgan is donating her 30th birthday to the foundation that supports Toronto's Sickkids Hospital. Sponsors have covered the event cost and people who attend will each donate \$100. Julianna hopes to raise \$10,000.

This is a praiseworthy example of the generosity of the Christmas season. It is an example of the innovative ways Kitchener-Waterloo citizens find to contribute to the well-being of our neighbours.

On Saturday, I will be helping out with food hamper delivery for our House of Friendship that delivers aid through a myriad of services. I will be ringing the bell for the Salvation Army Christmas Kettle, another group whose generosity is unbounded.

With the Working Centre, Anselma House, St. Vincent de Paul, Marillac Place, among others, and people like Julianna Yau Yorgan, these neighbours inspire me with hope and make me very proud to be the member of Parliament for Kitchener Centre.

\* \* \*

**SEARCH AND RESCUE**

**Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is public contempt over the defence minister's use of a search and rescue helicopter as a personal taxi. There is real contempt back home in Newfoundland and Labrador, not so much over the misuse of a government aircraft, which is almost routine, not even because the defence minister misled Parliament. What is most unforgivable about the minister's embarrassing actions is that they take away from the real story, that being the search and rescue response time of the Cormorants, which is 30 minutes during working hours, but 2 hours during evenings and on weekends.

Can members imagine a fire department operating with one response time during the day and another during the night?

The emergency response times of the Cougar helicopters that service the offshore oil industry will soon be 20 minutes around the clock.

I can tell members that the survival time of an offshore oil worker in the North Atlantic is the exact same as the survival time for a fisherman. There should be one universal response time for the offshore. That is where the contempt originates.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

#### COACH OF THE B.C. LIONS

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Wally Buono, who, earlier this week, announced his retirement as head coach of the B.C. Lions. For the past nine seasons, he has been the architect of our successful Leos. Under his leadership, the Lions have won our province two Grey Cups, most recently 10 days ago at the newly renovated B.C. Place.

Through his work, the Lions are winners on and off the field. Coach Buono's personal values permeate the organization as players and coaches make important contributions to our communities. They even partnered with our government in a campaign to end violence against women.

He has won Grey Cups as a coach with B.C. and Calgary, and as a player with Montreal. These are a wonderful part of his legacy, as he leaves the sidelines and moves to focus his work on the front office.

On behalf of all members of Parliament and all British Columbians, I wish Wally well in all his future endeavours.

\* \* \*

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I wear a purple ribbon to remember and honour women and children who have lost their lives at the hands of a person they once loved and trusted. The second annual Purple Ribbon Campaign, organized by Tri-City Transitions, is part of the international campaign 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Its theme this year is "Peace Begins at Home".

I congratulate Tri-City Transitions, which provides vital support to those affected by violence and abuse. It operates a women's resource centre, a transition house with an emergency shelter and provides counselling and victim assistance programs.

Today I introduced a motion calling on the government to take five specific actions to help end gender violence, including raising awareness of the issue and its root causes, as well as increasing gender equality.

I encourage all members of the House to take action and help break the cycle of abuse.

#### Statements by Members

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon—Wanuskewin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as noted, Canada is taking part in the worldwide campaign on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.

The reality is that violence against women still too often occurs in our society. The question used to be, "Why should we work with men and boys on ending violence against women and girls?" The question now is, "How can it be done?"

I salute the White Ribbon Campaign, which began in Canada with a handful of men who decided to urge other men to speak out. Its work has been so recognized that we now see other groups involved in this campaign. Wearing the white ribbon represents a pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

Men and boys need to stand alongside women and girls when it comes to ending violence.

\* \* \*

#### IRAN

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join fellow parliamentarians from around the world representing the Inter-parliamentary Group for Human Rights in Iran to stand in solidarity on this international Student Day in Iran with those who are courageously protesting the Iranian regime's systematic campaign of fear, violence and repression.

We call for the immediate release of university students jailed for no other reason than exercising their rights to freedom of expression. We call for the immediate release of the imprisoned Baha'i educators and leaders along with all Iranian political prisoners.

To those brave students who advocate for a free and democratic Iran, who represent the hope for freedom and democracy, we proclaim here today that we stand with them, that we will be there with them and that we will share freedom and democracy together.

\* \* \*

#### WREATHS ACROSS CANADA

**Ms. Eve Adams (Mississauga—Brampton South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is important that we as Canadians ensure that remembering our veterans is not confined to November 11. We should take the time throughout the year to remember and honour the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform.

### *Oral Questions*

It is for this reason that I rise today in the House to commend the work of Wreaths Across Canada. These wonderful volunteers encourage Canadians to honour fallen troops by laying wreaths at military headstones across the country, and they marked the inaugural event at Beechwood National Cemetery this week.

Over a quarter million veterans are buried in military cemeteries across Canada, and this organization is working hard to raise awareness and to honour our veterans who are buried in military cemeteries here at home.

Lest we forget.

\* \* \*

#### **FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, more and more of the Conservatives are showing that they are just not fit to govern.

The member for Lethbridge offended victims of gun violence by mimicking a six-shooter pistol during a vote on the gun registry. Even worse, ministers are tripping over their own logic as they make policy up on the fly.

First the Minister of Public Safety says that Bill C-19 would not impact how gun sales are reported, until the RCMP steps in and says that is just not true.

Then the minister's parliamentary secretary claims, with a straight face, that income tax forms can track firearms just as well as the registry. In fact, the RCMP report on gun control says that the changes will lead to the proliferation of firearms and that private sales will take place without any records and that the rules would be unenforceable.

The government is just making stuff up as it goes along.

The fact is the Conservatives have destroyed our last safeguard against deadly firearms, and they did it on the back of a napkin. The RCMP knows it and victims know it. As the member for Lethbridge should know, that is nothing to celebrate.

\* \* \*

• (1420)

#### **NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA**

**Mr. Robert Goguen (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the high-tax NDP has no idea when it comes to jobs and the economy. As the debate last weekend showed, the New Democrats support tax hikes for job creators, consumers, investors, families, banks, even a job-killing carbon tax that would hike the price of gas, energy and almost everything else.

The NDP wants Canadians to pay more, but offers nothing that creates jobs or prosperity for the future. The NDP wants lavish spending schemes and would push Canada off track to balanced budgets. Sadly, the NDP still looks at the ex-NDP premier of Ontario as a model for economic management. The NDP wants to halt development of the oil sands, which would kill billions in investments and hundreds of Canadian jobs.

These are not policies that would secure Canada's economic future. Its lack of economic leadership is just another worrying example that the NDP is not fit to govern.

---

## **ORAL QUESTIONS**

[English]

### **CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a federal court judge has ruled that the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and the Conservative government have broken the law. They breached the Canadian Wheat Board Act by making changes without holding a referendum among producers first.

In light of this development, will the government do the right thing and back off the Wheat Board?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we were as disappointed as western farmers were with the decision that was brought down today. We will be appealing that decision because, quite frankly, we believe in marketing freedom for Canadian farmers, unlike the NDP, which wants to legalize marijuana and the sale of it but criminalize the sale of western barley.

\* \* \*

### **CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS**

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are quite far from the Wheat Board.

The Prime Minister is in Washington today to sign a new border agreement with the United States. I guess Canadian politicians can go to Washington after all.

Very little information has filtered from these secret negotiations. Canadians have had almost no input. The government will not even say what it has been negotiating away behind closed doors.

Could the government confirm that the cost of the new border deal will be \$1 billion?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the contrast is rather striking. When the NDP members of Parliament go to Washington, it is to lobby against Canadian jobs. It is to lobby against Canadian exports. It is to lobby against private sector unionized workplaces and workers.

By contrast, when our Prime Minister goes to Washington, it is to lobby to create Canadian jobs and opportunities for Canadian businesses.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are worried, and rightly so. They want to know how far Uncle Sam will be able to pry into their business because of this agreement. We still do not know what information is at stake. It is a secret that the government refuses to disclose.

Can the government elaborate on the information that will be shared with the Americans? Are the Conservatives going to heed the Privacy Commissioner's recommendations for enhancing privacy protection?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are defending the interests of Canadians. This is about our national security. However, the most important thing is that we are going to create jobs and opportunities for our businesses, because that is our priority.

• (1425)

[English]

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, our jobs, our border communities and our privacy are at stake. Canadians need to know that this deal will get results.

We have seen it before. The government sits down with the Americans, and we end up with a thicker, slower and more costly border, airport taxes, airport delays, border delays and the lowest level of Canadian exports to the U.S. since 1982.

How do we know this deal will actually increase trade between Canada and the United States? What facts can the government table today that show it will get results for Canadians?

**Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would invite the member to await the outcome of these negotiations. I would also remind him that trade is absolutely critical to Canada's national prosperity. Trade is critical to driving economic growth.

I want to remind the member that over the years the NDP has consistently opposed trade with the United States and with every other country around the world. The NDP has opposed every free trade agreement our country has ever signed.

This Conservative government stands up for Canadians and focuses on the economy and on creating jobs.

**Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, every trade deal that the government has signed has actually cost Canadian jobs, and that is why we have opposed them.

Platitudes are not enough. Canadians who rely on cross-border trade need assurances that this deal will actually reduce border wait times. The Detroit-Windsor crossing is where nearly half of Canada's trade with the United States takes place every day. We cannot afford to leave our communities waiting.

Does the government have any facts to back up its estimates of reduced border wait times? Will it tell Canadians? Why will the minister not stand up for Canadians in Washington like New Democrats do?

**Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, clearly the member and the NDP still do not get it. The Canada-U.S. trade

relationship is an example of how partners can benefit from opening their borders to trade. It is the world's greatest free trade success story.

One in five Canadian jobs is dependent on trade. That is why we are ensuring enhanced access to the United States, our largest and most important trading partner. It is shameful that the NDP sends MPs to Washington not to promote our great country but to shut down Canadian exports and shut down Canadian jobs.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the judge's decision in Manitoba with respect to the Wheat Board, in which it states clearly the minister will be held accountable for his disregard for the rule of law, I wonder if the government can give us at least the assurance that the legislation will not be proceeded with as long as this matter is in front of the courts and as long as this judgment stands.

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are disappointed with the ruling that came down today. We are as disappointed as western farmers are that they are not going to be able to, right away, get the freedom to market their products as growers in eastern Canada get to do. We will be appealing this decision and, of course, we will abide by the laws.

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure. We will have to see what that means.

The legislation is now in front of Parliament. I want to have a categorical assurance from the minister that she will simply say that the legislation will not be proceeded with as long as this matter is in front of the courts and as long as we have a judgment that says that the Minister of Agriculture, who is now chatting with the minister, has had a disregard for the rule of law in the way in which he has tried to implement this legislation.

Could we at least have that assurance from the minister?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have made it very clear that we disagree with the ruling and that is why we are going to be appealing it on behalf of Canadian farmers in the west.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I did not receive an answer to the question, but I would like to ask another question of the government with respect to the events in Attawapiskat.

*Oral Questions*

The Indian Act is a colonial relic. It has been in place for decades. It gives extraordinary powers to the minister and to the crown with respect to people who are described in the act as “Indians”. It stretches all the way from wills to the care of children to defining this and that. It is an absolutely anachronistic piece of legislation.

I would like to ask the government, is it or is it not going to have the courage to put the question of the future of the Indian Act firmly in discussions and negotiations that are supposed to take place in January?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is January. Right now we are focusing on Attawapiskat. We are not trying to score cheap political points, as the Liberals are.

In fact, we have been working around the clock to develop a plan that will ensure that the residents there, children in particular, have a warm and dry place to sleep. The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs will be presenting that plan this afternoon. We encourage the band council to work with us on this. It needs to be part of the solution.

\* \* \*

• (1430)

[*Translation*]

**SEARCH AND RESCUE**

**Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence has refused to take responsibility. He refuses to apologize or step down. He does nothing but make up new stories.

Will he at least answer Canadians' questions, when they know that he used search and rescue services a number of times? Will he tell us how much this little taxi helicopter expedition cost the taxpayers, who are being asked to tighten their belts?

[*English*]

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one more time and as has been said many times before, the minister was called back from a personal vacation to go to work.

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is too bad we did not hear from the minister himself. I guess he is being airlifted to safety again.

Colonel Ploughman was pretty clear. Using search and rescue resources to get airlifted from a vacation was not about helping the Canadian Forces.

As for his decision to hop in a basket to get to London for a press conference on a new military contract, I have a few questions.

When exactly was this contract signed, when was the minister told, and when did he decide to travel to London?

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat one more time. As has been said many times before, the minister was called back from a personal vacation to go to work.

**PORT OF MONTREAL**

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when asked yesterday about recordings that mentioned strong-arming, intimidation and financial kickbacks for political appointments for the Port of Montreal, the Minister of Transport said the person was not appointed, end of story. By this logic, does the minister believe that a robber who tries to hold up a bank but fails has committed no crime?

If Conservative insiders were plotting to install someone as head of the port authority, why would the minister say nothing wrong happened just because they failed?

**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, the chair of the Port of Montreal is appointed by the board of directors. The board of directors named a person, who was not Mr. Abdallah, as I said before.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is avoiding dealing with the scandal of political appointments by stating that the board of directors made the decision. The problem is that the Prime Minister's former director of communications, Dimitri Soudas, acknowledged that he had indicated the government preferred Mr. Abdallah for the Montreal Port Authority. Canadians have the right to know what role the government played in the appointments to the Montreal Port Authority.

When will the Prime Minister answer?

**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, the board of directors of the Montreal Port Authority appoints the head of the Montreal Port Authority. At the time it was a man and now it is a woman. Mr. Abdallah was mentioned in the past but was not appointed chair of the board of directors. The board of directors assumed its responsibilities and made its choice.

\* \* \*

**G8 SUMMIT**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is just another way of avoiding answering questions.

[*English*]

Conservatives deal with many scandals by denying the facts and hoping everyone will just forget. For example, the President of the Treasury Board testified at committee that the G8 port project was removed at the request of the municipality, but we have evidence this is simply not true. It was the Muskoka minister himself who had the project removed from the list.

Could he explain why he came to the committee and then misrepresented such a basic fact?



*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I can inform the House this is week two now where the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay has not apologized to me after it was ruled by the Speaker that there were absolutely no facts to his accusations that I doctored *Hansard*.

In answer to the question, however, the hon. member should know that he is mixing up the facts yet again. The facts are that all of those documents were provided to the Auditor General and I answered all the questions at committee.

• (1435)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, just because the minister is wearing a Christmas tie, that does not mean that he could play Santa Claus in his riding with \$50 million of taxpayers' money. The minister said that the city decided to remove the project. The same city sent two emails indicating that it was the minister who advised it to remove the project. Those are the facts.

Why did the President of the Treasury Board testify in committee if he was going to say things that he knew were false? He has lost all credibility. He no longer has the moral authority to make \$4 billion in cuts to our public services. How can Canadians still trust him?

[*English*]

**Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is once again mixing up facts, just as opposition members did at committee. I answered questions for two hours at committee. In fact, I answered 75 questions in total at two committee hearings. This matter, along with G8 and G20, has been at committee for 41 hours.

The Government of Canada has complied with all questions and has delivered all documents. Members opposite are making mountains out of molehills, just as they did at the very beginning of this exercise.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, temperatures are continuing to drop in Attawapiskat and I am receiving messages from people who say there is a need for clean water, baby supplies, and heating for the people in the tents. We have Red Cross on the ground and provincial emergency teams are on the ground. Moving supplies up the coast, however, will create a major logistical effort and sending in a bean-counter just will not cut it.

The community has asked for the help of Canada's military to help coordinate supplies to get them up the coast. Will the government accept this request, so that the people of Attawapiskat may yet have a merry Christmas?

**Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, unlike the NDP, we are focused on the residents of Attawapiskat and not on scoring political points. We have been working around the clock on a plan to ensure residents, especially children, have warm and dry places to

sleep. We have a plan. We are still committed to working with the band council and we urge it to be part of the solution going forward.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, sending an accountant to deal with a humanitarian crisis is a sad testament to this minister's inability to respond to emergencies. Far too many first nations communities are on the brink of crisis. In addition to the daily struggle of providing basic services that most of us take for granted, many are left stranded in the wake of spills and floods.

When will the minister finally deliver a credible emergency response plan that ensures no first nations are left abandoned in a moment of crisis?

**Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first nations communities develop emergency management plans. We have two Cree communities in Quebec that invoked their emergency management plan two days ago. They have taken care of their people. We were in constant contact and we are monitoring the situation. They do not need our help because the leadership of those communities is looking after its people and doing the right thing.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jonathan Genest-Jourdain (Manicouagan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the emergency situation in Attawapiskat is far from an isolated incident. Hundreds of other aboriginal communities in Canada are having the same problems. A total of 80% of reserves in Canada have problems with drinking water. In Quebec, a quarter of the communities are financially suffocating and falling into poverty.

This government has turned its back on aboriginal people. Does the United Nations have to intervene in order for the government to take an interest in them?

[*English*]

**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. We have made significant targeted investments in first nations priorities, like education, water and housing. We build over 2,000 homes and 3,000 renovations every year on reserves. We continue to work in collaboration with first nations at the community, regional and national level to these ends. We will continue to invest in practical, innovative solutions rather than the negativity coming from the other side.

\* \* \*

**SEARCH AND RESCUE**

**Ms. Judy Foote (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the search and rescue taxi ride story keeps changing. First we were told it was a pre-planned demo for the minister. Not true. Then we were told it was the only way to get the minister out of a private fishing camp to a government announcement. Again, not true.

*Oral Questions*

Today the Conservatives claim it was a slide-in to existing Cormorant training. However, the emails are crystal clear: the minister demanded a helicopter, rather than taking a boat.

Why will the minister not admit the truth and apologize to this House and to Canadians?

• (1440)

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one more time and as has been said many times, the minister was called back from a personal vacation to go to work. That is the bottom line.

\* \* \*

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Human Resources wrongfully stated that 80% of EI applicants receive their first cheque in 23 days. She knows full well that part of the indicator she referred to also included the issuance of a notice of nonpayment.

My question is simple. Once an application has been flagged for something as innocent as a typo or a small mistake and a notice of nonpayment is issued, is the clock reset on this application? Once the typo is fixed and the application resubmitted, does the time on the services standard indicator start all over again from day one?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I explained to the hon. member at committee, and as did officials, basic statistics do include the people who are deemed ineligible. However, we are working to improve our service to Canadians. That is our goal. That is why we are working on automating the behind-the-scenes processing of EI: so we can deliver the payments that people deserve and need as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the truth about committee is that she did not know. One of her officials had to bail her out because she does not know the files and she does not know what is going on in her department.

I have a friend, Gordie Sampson, and he won a Grammy for writing the song *Jesus, Take the Wheel*. In the absence of divine intervention and with this minister driving her department over the cliff, would somebody on that bench show some courage and some compassion, and help this minister through this mess? She is making a mess of Service Canada and hurting Canadians.

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, throughout the recession we delivered the EI payments to Canadians in a very timely manner. I wish the hon. member had noted that part. We are struggling right now with some challenges. It is a seasonal thing that we go through every year. We are putting additional resources toward it.

What is a real shame is that even with the economic action plan when we wanted to put in extra funding to help speed up payments for Canadians, the Liberals voted against that help for Canadians.

[Translation]

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, 19,000 jobs were lost last month, and almost half of those were lost in the manufacturing sector. This is another sad record for this government, which already has the worst trade deficit in our country's history—

[English]

**The Speaker:** Order. I am getting indications that the translation may not have been working. I will allow the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster to restart his question.

[Translation]

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, 19,000 jobs were lost last month, and almost half of those were lost in the manufacturing sector. This is another sad record for this government, which already has the worst trade deficit in our country's history, the worst level of family debt in our country's history and now the worst track record in terms of manufacturing jobs in our country's history. Employment in this sector is the lowest it has been since we began keeping statistics in this regard.

Why does the government not take action to protect this sector, and what is the government's plan to help workers who have lost their jobs as a result of its policies?

[English]

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on jobs and economic growth. We have the best job creation record in the G7 since the end of the recession, in July 2009.

The international organizations have looked at these things. They are convinced that Canada again will continue to lead in job creation. The OECD just said in its outlook for 2011 that Canada's long-term unemployment is among the lowest in the OECD, suggesting that job prospects have remained fairly positive for the unemployed even during the crisis.

I am sure if the member opposite actually cared about jobs, he and his party would not have voted against the job credit for small businesses to create jobs.

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is a bizarre thing to say, that it is positive to lose jobs.

Nineteen thousand jobs were lost last month. Seventy-two thousand full-time jobs in the month of October are gone. Mills and factories that support families across this country are gone. They have lost high-paying jobs that are the bedrock of our communities. Manufacturing jobs are now at their lowest levels since records started being kept in 1976. The Conservatives are even worse than the Liberals.

Why does the government not have a real jobs plan? Why is it asleep at the wheel? Why do the Conservatives not care about losing—

•(1445)

**The Speaker:** Order. The hon. Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Jim Flaherty (Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member talks but he does not vote. When we bring in measures that encourage job creation in this country, such as the accelerated capital cost allowance, the tax credit for small businesses, the NDP members stand in their places and they vote against every one of those measures. The member has the nerve to stand in the House and say that job creation is inadequate when he votes against every measure that would create jobs in the country.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Patry (Jonquière—Alma, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the people of Saguenay got some bad news this week. The axe has fallen on paper machines number six and seven at Resolute Forest Products in Kénogami. With the holidays just around the corner, 400 employees are out of work and do not even know if they will be able to return to their jobs after the holidays, after the temporary closure of the mill. With the current processing times for EI claims, which are already too long, what does the government have to say to those families and what does it plan to do to help them?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I truly feel for anyone who has lost their job, especially at this time of year. However, I can assure this House that Service Canada will work with the provinces to offer these people every possible benefit and opportunity in order to help them.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

#### ATLANTIC CANADA OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY

**Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it seems that under the Conservative government's watch, ACOA has been throwing money away. It gave a million dollar loan to Ocean Choice International to process yellowtail flounder in Newfoundland and Labrador. At the same time, that company inked a deal to send the same fish to China for processing.

Why would ACOA approve a loan to a company that creates fish processing jobs in China? Why is it not funding those jobs here at home?

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am trying to follow the logic in the question. Maybe the hon. member will have a rebuttal, but I think he is talking about the loss of fish plant jobs in the Marystown plant. If that is what he is discussing, he has to understand that ACOA is in Atlantic Canada to help entrepreneurs, to help manufacturers—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. The hon. parliamentary secretary has the floor. I ask members to let him finish his response.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** Mr. Speaker, ACOA does due diligence on every loan that it gives out. We have worked closely with Ocean

#### Oral Questions

Choice in Newfoundland. We will continue to work closely with all manufacturers in Atlantic Canada.

\* \* \*

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians were shocked and disappointed yesterday to see violent protests in Toronto and Ottawa over the recent election in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right in Canada. However, armed demonstrators and violence should not be tolerated.

Could the Minister of International Cooperation please give the House an update on Canada's role in monitoring that the Congolese election was conducted in a fair manner?

**Hon. Bev Oda (Minister of International Cooperation, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is very proud to have sent the largest election observation delegation allowable as part of the EU observation mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We continue to promote peace and democracy in the DRC. We urge all sides in the DRC and here in Canada to remain calm and to let the democratic process unfold.

\* \* \*

#### CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, during the federal election the Minister of Agriculture promised prairie farmers they would get a chance to vote on the future of the Canadian Wheat Board. We now know that the Conservatives not only broke their promise to farmers, the courts say they broke the law.

The Conservatives punted the member for Edmonton East out of their caucus for failing to blow a breathalyzer test. What is the big law and order party going to do to a minister who flagrantly breaks the law? They should send him to the showers.

•(1450)

**Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we were all waiting with bated breath to see how that anger management course turned out. Apparently, it did not work.

Let me read a quote from the member just a few short weeks ago, "Parliament has the right to overturn legislation put in place by previous governments". We absolutely agree with the member for Winnipeg Centre when he said that.

On behalf of western Canadian farmers we will continue to finalize Bill C-18 and give them marketing freedom. We will also continue to appeal the declaration of the court today.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's performance in the fight against climate change is so poor that we rank behind Brazil, Russia, India and China. The worst part of all this is that the Conservatives have been blaming those countries for their failure to act.

Does this government realize that, in order to participate in the new energy economy, we need to act now?

[English]

**Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let us look at the NDP's playbook on international relations, the energy sector and the environment. First, they lobby against Canadian jobs in the energy sector. Second, they vote against climate change budgetary measures. Third, they tell the international community to ignore our country. Fourth, they revel in awards that denigrate our country.

We have a plan that will ensure that all major emitters come to the table in an international agreement and a sector-by-sector regulatory approach. It is a plan that is working and a plan that makes sense.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while the rest of the world is in Durban trying to make progress on these negotiations, Canada is telling the world that we are not interested because instead of making Canada a world leader in clean energy, they are first, giving away billions in tax breaks to fossil fuel companies; second, breaking their promise to regulate the oil sands emissions; and third, cutting funding for renewable energy.

Why is the government isolating Canada? Why is it shutting us out of the green economy of the future?

**Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what my colleague opposite would call an economy that is a world leader in exporting intellectual property related to clean energy technology, as well as an energy sector that invests billions of dollars and has seen tangible reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. This is Canada. This is working.

Her party votes against budgetary measures to continue R and D in this area. Our electricity sector produces 75% of our electricity from non-emitting GHG sources.

The member should be proud of our country and proud of our environmental plan.

\* \* \*

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it turns out the government's story on firearms tracking is not quite true.

[Translation]

In fact, the government is playing with fire.

[English]

The RCMP commissioner of firearms confirmed yesterday that firearms dealers and stores will no longer be required to record information on gun sales.

[Translation]

Gun vendors are no longer required to keep a record of transactions.

[English]

Thanks to this government, police have lost their last tool to track firearms used in violent crimes, but that is not what the government wanted us to believe. Either the government does not understand its own bill, or the RCMP has it wrong. Which is it?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if the member does not understand what we are trying to do, let me make it clear for her. What we are doing is repealing the long gun registry, which is made up of data. Those data will be destroyed in order to scrap the long gun registry.

\* \* \*

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, reports from Durban are shocking. The government is missing in action, invisible, and our country, once prided as the global environmental leader, has been relegated to the margins of the Durban debate. One media commentator went as far as to say, "Canada's invisibility at the summit suggests that it is ashamed of their climate stand" and Canada's "reputation is taking a beating".

Why is the government failing our country and the world by abdicating global leadership on the world's most pressing environmental issue?

**Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure where the Liberal Party's concern for our environment was when it signed on to an international agreement that only included one-third of the world's global emitters, or where it implemented policies that would be detrimental to our economy through a massive carbon tax.

What is truly shameful is that the member's party opposite does not support a plan that looks at a sector-by-sector regulatory approach that will balance our environment with economic sustainability, and our country's approach to saying that we need an agreement with everyone around the table.

● (1455)

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary needs to brush up on her homework.

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

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

[English]

We will let the member for Vancouver—Quadra put her question.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Ms. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, China has said it is willing to go even further in its commitments under the Kyoto protocol. Meanwhile, the Canadian government is saying that it is abandoning its commitments under that agreement.

While most leading economic nations are committing to developing green economies, why are the Conservatives turning to their Reform Party roots and refusing to serve the economic and environmental interests of Canadians?

[English]

**Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is in the best interests of Canadians is an approach to managing our environment that balances both economic sustainability and the environment. This is why we have a sector-by-sector approach to regulate our emissions, as well as promoting an agreement where all international players are at the table.

This is what we stand for. This is what Canadians want. It is an action focused plan.

\* \* \*

**PENSIONS**

**Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has released a report. When it comes to retirement savings, it is saying that baby boomers—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek has the floor now.

**Mr. Wayne Marston:** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has released a report that says baby boomers are the lost generation. According to this report, one-third of these people will not have enough money to retire. The government's plan for a pooled registered pension plan would have Canadians gambling on the market. They would have to play market roulette.

The report clearly shows the Conservatives' plan is failing Canadians in a pensions crisis. When will the government come to understand it is not about banks, it is not about insurance companies, it is about retirement security for seniors?

**Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is why we have been focused on retirement income adequacy for all Canadians. It is not just about seniors who are in retirement now, but it is helping Canadians to prepare for their retirement. The opposition would suggest that we double the Canadian pension plan contribution. Our provincial counterparts do not think that is a good idea, even though the folks that like to tax and spend think that is a good idea. It would actually kill jobs in the country.

What we have done is, working with our partners, the provinces, we have developed a pooled registered pension plan that has been applauded across the country.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government is not listening. Rolling the dice with retirement savings does not create a secure retirement for Canadian seniors.

Instead of letting seniors age with dignity, the government is allowing them to live in poverty. Too many seniors cannot afford food, housing or medication. According to news reports, some are even relying on a private lottery to try to make ends meet.

All seniors deserve to live with dignity. Why is the government refusing to help?

**Hon. Alice Wong (Minister of State (Seniors), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government continues to take strong action to support seniors.

Since 2006, our government has provided billions in annual tax relief for seniors and pensioners, removed hundreds of thousands of seniors from the tax rolls completely, introduced the largest GIS increase in a quarter century and made significant investments in affordable housing for low-income seniors.

If the opposition members truly wanted to support seniors, they would have voted in support of these measures.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD**

**Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Allen Oberg and his seven Canadian Wheat Board directors said they would spend millions of dollars of farmers' money to fight Bill C-18, the marketing freedom for grain farmers act, and they did.

After spending millions of farmers' money on advertising misinformation, Mr. Oberg and the board have filed a baseless court case to prevent western Canadian grain farmers from exercising marketing freedom.

Our government believes farmers should have the marketing freedom they want and deserve. Would the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food please explain the implications of this court case?

● (1500)

**Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government categorically disagrees with this declaration, and on behalf of western Canadian farmers, we will appeal this decision.

This government will continue to deliver on our promise to give farmers the marketing freedom they want and deserve.

Members on all sides of this House agree that Parliament has the right to introduce or amend legislation.

This government remains committed to providing farmers with the options they need through marketing freedom, including the choice to market through a voluntary Canadian wheat board.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The preliminary results announced yesterday by the election commission are problematic. That is what the Congolese diaspora is criticizing. Instead of criticizing this diaspora, perhaps we should be trying to address its concerns.

What concrete action does the government plan to take, beyond a call for calm, to ensure that Congo's election results reflect the will of the Congolese people?

[English]

**Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, results are still in the process of being tabulated and released. We urge all to remain calm and to let the democratic process unfold.

Our hope is to see a result that was conducted in a free and fair manner for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo. We also urge any protesters here in Canada to remain calm and peaceful. Disruptive behaviour is unnecessary. The voices of those who are concerned about the legitimacy of the election are being heard.

[Translation]

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, with this government, corrupt foreign dignitaries living in Canada can sleep soundly at night. Legislation enabling Canada to freeze their assets was passed nine months ago, but the Tunisian community is still waiting to know whether the Ben Ali family's assets were frozen. The Tunisian government asked Canada to freeze this family's assets.

Can the minister tell us what the government has done to respect Tunisia's request and Canadian law?

[English]

**Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has taken strong action and sanctions against the members of the former Ben Ali regime, and this matter is under review by our officials.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Bryan Hayes (Sault Ste. Marie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has acted to ensure that the residents of Attawapiskat have access to safe and warm shelter for the coming months.

We delivered urgent funding to renovate five houses and are working with Emergency Management Ontario and other partners to deliver necessities to the residents, like compost toilets, wood stoves and building materials.

Could the minister please update the House on our efforts to assist the residents of Attawapiskat?

**Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our priority is and always has been the health and safety of the residents of Attawapiskat. Unlike the NDP, we are focusing on a plan, not on scoring political points.

Our action plan to assist this community is already under way, and permanent homes will be delivered as soon as possible. I have written to Chief Spence with immediate solutions that include transforming community buildings into comfortable living spaces so that people can use them as a temporary home.

We are committed to the delivery of safe shelter and necessities to the community. I encourage the chief and council to work with our government—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Newton—North Delta

\* \* \*

**AIR INDIA**

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has been 26 years since the devastating Air India tragedy. The victims' families are still waiting for justice and compensation from the Conservative government, but yet another hurdle is in their way. They must now provide more proof that they were related to the victims.

Is that a joke? What more can they do to show they were related? The families and the community just want this nightmare to end. Why is the government determined to extend this drama and humiliation?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the tragic Air India incident is a reminder that Canada is not immune from terrorist acts.

In fact, our government responded very quickly to years of neglect in looking into the matter, and we are following the commissioner's recommendations. In respect to the *ex gratia* payments, we are taking appropriate steps to ensure that the recommendation is followed and to ensure that we administer taxpayers' money appropriately.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, one by one the reasons given by the Conservatives to discredit the Kyoto protocol are proving to be nothing but diversions to conceal their poor performance on climate change. Now that developing countries say that they are ready to meet binding targets, the Minister of the Environment, who said that they were a vital requirement, is refusing outright to make a commitment, stating that this ideological decision was made some time ago.

Why is the government once again trying to sabotage environmental negotiations, if not to protect the big oil companies and Canada's appalling track record, which is worse than that of Russia, India, China and Brazil?

*Points of Order*

[*English*]

**Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what my colleague opposite is referring to when he says that we have an appalling record when the International Institute for Sustainable Development says, and I quote:

...Canada is moving in the right direction on GHG policy.

and

...Canada's federal government is finally establishing the policy architecture to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We are taking a leadership role. It is time that the opposition parties start acknowledging that and start being proud of the role that our country has in the international community with environmental stewardship.

**The Speaker:** That concludes question period for today.

The Chair has notice of a few points of order.

\* \* \*

### POINTS OF ORDER

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, very briefly, during question period, the member for Beaches—East York referred to the absence in this place of one of the members of the government.

I know that the member for Beaches—East York is new to this place. He may not be aware of the rules governing our members, but I believe he has been here long enough to understand that one is not to make mention of the absence or presence of any members in this place.

All I am looking for is some assurance that this will not occur again in the future.

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my comments were not meant to refer to the literal presence or absence of the minister here today. Rather, they were meant in a figurative sense.

[*Translation*]

MEMBER FOR LETHBRIDGE

**Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we commemorated the terrible massacre of 14 young women who were killed for anti-feminist reasons at École Polytechnique in Montreal 22 years ago. In the meantime, a video was being broadcast on the Internet and on television of the inappropriate and disgraceful gestures made by the hon. member for Lethbridge during a vote in the House on eliminating the firearms registry. He was making gun-shooting gestures with his hands. Not only has he not apologized in the House—and I do not believe he has apologized outside the House either—but in an article I found today in *La Presse*, he said it was just a subtle, little gesture. He is making a mockery of this and even says that his Conservative colleagues facing him were not offended.

I am asking the hon. member for Lethbridge to do the right thing and apologize for the gestures he made during the vote on November 1. Obviously in a democracy we are entitled to vote for or against abolishing the firearms registry. Everyone in the House respects that right. However, this is not about democracy, but about contempt. That type of gesture shows contempt for the victims, the victims' families and the House. I know that decorum is important to you, Mr. Speaker. We are not talking about subtle, little gestures. If the hon. member for Lethbridge refuses to apologize—and I will close on this—then someone from the Conservative government side should stand up, condemn those gestures and say that the hon. Conservative members and the Conservative government were indeed offended by the gestures made by the hon. member for Lethbridge. He should stand up and apologize.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the video was released yesterday on the anniversary of the tragic events at the École Polytechnique, and that is what is tragic.

The vote occurred five weeks before and had absolutely nothing to do with these tragic events. The gesture was not made towards anyone; it was not even made towards the colleagues I faced in the Conservative Party. It has nothing to do with the victims of violence.

If ending the long gun registry was a victory for violence, then this would be an offensive gesture. It is not a victory for violence. The long gun registry was ineffective and targeted peaceful, law-abiding gun owners.

I am sorry not just that this has been misinterpreted but that it has been misrepresented as being associated with the tragic events at École Polytechnique 22 years ago. The vote was five weeks before the anniversary. I remain committed to improving the safety of all Canadians and ending violence towards women.

● (1510)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was really hoping that the member for Lethbridge would rise at least to apologize for his gesture. It is sad. True, it happened some weeks ago; however, the act is behind us.

When I got home yesterday, I had many messages from people across Canada who were offended by the gesture. This matter really got under people's skin, and we know what it stands for. It was definitely a very regrettable and very disrespectful gesture.

Mr. Speaker, I refer to the ruling you handed down yesterday concerning decorum in the House. When people vote, they are supposed to exercise restraint. They express their opinions through their vote and through their “yeas” or “nays”, but no one should be making any gestures that could be perceived as offensive. I am sorry, but imitating the firing of a handgun was definitely an offensive gesture. It is completely understandable that many people would misinterpret the gesture, which, unfortunately, has been seen around the world.

*Privilege*

I would have liked my colleague to have the decency at least to let us believe that perhaps he had misunderstood something and to apologize to anyone who was offended. And, yes, people were definitely offended. The gestures were completely inappropriate and had no place in this House during a vote.

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I might be able to suggest a solution to the problem.

Frankly, I was disappointed to hear what the hon. member for Lethbridge had to say. Every hon. member has been in a situation where he was not pleased with how people interpreted some event or something he did. However, it is clear that many people were shocked by the gestures made by the hon. member during the vote.

There is a simple solution to the problem. Mr. Speaker, you made a ruling yesterday, a ruling that all of us in the House accept. You clearly said that any demonstration made by hon. members during a vote is unacceptable.

The hon. member could simply acknowledge that he did not recognize the importance of the solemnity of the vote, that he regrets his actions and he fully accepts the Speaker's ruling. That is the choice that is before the hon. member. He cannot say that he has nothing to say when he clearly did things that go against the ruling made yesterday by the Speaker of the House. That is the solution I propose.

[*English*]

**Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Lethbridge has pointed out that the vote occurred weeks before yesterday when the video was shown. Somebody maliciously set the video up for yesterday. However, regardless, if people anywhere are offended by that action, I apologize.

•(1515)

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday you made a ruling on decorum during votes. It is true that I am new in the House. I have only been to about 100 votes or so. I have seen many members make different gestures while they vote. That was before the ruling.

You have made the ruling, Mr. Speaker, that we should not applaud during votes and I will accept that ruling. I will not be making gestures of any nature during votes, from this point on. I respect that. I think that the offence occurred because someone took this video in an inappropriate way and connected this gesture to the victims of violence. That is deeply regrettable. I—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. We are going to let the member for Lethbridge finish his remarks.

**Mr. Jim Hillyer:** Mr. Speaker, if I had intended to offend victims of violence or anyone else, that would not only demand an apology but it would demand far more than just that. No offence was intended. No one who looks at the video and the timing of the video would think for a second that I intended any offence toward victims of violence. The people who caused the offence are the people who connected the video on the wrong day, and that is terrible.

I am sorry that I did not follow the ruling that you, Mr. Speaker, have made since then. I will not make gestures anymore. I have nothing but sympathy for victims of violence. I continue to remain committed to ending violence toward women and all Canadians.

**The Speaker:** We can consider the matter closed. The member has indicated that he will respect the Speaker's ruling going forward. He certainly seems to have indicated regret that anybody may have taken offence.

I thank all hon. members in advance for respecting the ruling I gave yesterday on overall decorum and comportment not only during votes, but also during question period when members are both putting questions and trying to answer them.

The hon. member for Mount Royal is rising on the question of privilege he raised some time ago.

\* \* \*

**PRIVILEGE**

TELEPHONE CALLS TO MOUNT ROYAL CONSTITUENTS

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise again in the matter of the question of privilege I first raised on November 16. Simply put, the submission from the member for New Brunswick Southwest on Monday evening misstated the facts at issue, however inadvertently, yet again, while ignoring the attending breach of privilege. Moreover, he did not make any reference to the principles and precedents which support my position and which should guide your ruling.

I want to organize my remarks and ensure that we are all following *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition from 2009 by the recognized authorities O'Brien and Bosc. The member stated:

In conducting voter identification, the Conservative Party used its traditional voter ID script, with no mention of a byelection.

Either every person who has called, emailed, mailed or faxed my office, or talked to me in person about these calls is lying, or the member is utterly mistaken as to their content while ignoring the evidence.

May I draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to a *Huffington Post* article, a copy of which was provided to the table clerks, along with samples of the emails and phone calls to my offices, wherein a constituent says:

I kept arguing with them. They kept insisting that there was a byelection and I'm politically aware and there isn't one.

Mr. Speaker, I will repeat. The constituent, and more importantly this constituent is representative of the calls received and the evidence you have received, said, "They kept insisting that there was a byelection..." "was" being the key word, not "maybe", "could perhaps be", "might be". She said "was" and that she had to argue with the caller otherwise.

Any dispute as to the contents of these calls is quickly resolved by looking at the evidence my office has submitted to the table clerks. But, Mr. Speaker, I will remind you that you need not resolve the actual content of the calls prior to ruling. Indeed, as the Clerk of the House noted before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in 2002, reprinted on page 145 of O'Brien and Bosc:



*Privilege*

The Speaker's role ought to be explained, and it is that the issue put before the Speaker is not a finding of fact, it is simply whether on first impression the issue that is before the House warrants priority consideration over all other matters, all other orders of the day that are before the House.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, your role is finding whether there is a prima facie breach which O'Brien and Bosc reminds us means a breach, "on the first impression or on first glance".

It is standard practice that you would take the matter under advisement as you have done, upon first being presented with it. However, I would assert that it is evident on its face, particularly as we begin a fifth round of interventions on this topic, that the matter is sufficiently serious and sufficiently prejudicial to warrant consideration by the whole House and subsequently at committee.

The member for New Brunswick Southwest asserts that my privileges have not been breached and that my parliamentary duties have not been sufficiently impeded. The member is ignoring that sowing confusion as to a member's identity is actionable on its face and alone a per se impediment.

While I believe that I made a clear and compelling case in this regard in my previous intervention, I would like to remind the House and that member, through you, Mr. Speaker, that there is another privilege avenue of which I have not yet spoken. Specifically, O'Brien and Bosc explained it:

In deliberating upon a question of privilege, the Chair will take into account the extent to which the matter complained of infringed upon any Member's ability to perform his or her parliamentary functions or appears to be a contempt against the dignity of Parliament.

Admittedly, I have not delved much into the discussion of "contempt against the dignity of Parliament" in my previous interventions because the interference with my parliamentary duties was compelling enough on its face. Accordingly on this point, may I briefly remind all hon. members of what O'Brien and Bosc note re prima facie privilege:

...some matters found to be prima facie include the damaging of a Member's reputation and the usurpation of the title of Member of Parliament...

It went on to describe the reputational damage cases which I cited in my first intervention and where the matter at hand accords with the established precedents. While I realize that the precedents in O'Brien and Bosc are somewhat more recent on this point, may I draw your attention to the 1987 remarks of Speaker Fraser:

The privileges of a member are violated by any action which might impede him or her in the fulfilment of his or her duties and functions. It is obvious that the unjust damaging of a reputation could constitute such an impediment.

● (1520)

While the government member assertions that "calls were within the bounds of typical political discourse", I believe that once there is a false and misleading statement of fact made that there is or will be a byelection and that the member has resigned or is about to resign, this clearly crosses the line and is constitutive of reputational damage.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is you who informs the House of vacancy in the representation, not any party and certainly not any unsolicited phone call.

I realize that determining contempt against the dignity of Parliament is a somewhat subjective test. On this point, I would

direct you to articles in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, the *National Post*, an editorial in the *Ottawa Citizen*, columns in *Le Soleil* and other papers that all similarly conclude that these calls are "black ops", "sleazy", "odious", "disgusting", "Watergate-like", "a new low in politics", and much more, the whole bringing members and this institution into disrepute, let alone the clear reputational damage involved.

On this point, Queen's University professor, Ned Franks, a noted expert on parliamentary procedure, referred to the calls as "disgusting...a perversion of the system of representation".

Similarly, Carleton University political scientist, John Pammett, said:

People are confused and negative enough about politics that they don't need that extra push to make them think politicians are crooks or not telling them the truth.

I think those quotes and other like commentary speak for themselves.

Elsewhere in his intervention, the member for New Brunswick Southwest replied to an intervention from the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands regarding a 1985 precedent involving a newspaper ad that identified the previous MP as being the sitting MP. The government member said:

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.

While there is no less confusion caused by the misrepresentation in the matter at issue that I have resigned or am about to resign, there is also a long-standing principle in this place, and one need only search *Hansard* to see it repeated time and time again, such as by the Deputy Speaker on January 31, 2003, by the Acting Speaker on April 7, 2008, and by the Speaker on April 19, 2007, let alone in law generally, "...you cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly".

● (1525)

Accordingly, stating that there is a pending or imminent byelection clearly implies that the member is no longer serving. I do not think for a moment that, just as we would not tolerate calls that say "so and so is no longer your member of Parliament", we should equally not tolerate these calls which, in their effect, if not also in their intent, convey the same false and misleading information that breaches a member's privilege.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I draw your attention to Speaker Bosley's 1985 ruling, which reads:

...anything tending to cause confusion as to a Member's identity creates the possibility of an impediment to the fulfilment of that Member's functions. Any action which impedes or tends to impede a Member in the discharge of his duties is a breach of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by addressing the final remarks made by the government member. He asserts that this practice will result in you being called upon to "rule on all matters of political activity" and that "You are being asked to send the House into territory where it does not belong".

*Routine Proceedings*

While my previous interventions sought to demonstrate that the conduct at issue has nothing to do with normal political activity, let alone the absurdity of trying to validate it under free speech, false misrepresentation is simply not protected speech inside or outside this House. This misconduct clearly falls into the territory of a breach of privilege on which you are asked to rule and for which ample precedent, as I have cited, already exists and has yet to be countered by anything said by government members who have yet to cite any relevant and pertinent authority in this regard.

Any ruling you make, Mr. Speaker, is directly on the point of parliamentary privilege. In other words, people can still discuss politics and people can still traffic in rumours, however distasteful that may be, as I noted already, but the line is crossed when false, misleading and prejudicial information is presented as if it were fact. This is when it becomes and constitutes a prima facie breach of privilege and becomes actionable in the House as past Speakers in the House itself have found.

In this regard, I would draw the attention of all members to the finding of a breach of privilege in the 38th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in the first session of the 38th Parliament on a matter regarding ten percenters and applicable to the matter before us. In the privilege case discussed in that report, mailings were sent to the wrong riding and, as such, contained references to “your MP that were inaccurate in terms of the member's positions, voting record and committee assignments”. This was found to breach the member's privileges.

Simply put, while I have intervened already in this matter to demonstrate that it has no relation to free speech, I would note that, with specific regard to false statements made about members, it has already been found that such matters may constitute a breach of privilege.

As such, whereas the government member asserted on Monday, Mr. Speaker, “you are being asked to send the House into territory where it does not belong”, let it be known that the House has already been there, has already pronounced and has already found that such actions may constitute a breach of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that there need not be anything more said on this matter, lest we spend more time discussing matters irrelevant to your ruling such that a breach of privilege somehow becomes protected speech or that false, misleading and prejudicial misrepresentations of fact are somehow said to be within the bounds of political discourse, or that somehow it is relevant as to what members did or did not invoke such privileges in the past as distinct from the principles and precedents where such privileges were invoked and applied.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, you have the authorities before you. The table clerks have been provided with the evidence. I have canvassed all the principles and precedents in this matter and applied them to the case at hand. It should be abundantly clear that the matter is one for the whole House to resolve and, as such, I urge you to find a prima facie breach of privilege with all deliberate speed.

• (1530)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his further intervention on this point.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*Translation*]

**PUBLIC SECTOR INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER**

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 111 (1), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a certificate of nomination, with biographical notes, for the proposed appointment of Mario Dion to the position of Public Sector Integrity Commissioner. I request that the nomination be referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

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

\* \* \*

**PROHIBITION ON IMPORTING GOODS PRODUCED BY SWEATSHOP LABOUR ACT**

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-378, An Act to prohibit sweatshop labour goods.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Joliette for seconding the first reading of this bill.

As members know, Canada is a signatory to the International Labour Organization Convention. It talks about five labour standards that exist within the International Labour Organization and they are enforced here in Canada. They are: the right of association; the right to bargain collectively; the prohibition on the use of any forced or compulsory labour; a minimum age for employment of children; and acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work and occupational health and safety.

We enforce these regulations and standards here in Canada but there are often companies abroad that do not enforce them. Because of that unfortunate situation and because of our clear belief in fair trade policies that set a higher standard around the world, I am tabling this private member's bill today to say that sweatshop goods should not be brought into Canada. There should not be a way of getting around the ILO standards.

We must ensure that the right of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining is enforced. In areas where there is compulsory labour, no right to free association and to organize collectively and where those fundamental human rights are violated, Canada should say no to the goods coming from those sweatshops.

I am very proud to table this bill and I hope it receives support from all members of the House.

In closing, I would like to thank the students of Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School in Toronto. With their “Voices Through Choices” campaign, they are strong supporters of ending sweatshop labour.

*Routine Proceedings*

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

\* \* \*

### PROTECTING CANADIANS' PERSONAL PRIVACY ACT

**Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-379, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (visual recording of persons in their residence).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Scarborough—Guildwood for seconding my private member's bill.

We are quite fortunate to live in a time where we glean so many positive benefits from technological developments. That said, many of these developments have serious implications for such basic matters as privacy.

In the past, the Supreme Court of Canada, the Federal Court and other provincial courts have ruled that an individual's expectation to privacy in public areas is limited at best. While people may take offence to a neighbour making or attempting to make a visual recording of them in the privacy of their home or backyard, inadvertently or otherwise, presently it is not an offence to do so unless the crown can prove the victim was harassed, fearful or that the act of recording was of conduct sexual in nature. Barring those circumstances, a victim has to sue the person taking the recording, an exercise only the wealthy can afford.

The bill would effectively alleviate the victim from having to explain his or her activity on his or her own property, as innocent or private as it might have been.

What is worse is the retention of these recordings, which could be made public, disseminated to a specific audience or kept for personal reasons without the knowledge of those who had been recorded.

This private member's bill is drafted to capture those situations where the act of making or attempting to make a visual recording, or the publication, attempted publication or possession of the recorded material, whether made deliberately or recklessly, are made illegal, regardless of the intentions of the person recording and without the need for the crown to prove that the victim was harassed, fearful or had the use or enjoyment of his or her property interfered with in any way.

People deserve the opportunity to use and enjoy their own home and property, perhaps their last bastion of privacy, and conduct themselves as they wish without concerns that any of it is being recorded so long as the conduct is not criminal in nature.

I hope that when the bill comes before the House I can count on the support of all members of this place.

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

● (1535)

[Translation]

### INDUSTRIAL ALLIANCE PACIFIC GENERAL INSURANCE CORPORATION CONTINUATION ACT

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe that you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, Bill S-1002, An Act to authorize the Industrial Alliance Pacific General Insurance Corporation to apply to be continued as a body corporate under the laws of Quebec, be deemed to have been reported favourably by the Examiner of Petitions pursuant to Standing Order 133(3); and that the bill be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole, deemed considered in Committee of the Whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage and deemed read a third time and passed.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, considered in committee of the whole, reported without amendment, concurred in, read the third time and passed)

\* \* \*

[English]

### PETITIONS

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from people all across Canada who are concerned with the proposed mega-quarry in Melancthon Township in Dufferin County, Ontario, which would be the largest open-pit quarry in Canada at over 2,300 acres.

The petitioners are concerned about a number of items, one of which is that the proposed mega-quarry would put at risk the drinking water of over one million Canadians.

The petitioners ask that the Government of Canada conduct an environmental assessment under the authority of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act on the proposed Highland Companies' mega-quarry development.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table in the House a petition from Albertans supporting the Canadian interfaith call for leadership action on climate change.

*Routine Proceedings*

The petitioners call on Parliament, in the spirit of global solidarity, to take collective action by signing a binding international treaty to maintain our temperature at 2°C; demonstrating national responsibility by committing to national carbon emission targets, which I will remind the House our country signed on a year ago to do exactly that, and a national renewable energy policy to achieve sustainability; implementing climate justice by playing constructive roles in the design of the green climate fund under the UN governance; and contributing public funds to assist the poorest and most affected countries to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

• (1540)

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present two petitions today.

The first petition is with regard to CCSVI. Over 15,000 procedures have been undertaken worldwide. Dr. Petrov reported that 62% of his 461 MS patients showed a functional improvement after treatment. Dr. Mehta studied 150 patients who showed more than a 25% increase in quality of life scores a year after the procedure as measured by physiatrists who were unaware that the procedure had taken place. In Britain, Dr. Gilhooly reported that his 125 patients reported the following improvements: fatigue, 60%; brain fuzziness, 60%; mobility, 48%.

The petitioners call 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.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my second petition is with regard to monitoring ozone. Surface measurements and satellite observations confirm that the ozone layer, which is vital to life on Earth, is recovering because CFCs are going down, but ozone is impacted by many factors, including climate change and chemicals. Therefore, the ozone story is not over; it is evolving. Therefore, we must monitor ozone to ensure there are no surprises, such as this year's two million square kilometre Arctic ozone hole.

The petitioners call upon the Minister of the Environment to develop a plan to ensure the integrity of the ozone monitoring program and commission a report to assess the adequacy of Canadian contributions to the global observing system for climate in support of the UNFCCC.

[Translation]

## BOTTLED WATER

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

[English]

I am pleased to present my first petition, which is presented on behalf of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, B.C./Yukon Region. This petition is signed by over 1,200 from five parishes in the Nelson diocese, as well as concerned citizens from Victoria.

The petitioners call on the federal government to ban the purchase of bottled water in federal institutions wherever potable water is available. They use, as a precedent, the fact that the Province of Nova Scotia and many Canadian cities have banned bottled water in their government buildings.

I would like to especially congratulate Mr. Barry Nelson and others of the Nelson diocese for their efforts in organizing this petition.

## CANADA POST

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I have is from concerned citizens all over British Columbia with regard to our post office.

The petitioners say that Canada Post has announced that it will remove mail processing from local cities, towns and communities in British Columbia and send it to Vancouver. They say that this will result in a reduction of service and the loss of good-paying jobs, which will negatively affect communities already hit hard by the economic recession, and I have seen that in communities I serve.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to ensure that Canada Post does the following: that it support local economies by preserving local jobs and maintaining mail processing and post offices in local cities, towns and communities throughout the province of British Columbia, and that prior to making any changes to its mail processing and transportation, it conduct a thorough in-depth study into the service and economic impact on local communities.

## SERVICE CANADA

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been asked to present a petition on behalf of the EI claims processing centre in Prince Edward Island. This is the only claims processing centre in Prince Edward Island, located in Brudenell in the federal riding of Cardigan.

The petitioners of the riding of Cardigan, province of Prince Edward Island, draw the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that the claims processing centre in Brudenell, Prince Edward Island, is the only employment insurance claim processing centre on Prince Edward Island and that it has a record of the highest percentile in all of Canada for processing and accuracy over a number of years and provides an economic benefit to the surrounding communities through the payroll of over 30 employees.

Therefore, they request the House of Commons to direct the Government of Canada to allow the claims processing centre in Brudenell, Prince Edward Island, to continue to remain and provide the excellent service, as in the past, and ensure that there is not a negative impact on the surrounding communities.

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1545)

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have another petition to present today, signed by people primarily from the Saskatoon area of Saskatchewan, but other places as well.

The petitioners express their concern about the situation of those Canadians who suffer from chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency and multiple sclerosis at the same time.

The petitioners call upon the Minister of Health to consult experts who are thoroughly familiar with the experience of these two diseases. They urge the Minister of Health to proceed urgently with phase III clinical trials and to follow up on the treatment and life experience of these patients so a more thorough history can be accumulated with respect to the kinds of difficulties they suffer.

[Translation]

## BILL C-10

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to rise today to present three petitions.

The first is a petition on Bill C-10 that was signed by Canadians across the country.

[English]

The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that the omnibus crime bill currently bundles together too many pieces of unrelated legislation, some of which makes sense and some of which does not, and that there is a big problem with implementation because Ontario and Quebec may refuse to pay for the costs of some measures that will be downloaded to them.

The petitioners call on Parliament to separate Bill C-10 into its pieces and allow members to vote on each piece separately. I understand that the bill has already passed, but I wish to draw the attention of the House to Canadians who are concerned with its passage.

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have another petition related to C-10.

The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House to flaws in the omnibus crime bill, such as mandatory sentencing, which would turn youth offenders into hardened criminals and prisons into warehouses for the poor, the mentally ill and those addicted to drugs. As well, it is uncosted and unfair to the provinces that have to pay the costs.

## PRISON FARMS

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a third petition related to the prison farms. The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that many prisoners are not receiving the education or rehabilitation and training programs that are mandated to be provided by Correctional Service Canada. The omnibus crime bill that was just passed in the House will crowd prisons, exacerbating these problems.

Before the recent closure of the prison farms, they were providing an effective rehabilitation program through work that supplied food to Correctional Service Canada inmates.

The petitioners call on Parliament to restore and expand the prison farm program and ensure that Correctional Service Canada can fulfill its mandate to provide rehabilitation programs for inmates.

## VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of several residents of British Columbia concerned about the announced and anticipated cuts in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The petitioners raise the issues of the \$226 million cuts to Veterans Affairs, which have already been announced; the anticipated impact of further cuts as a result of the strategic and operating review; and the fact that 500 jobs are now in play. They express concerns over the ability of the department to service our veterans in that environment.

They specifically call for the Government of Canada to restore funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 190 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings*

[Text]

**Question No. 190—Mr. Frank Valeriote:**

With regard to the Rural Secretariat (RS) and the Co-operatives Secretariat (CS): (a) what is the total number, assigned at each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, of (i) full-time employees, (ii) part-time employees, (iii) contract employees, (iv) temporary employees; (b) for the government's response to each part of (a), (i) what are the different occupational groups and levels assigned at each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, (ii) how many employees are in each of the occupational groups and levels assigned at each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (c) what is the breakdown of the total number of employees assigned at each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012 who work in (i) the departmental headquarters in Ottawa, (ii) regional offices across Canada, (iii) sub-regional offices across Canada, (iv) district offices across Canada; (d) what is the total number of full-time, part-time and contract employees assigned to each program since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (e) how many contracts have been signed by the government to provide goods and services to each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (f) for the government's response to part (d), (i) which companies were awarded contracts to provide goods and services to each of the Secretariats, (ii) what were the goods and services provided for each contract, (iii) what were the amounts of each of the contracts, (iv) how many contracts were awarded without a competitive solicitation of bids; (g) what is the annual budget for each of the Secretariats for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (h) what are the total expenditure costs, broken down by type, for each fiscal year since 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (i) for each of the fiscal years from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, what was the total amount of federal funding allocated by each Secretariat (i) across Canada as a whole, (ii) broken down by province and territory, (iii) broken down by municipality, (iv) broken down by electoral district, (v) broken down by the Statistics Canada Postal Code Federal Ridings File (PCFRF), (vi) broken down by the "forward sortation area" (FSA) as defined by Canada Post, (vii) broken down by type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments, program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures; (j) for each of the fiscal years from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, what is the total number of agencies, organizations and individuals that applied for federal funding at each of the Secretariats (i) across Canada as a whole, (ii) broken down by province and territory, (iii) broken down by municipality, (iv) broken down by electoral district, (v) broken down by the PCFRF, (vi) broken down by the FSA, (vii) broken down by type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments, program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures; (k) for each of the fiscal years from 2001-2002 to 2011-2012, what was the total number of agencies, organizations and individuals to which federal funding was allocated from each of the Secretariats (i) across Canada as a whole, (ii) broken down by province and territory, (iii) broken down by municipality, (iv) broken down by electoral district, (v) broken down by the PCFRF, (vi) broken down by the FSA, (vii) broken down by type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments, program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures; (l) for each of the fiscal years from 2001-2002 to 2011-2012, what was the total number of agencies, organizations and individuals whose applications for federal funding were rejected by each of the Secretariats, (i) across Canada as a whole, (ii) broken down by province and territory, (iii) broken down by municipality, (iv) broken down by electoral district, (v) broken down by the PCFRF, (vi) broken down by the FSA, (vii) broken down by type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments, program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures; (m) for each of those agencies, organizations and individuals receiving funding as per the response to part (k), what are the names of the agencies, organizations and individuals who received funding in any fiscal year that was less than the total funding received by that same agency, organization and individual in the previous fiscal year, including, for each such agency, organization or individual, (i) the municipality, town, or city in which the agency, organization or individual is located, (ii) the electoral district location of the agency, organization or individual, (iii) the address of the agency, organization or individual, (iv) the FSA of the agency, organization or individual, (v) the total amount of funding allocated to the agency, organization or individual in each fiscal year from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, (vi) the type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments,

program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures allocated to the agency, organization or individual in each fiscal year from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (n) for each of those agencies, organizations and individuals whose applications for funding were rejected as per the response (l), what are the names of the agencies, organizations and individuals that had received funding in a previous fiscal year, including, for each such agency, organization or individual (i) the municipality, town, or city in which the agency, organization or individual is situated, (ii) the electoral district location of the agency, organization or individual, (iii) the address of the agency, organization or individual, (iv) the FSA of the agency, organization or individual, (v) the total amount of funding allocated to the agency, organization or individual in each fiscal year from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012, (vi) the type of funding or expenditure, including grants over \$25,000, grants under \$25,000, contributions over \$25,000, contributions under \$25,000, contracts over \$10,000, contracts under \$10,000, transfer payments, program expenditures, operating expenditures, and capital expenditures allocated to the agency, organization and individual in each fiscal year from 2004-2005 to 2011-2012; (o) what are the criteria used by the government to evaluate applications by agencies, organizations and individuals for (i) grants over \$25,000, (ii) grants under \$25,000, (iii) contributions over \$25,000, (iv) contributions under \$25,000, (v) contracts over \$10,000, (vi) contracts under \$10,000, (vii) transfer payments, (viii) program expenditures, (ix) operating expenditures, (x) capital expenditures; (p) how have the criteria listed in response to (o) changed since 2006; (q) what is the process by which applications are evaluated for (i) grants over \$25,000, (ii) grants under \$25,000, (iii) contributions over \$25,000, (iv) contributions under \$25,000, (v) contracts over \$10,000, (vi) contracts under \$10,000, (vii) transfer payments, (viii) program expenditures, (ix) operating expenditures, (x) capital expenditures; and (r) how has the process described in response to (q) changed since 2006?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE**

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bill: S-4, An Act to amend the Railway Safety Act and to make consequential amendments to the Canada Transportation Act.

*Government Orders*

● (1550)

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## DECORUM IN THE HOUSE

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to make very clear my intentions with my point of order. I have already committed that I will not make gestures according to your ruling. I have already committed to dedicating myself to the safety of Canadians and especially against violence against women. I also want to make it very clear that I understand that many victims of violence and people who fear violence could be offended by those gestures and I am sorry if they were.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for his further statements on that matter.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**FAIR REPRESENTATION ACT**

## BILL C-20—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC)** moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-20, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act and the Canada Elections Act, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at report stage of the Bill and one sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said Bill; and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government orders on the day allotted to the consideration at report stage and on the day allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

**The Speaker:** There will now be a 30-minute question period. Once again, I would like to remind members that members of the opposition will get preference from the Chair in terms of recognizing them for this time.

The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

**Mr. Joe Comartin (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are now at a stage where this has become almost farcical. It would be farcical if it were not so serious in terms of undermining a basic democratic process, which is the right of parliamentarians to have a full and complete debate on issues that confront the country, and the ability of citizens in this country to watch that debate and take part in it across the country.

I just want to recite these facts. The Conservative government has used time allocation or closure 12 times since the election, nine times since the House came back in September. It has used closure on seven different bills since the election, six since September. It has used time allocation 12 times in 62 sitting days, 9 times in the last 48 sitting days.

It is important to draw this into the historical context. The worst that we ever had before this was the Liberal government in the 2000-2004 Parliament. At that point, the Liberals took 122 days before

they used closure or time allocation nine times in that one period. We are way beyond that.

How many more times will we have to put up with this undemocratic process?

**Hon. Tim Uppal (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is very important that we pass the fair representation act as soon as possible. This is a commitment by the government. Even the Chief Electoral Officer, who said at committee in November regarding the passing of the bill:

The best date, in our mind, would be before the commissions are set up in February. Otherwise, commissions will have to start their work, the legislation will come into place later on, and they will have to restart again. That may, of course, generate additional costs, but also quite a bit of confusion, depending on what time the legislation comes into place.

That is the Chief Electoral Officer talking about why it is so important that we pass the fair representation act as soon as possible.

● (1555)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians should be concerned in the sense that this is now becoming standard procedure for the Conservative majority government. It does not respect the importance of debate and has demonstrated that time and time again.

The minister says the legislation is really important. We have heard that line on every piece of legislation that the government has brought forward. The government has to allow debate to occur inside this chamber. Time and time again the government has introduced time allocation which does not afford members of this chamber, whether they are government backbenchers or members of the opposition, time to participate and engage in the flawed legislation that is being brought forward. A good example of that is the Canadian Wheat Board legislation about which the Federal Court today said the government broke the law.

Why has the government decided to use time allocation almost as a standard procedure nowadays in order to pass its legislation? Why has it given up on true democracy within this chamber?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to have good debate in the House, and on this legislation there has been great debate in the House. I thank members of the opposition for contributing to that debate.

We have had good discussions at committee. It was my pleasure to be at committee to answer questions there. The Chief Electoral Officer appeared at committee to talk about the bill. Other experts and witnesses were at committee. We debated the bill again here yesterday. There has been debate.

It is time to move forward and allow Canadians to have those extra seats, to have fair representation in the House of Commons. We need to put this to a vote, so we have this in place before Christmas and before the electoral commissions begin their work in February.

*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues said earlier, this way of doing things is starting to become fairly routine. The time when we actually felt as though we all had a say is over. With this government, the time when all those who had the desire, the need and the right to speak on behalf of their constituents—who elected them democratically—were able to have their say is basically a thing of the past. Now that the Conservatives have a majority and know full well that the numbers are on their side when it comes to votes, they do not give the other side, the various opposition parties, or even their own members enough time to discuss the bills in question. We are not talking about small bills. Here we are talking about a major change to the distribution of seats.

I would like to give the minister the opportunity to once again explain or to provide clarification. When he says that it is the Chief Electoral Officer who said that this must be done quickly, he is misleading the House a little. This is true only if we want this legislation to be in place by 2015. So, this is not an urgent issue. It is a matter of doing the job right.

I would like the minister to tell us that it is not the Chief Electoral Officer who is insisting that this be done quickly. It must be done quickly only if we want these changes to take effect by the next election in 2015.

[*English*]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, as I was having my consultations across the country, I heard from Canadians, who are under-represented in Alberta, B.C. and Ontario, who believe they deserve to have fair representation. It is only fair that to the greatest extent possible every Canadian vote should have equal weight. They want this equal weight, this fairness at the next voting opportunity, not eight years from now.

We are working on a timeline of February. The Chief Electoral Officer himself has said that in order to have that process in place, and in order to stay away from duplication of the process, we need to have this bill passed as soon as possible. We are asking the opposition to at least follow through on what the Chief Electoral Officer has said.

● (1600)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we continue with questions, I see there are a number of members who wish to put questions, so I would ask members to confine their questions to around one minute if they can.

The hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have been debating this matter now for over four years. In fact, the first iteration of this bill was Bill C-22, an act to amend the Constitution Act, which was introduced by the then House leader, the current House leader, on November 14, 2007. That was over four years ago.

Then another bill was introduced on April 1, 2010, almost two years ago. That was Bill C-12. This is the third bill that has been introduced on this subject matter. It has been over four years now that we have had debate on this issue. We now need to pass this so we can get these changes in place before the next election to ensure

that visible minorities are proportionately represented in this House in the rapidly growing regions of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his work on the bill and on this issue of democratic reform itself. It is very important that those Canadians who are under-represented across the country receive fair representation. Our plan, which is fair and principled, brings every Canadian closer to representation by population.

He mentioned visible minorities and new Canadians. They actually live in those areas that are most under-represented because those are the areas that have the most growth. It is only fair that we move forward, pass this legislation, and give those Canadians fairness. They deserve, like all Canadians, to have their vote count.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government presented such bad bills in the past that it now wants to rush this one through, so this argument that we discussed other bills before is a very weak one. The question is, why has the government been so slow to table the bill?

Now it says it does not have time to properly debate the bill because we need to be on time for 2015. I had been told in the briefing that I received, and I thank the minister for that, that there were transitional measures that would allow us to debate longer, including into February, and it would not put in danger the possibility of being ready for 2015.

I know why the government is rushing. The government knows that Canadians do not want more politicians, and this more politicians bill would create a backlash from Canadians as they realize that the government would impose on them 30 more seats for no valid reason. There is proportionate representation in the House with 308 members of Parliament.

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, there has been a great deal of debate on this issue.

We have heard the government's proposal, which is fair, principled and balanced. We have heard proposals from the NDP. We have heard proposals from the Liberals which, as mentioned by the hon. member, would actually pick winners and losers, and pit one part of the country against the other. It would actually hurt rural Canadians more than anyone else, and that is why we need to move forward with this legislation as soon as possible.

What is the danger of delaying this legislation? The Chief Electoral Officer has said, "Imagine if the commissions began their work and held public hearings based on a certain formula, and then had to start all over and hold new consultations".

It would probably cause some confusion among Canadian voters. We can not allow that duplication of work to happen. We need to pass this as soon as possible.



*Government Orders*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, once again today, this Conservative government's behaviour is pathetic. What was once supposed to be an exception is becoming the norm. For the ninth time this fall, the government is limiting time for debate in the House. It is a sign of contempt for parliamentarians, democracy, this institution, our debates and Parliament. The Conservatives are systematically preventing parliamentarians from speaking and debating because they do not want to listen.

They claim that it is urgent. What is urgent is helping people in Attawapiskat, the unemployed, people who are losing their jobs and people who are going to food banks on Christmas Eve. Bill C-20 addresses a serious issue that will change this House, but it is not urgent. The government should take time to hold debates and listen to everyone.

Why is this government incapable of moving its bills through the House without limiting debate?

•(1605)

[*English*]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked about some very important issues. He talked about the economy. Yes, that is very important and that continues to be this government's top priority. He talked about Attawapiskat. There are so many issues that this government needs to deal with and that is why we have debated this issue.

I thank the opposition for the debate. There has been very good debate on this issue. We have worked at committee on this bill. We have discussed it there, and now it is time to put this bill to a vote so we can get the commission to begin its work.

The hon. member is right, we do not need to spend more time on this issue. We need to vote on it and get it passed.

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about any further delay on the bill.

I come from a riding where I represent essentially the average number of constituents, approximately 90,000 constituents. It is actually manageable in that sense, but my concern really is for those who have constituencies where there are 150,000 or more individuals. Some even have 200,000.

To delay this any further is not only doing an injustice to the people representing these constituents but the constituents themselves. I would urge the Minister of State for Democratic Reform to move the bill along as quickly as possible, so that each voter's interest is represented properly, at least in time for the next election.

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the minister is absolutely correct that we need to move this legislation forward as soon as possible.

Again, the Chief Electoral Officer said, "If there are any further delays, we risk having the commissions restart their work".

By statute, the commissions need to start their work by February. We need to get the bill passed through the House and allow the commissions to start their work. We cannot allow the commissions to redo their work all over again.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister quotes the Chief Electoral Officer, but the Chief Electoral Officer did not say this bill must be passed.

The reality is we have had very principled arguments from the New Democratic Party about the fundamental nature of the Canadian federation and the need to ensure that we maintain the proportionality of the province of Quebec in forming the foundation for our nation building exercise that we should be engaged in.

We have the Liberals who want to reduce the number of seats in my province and other provinces, which is a totally different idea, and we have this arbitrary formula that the government has put in.

Why is the minister not taking this seriously enough to ensure that this full debate gets out there because it is fundamental to the future of a united Canada? We are the ones who have been bringing that forward day after day in this debate. Does the minister want to shut that down and allow this to go forward without that being resolved?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking why we do not support the NDP plan. The fact is that the NDP has brought forward no numbers. The NDP is being very secretive of what its numbers are. How many seats would the NDP add to the provinces? That party is not telling Canadians. That is one reason we will not support it.

The NDP plan would actually trigger constitutional talks and long drawn-out constitutional battles. That is another reason we will not support that plan.

The third reason is the NDP plan uses out-of-date figures. It uses figures that are not even relevant at this time.

There are many reasons that we do not support the NDP plan. We have a plan that is fair for all provinces. It is a principled plan. It would bring every Canadian closer to representation by population. Let us get this plan passed.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, considering what we are seeing here today, I would suggest to the Minister of State for Democratic Reform that he change his title to "minister for undemocratic reform". As one hon. colleague said earlier, nine time allocation and closure motions have been moved since this session began, in order to shut down debate in this House. This is a rather delicate subject, because it has to do with the foundations on which Canada was built.

I am a sovereignist and I want Quebec to become a sovereign country. Nevertheless, federalists and sovereignists alike in the Quebec National Assembly unanimously agree that Quebec's political weight must not be decreased. The Conservatives are imposing a gag order here in order to speed things up. As other members have already said, the Conservatives' only goal is to have more seats because they believe that their party will represent those regions.

Why are they in such a hurry to disregard the wishes of Quebec and decrease its political weight? I do not understand why the minister is so unwilling to listen to the members of this House or of Quebec's National Assembly.

*Government Orders*

•(1610)

[English]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, what Quebecers are asking for and what all Canadians are asking for is fairness. When this bill is implemented, Quebec will have 23% of the population and 23% of the seats in the House of Commons. That is fair.

The basis of this formula is to bring every province closer to representation by population, to bring every Canadian closer to representation by population. It is a principled formula. It makes sense. It is time that we passed it. It is time that we voted on it, in order to allow the commissions to do their work.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of State for Democratic Reform in putting forward the bill labelled a bill to reform some laws that deal with democracy, sees the irony in using the most undemocratic of tools to accelerate the debate on a very complex issue. I have spoken to constituents about it. They do not understand the intricacies of it. They understand there are different possibilities, different solutions. Our party has put one forward that has its merits, so it has been reported as such by experts in the field.

Does the Minister of State for Democratic Reform not feel a bit of shame about the irony of invoking the least democratic measure to accelerate debate on something when it should not be?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, it is important to have debate in this place. We have actually had very good debate on this bill.

The fact of the matter is we have been talking about representation in the House of Commons for four years. On this bill itself, we have had debate. It has been to committee. We have had good work in committee from members on all sides and we have had good debate. We have had proposals from the other parties, the Liberal proposal and the NDP proposal. We have discussed those proposals. It is now time that we voted on the bill.

[Translation]

**Ms. Charmaine Borg (Terrebonne—Blainville, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I represent a riding that has a higher than average number of constituents. In response to the comments made by the Minister of Public Safety, I would be happy to stay here to share my opinion and take part in a debate on this issue, because the Conservatives are in the process of reducing Quebec's political weight. Although I represent a larger number of constituents than average, I would be pleased to continue the debate for my riding. I was not here during the past four years when this issue was being debated. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the matter further.

[English]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talks about the fact that she would be happy to stay in this place and debate this issue and maybe talk about this for a long time. The fact of the matter is this is not about her, nor is it about me. It is not about us. It is about Canadians who are under-represented because of the strong growth in population in certain provinces, those being Alberta, B.C. and Ontario. Those Canadians are under-represented because of population growth. New Canadians and visible minorities are under-represented because of where they are and the population growth in that area.

It is fair to bring more seats into the House of Commons to address this under-representation. It is a principled formula. It is fair for all provinces. Every Canadian will be brought closer to representation by population.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have a chance to ask the Minister of State for Democratic Reform a question.

I find it ironic to see him rise here in the House so many times to justify a time allocation motion to limit debate in this House, which I consider to be undemocratic. It is surprising, coming from him.

My question is more general and not just about the urgency of this particular bill. Generally speaking, does he think using this time allocation motion is a democratic tool that should be used more often in this House? Do the government and the Minister of State for Democratic Reform plan to make more use of this type of motion, which I consider to be undemocratic?

[English]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, debating an issue is important to democracy; there is no doubt about it. We have done that on this bill. What else is important is voting on the issue. That is a very important part of democracy. It is time to vote on this bill. We have debated this issue. We have debated it for a long time and it is now time to vote on it.

•(1615)

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I both represent parts of Alberta. I represent one of the most populated constituencies in this country and the most populated in the province of Alberta. What my constituents are telling me is there is a necessity to have their representation be equal to those in other parts of the country. A Liberal colleague stated that there is no valid reason to move forward with this legislation. My constituents take incredible offence to that. They believe that they are a valid reason to move forward with this legislation.

I would ask the minister, with regard to this time allocation motion, what would be the effect of delaying this legislation until next year or the year after, and continuing the debate on this issue when it has been debated for years? What effect would it have in the next election? What effect might it have in terms of my constituents' ability to be represented more closely to the population that is in my riding?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the member from my home province of Alberta has asked a very important question.

*Government Orders*

He is quite right. People in Alberta, B.C. and Ontario deserve to the greatest extent possible to have their vote be equal to that of anyone else in Canada. To delay this bill would result in duplication of work by the independent non-partisan commissions. They are going to begin their work in February, regardless of this bill. Even the Chief Electoral Officer has said that it would duplicate their work if we stalled this bill. It is very important that we move forward so that they do not duplicate their work.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the government is in such a rush to have more members come into Parliament when members of Parliament come in here to do their job and they are told to sit down and shut up. There have been nine time allocation motions, and we are told that we are interfering. The Conservatives' idea of parliamentary democracy is they have a majority and why are we standing in their way.

I represent a region in northern Ontario and northern Ontario would most likely lose a seat. Yet Saskatchewan, with 68,000 per riding, would keep seats, and the Maritimes, with its proportionality, would not lose. The Conservatives are targeting so that my region would lose a seat.

Why is it that we cannot stand in this House and represent our constituents and do our rightful job, which is to bring forward their concerns about the proportionality of this House and about fair representation in this House? That is my job. That is what we were sent here to do. That is what we are here to do, but when we do it, the government gets its back up and tries to shut down debate. It does it time and again. Why even have this place open if the Conservatives are not listening to debate?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I agree that it is very important to have debate on this bill. We have debated this bill. We have discussed this bill, or some version of this bill or the general idea of representation in this House for four years. This bill has been debated. It has been to committee. Witnesses have appeared before committee. I have been very pleased to go in front of the committee and answer questions. The bill has come back to this House. We have debated this bill again. At some point we need to make a decision and move forward. That point is now.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the minister when he said that this bill is about Canadians, but if he actually consulted with Canadians, I believe that he would find that a vast majority—not a slight majority, but a vast majority of Canadians—do not want more members of Parliament.

The Liberal Party has put forward a proposal that would retain the House at 308 seats. The Conservatives want to increase the number by 30. We can still accomplish everything the government wants to accomplish by having 308 seats.

I would ultimately argue that the debate needs to continue, because at one time the Prime Minister of Canada advocated for a reduction in the number of members of Parliament. He believed that Canada only needed 265 members.

When there are so many ideas out there, and we are still waiting for the NDP to table what its idea is, why limit the debate and prevent that dialogue from occurring? That dialogue would be in the

best interests of Canadians, something which he said he would like to see happen.

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, what is in the best interests of Canadians is not to follow through on the Liberal plan.

The member talked about the Liberal plan. That plan basically picks winners and losers, and pits one part of the country against the other. The losers under the Liberal plan would be Quebec, which would lose three seats, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, which would lose seats, and Newfoundland and Labrador, which would lose seats. That is not a plan that we support.

We committed in the campaign that we would maintain the seats of the smaller and slower growing provinces. We committed that our formula would be fair for all provinces. That is what we are moving forward on.

• (1620)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the minister on one point, and the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay expressed it quite well. Yes, we are here to represent our constituents; however, right now, the government is preventing us from representing them and speaking on their behalf.

This bill ignores certain realities and is really out of touch with the realities in our regions. I have the impression that the Conservative government does not realize just how toxic this attitude is for the future of our country, and here, we are indeed talking about the future.

Why does the government not recognize the role of parliamentarians? Why does it not recognize the role of the media, who study what is happening in the House and explain it to Canadians? Bill after bill, members are not being given the opportunity to study legislation in sufficient depth. On our side, we are not able to examine bills as much as we would like.

How does the government expect us to be able to do our work? How does it expect the media to be able to do its work? Do the Conservatives believe in our democracy? Do they believe in the work of the media and parliamentarians? Do they believe in the judgment of our fellow Canadians? The next election will be held in four years. These boundaries will apply only four years from now. Why the rush? We have four years to debate this issue.

[*English*]

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, the member asked about why there is urgency now.

The fact is that the independent non-partisan commissions will begin their work in February regardless of what we do. If this bill is not passed, they will have to redo all of their work when it does pass. That is why it is important that we pass this bill, so that we do not have duplication of process. It is a waste of time. It is a waste of money.

We have debated this bill. We have studied this bill. Now it is time to vote on this bill.

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to add my voice to the ironic debate we are having.

*Government Orders*

At the very time the government is moving to add more parliamentarians, the current parliamentarians are being stopped from having fair and open debate.

Let us talk about democracy. Democracy is not about moving time allocation to ram an agenda through within a very short timeframe. Democracy is not about inviting more MPs into this House so they can sit here at great expense only to be muzzled and not given the opportunity to speak.

I ask the minister, on this legislation which is all about the democratic process, why is the government denigrating the parliamentary democracy that we have? Why is the government using a time allocation motion to stop debate on such a fundamental issue that will change the nature of this Parliament?

**Hon. Tim Uppal:** Mr. Speaker, let us talk about democracy. Really, it is not about us, but about the people who live in the fastest-growing provinces, including her province and those living in her riding.

I have been to the member's riding. It is a great part of the country. There are many new Canadians and many visible minorities who are under-represented. In a good democracy, their vote should count to the greatest extent possible, just as much as anyone else's in any other part of the country. The people in her riding deserve this bill to be passed.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Order, please. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, Status of Women.

[*English*]

It is now my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

[*Translation*]

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 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.

● (1705)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 99*)

## YEAS

## Members

Adams	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Bateman	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
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	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Hoepfner
James	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKenzie
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Menzies	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
O'Neill Gordon	Oda
Oliver	Opitz
Payne	Penashue
Poilievre	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)	

## Government Orders

## SENATE REFORM ACT

Weston (Saint John)  
Williamson  
Woodworth  
Young (Oakville)  
Zimmer— 147

Wilks  
Wong  
Yelich  
Young (Vancouver South)

## NAYS

## Members

Allen (Welland)  
Angus  
Aubin  
Bélangier  
Bennett  
Blanchette  
Boivin  
Boulerice  
Brisson  
Byrne  
Casey  
Charlton  
Choquette  
Christopherson  
Coderre  
Côté  
Crowder  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
Day  
Dionne Labelle  
Doré Lefebvre  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Dusseau  
Foote  
Freeman  
Garneau  
Genest  
Giguère  
Goodale  
Grogulé  
Harris (St. John's East)  
Hyer  
Julian  
Lamoureux  
Larose  
Laverdière  
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)  
MacAulay  
Marston  
Masse  
McCallum  
Michaud  
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)  
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
Nantel  
Nunez-Melo  
Papillon  
Perreault  
Quach  
Rafferty  
Regan  
Saganash  
Savoie  
Sellah  
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)  
Sims (Newton—North Delta)  
Sitsabaiesan  
Stewart  
Sullivan  
Toone  
Trudeau  
Valeriotte— 121

Andrews  
Atamanenko  
Ayala  
Bellavance  
Benskin  
Blanchette-Lamothe  
Borg  
Brahmi  
Brosseau  
Caron  
Cash  
Chicoine  
Chow  
Cleary  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cuzner  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Dion  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Eyking  
Fortin  
Fry  
Garrison  
Genest-Jourdain  
Godin  
Gravelle  
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)  
Hsu  
Jacob  
Kellway  
Lapointe  
Latendresse  
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)  
Leslie  
Mai  
Martin  
Mathysen  
McGuinty  
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)  
Murray  
Nicholls  
Pacetti  
Patry  
Pilon  
Rae  
Raynault  
Rousseau  
Sandhu  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
St-Denis  
Stoffer  
Thibeault  
Tremblay  
Turnel

## PAIRED

Nil

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

I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings on the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

The House resumed from November 22 consideration of the motion that Bill C-7, An Act respecting the selection of senators and amending the Constitution Act, 1867 in respect of Senate term limits, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** When we last finished debate on Bill C-7, the hon. member for Welland had five minutes remaining in the questions and comments period.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Sherbrooke.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseau (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a rather simple question for my colleague. What does he think about the government, which wants to reform the Senate, but in a roundabout way? The government is proposing that we hold provincial elections, but the Prime Minister will not be required to appoint the successful candidates from these elections. I wonder what my colleague thinks about the Conservatives' misguided application of democratic reform of the Senate.

[English]

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, they could have saved the paper and all those trees and simply closed the place. It would have been simple: one act, and one act alone, and then wish them a merry Christmas. On this side, I think we would probably sponsor the party. Being a Scotsman, I know we are seen as being tight, but I would probably put up a few bucks for a few of those bubbly pops if that would be the end of the Senate. We could proclaim that we had done something that Canadians wanted us to do since 60%-plus of Canadians are saying that it is time for the senators to go.

We should not be trying to play around with whether we should elect some. In fact, we would not elect them. If the provinces want to have an election, they can, but there is no guarantee that their selection will get appointed. What is the point? Why would we put someone through the tortures, which we all know well as elected officials, of trying to get elected, then get elected and find out that he or she cannot be a senator because the Prime Minister does not like him or her? It would still be an appointment process. It is still at the whim of the Prime Minister to send the person there. Of course, when people are sent there, they get to stay until age 75. It is not a question of taking a senator out if he or she is not doing a good job. At the end of the day, a senator can stay until age 75.

In the spirit of Christmas, I forgive them for all the things they have done wrong, but now it is time for them to go.

● (1710)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I question the member when he says that over 60% of the people want to see the Canadian Senate abolished. I do not buy that. I understand that a majority of Canadians do see value in having a Senate. There is no doubt that many people would argue that there needs to be reform within the Senate, but they see some value in it.

Many people who live in western Canada recognize that part of that value could be through a possible appointment in which individuals who bring forward certain regional interests would be appointed. Having a valued Senate could receive support.

*Government Orders*

If the majority of Canadians agreed with that, would the member then agree that the NDP are on the wrong side of the issue? If the majority of Canadians want to have a Senate, would the NDP still oppose it?

**Mr. Malcolm Allen:** Mr. Speaker, the only value the Senate has is for the Conservative Party and Liberal Party is as a place for their bag people to go and collect money for them. That is the value of the Senate, none other than that. The value of it is for those parties to put their own folks in the other chamber to phone and petition for money for the Liberal Party or Conservative Party.

There is no value in the Senate. My friend is wrong. He ought to look at the reports and read the polls. The majority of Canadians have said that it is time for the Senate to go.

What we say is, “Have a merry Christmas”, and then we will roll up the red carpet, send them on their way and watch them collect their pension, unless, of course, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party would like to be generous and help the Canadian public pay the pensions that they gave the crew down at the far end. If they are willing to help the Canadian public to do that, then the Canadian public would probably appreciate it.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is a tough act to follow, believe me.

I am pleased to rise here today to speak to An Act respecting the selection of senators and amending the Constitution Act, 1867 in respect of Senate term limits. I admit that the issue of the Senate is one that may seem straightforward at first, but it must nevertheless be carefully analyzed, because we are wading into constitutional waters, as some would say, and into muddy waters, as others would say.

I can think of one prime minister who talked about abolishing the Senate for quite some time and then started talking about an elected Senate. Once he came to power, he suddenly changed his tune and decided to do the same thing as the previous Liberal governments—he started giving Senate appointments to political friends, fundraisers, and as my hon. colleague from Welland so aptly put it, people who work behind the scenes, all paid for by taxpayers.

When I began my legal studies and was studying constitutional law, the issue of the Senate of Canada came up. I had the great pleasure of taking classes taught by none other than the great Senator Beaudoin himself—not necessarily great in height, but great in terms of eminence. He was not a Conservative senator when he was teaching my classes. He taught us about the Canadian parliamentary system.

I grew up thinking that the Senate was indeed what had always been called “a chamber of independent sober second thought”. That title always impressed me. The title is even longer in French: “lieu de la réflexion indépendante, sereine et attentive au sein de la démocratie parlementaire canadienne”. I was so naive that I believed that for a very long time. I thought we had a parliament made up of MPs elected by the public to debate the issues, represent their constituents and engage in dialogue, which might be vigorous but is always supposed to be respectful.

Since then, I have learned that Canadian democracy is not all that healthy. When we want to talk, we end up being silenced. There are time allocation motions. That is a new expression I have heard a lot in the House the past few months.

While I was learning about the wonderful Canadian system, I learned that the Senate was a place free from any influence, a body that would disregard partisan politics and work together to examine issues. I learned that the Senate conducted in-depth studies of bills once they passed all the stages in the House and in committee.

I have met senators whom I admire a lot. They are strong people, people with whom you can have extremely interesting and deep conversations. Unfortunately, the very politicized and partisan side of the system seems to have drifted down the hall to that sacrosanct chamber, where we do not often have the right to enter, except on rare occasions, and even then, only in the hall. In any case, we do not go in very far.

As co-chair—with a colleague from the Senate—of the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations, I learned that no matter where it goes, the Senate always has priority over the House of Commons, the people's house.

Partisan appointments have always tainted the quality of the Senate. Once people were appointed, they were there until the age of 75. We saw Senate reports that were not necessarily partisan and that did not reflect the views of the party that had the majority in the Senate. It was not uncommon to see bills come back to the House of Commons with amendments because they had been carefully studied.

● (1715)

The problem with the current situation is that not only do we have an ultra-partisan House of Commons that hardly debates any more and is often democratic in name only, but we also have a Senate that is the same in nature. That is of great concern to me. In this context, when examining the issue of changing and improving the Senate, I take everything with a large grain of salt. I see nothing in any of the changes proposed by the government in Bill C-7 that will ensure that the Senate will serve as chamber of independent, sober second thought within Canada's parliamentary democracy.

There are even some aspects of the bill that are of great concern to me. On the one hand, we will end up with a sort of patchwork Senate, made up of senators who may be elected, who are not really elected, who are almost elected, who are not elected at all, and who are elected but not appointed, and this will really create a rather unusual situation. As for its fundamental role, we must be honest, and members of the House of Commons have to take a good look and ask themselves what the purpose of this Senate is, other than having a Liberal or Conservative wing that, depending on who has the majority, does the Prime Minister's bidding.

*Government Orders*

Canada is probably the country where power is most concentrated in the hands of only one person. I challenge even my colleagues opposite to say that they have a lot of power. What the PMO says is what the PMO does. The rest just trickles down and people fall in line. There is only the official opposition to stand up to and serve as the counterweight to the government. Thus, under the circumstances, I went one step further and asked myself what the purpose of the Senate is. To my mind, it serves no purpose. The NDP nevertheless realizes that there are very important constitutional issues involved in abolishing the Senate. We are very much in favour of putting the question to the people, and I believe that they must decide if we should continue to have a senate.

Since 1968, I believe, every provincial senate has been abolished, and the provinces are doing just fine without their senates. This solves my problem. I am acutely aware that we have to discuss this with our partners in the federation, namely the provinces and territories. We cannot come up with this type of change and be paternalistic about it and presume that it is up to us, because this has a huge impact on how the Canadian Constitution operates. I am also well aware of the position of Quebec, which challenges the constitutionality of the Conservative government's proposed changes.

We have a much simpler suggestion: it might be time to put the question to the Canadian public. The Liberals are saying they do not want more MPs, but we keep asking the wrong questions. The real question is this: what is a reasonable number of constituents for an MP to represent? Once we establish that, we stop playing political games, we respect the fact that some provinces are less populous, and we respect the nation of Quebec. That would work.

The same goes for the Senate. Let us put the question to the public. If we put our trust in the public, we might be surprised by the result. They might say something intelligent. They might say that the Senate is indeed a waste of time, that it is redundant and full of people who get pensions that cost the country a lot of money, when other people are in real need of that money. I am not talking about the people here in this House, but those outside the walls of Parliament. Perhaps we could find a better way to invest that money than in a stronghold of partisan players who are working at our expense to help the Liberal or Conservative cause.

• (1720)

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we proceed to questions and comments, it is my duty to inform the House that although the House had been informed that 30 minutes would be added under the normal time for government orders, according to and subject to article 67.2 of the Standing Orders, the only time that the 30 minutes is added for government orders is when the said bill that was the subject of the motion on the recorded division that we just took is in fact the bill that is before the House for the remainder of government orders.

Since the bill that is before us, Bill C-7, is not that said bill, the time allocated for government orders will be the normal time until 5:30 p.m.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville.

[Translation]

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her speech. She spoke very passionately and clearly expressed her point of view. However, it seems to me that her position is somewhat contradictory in that her party, quite rightly, wants to respect the Constitution when it comes to Senate reform but flouts the Constitution when it comes to making changes to the House of Commons. Of course, the NDP was unable to prove that a province's representation in this House could be forever frozen through a parliamentary decision. The NDP spoke about one case, but it involved provincial elections. The drawing of provincial riding boundaries would not in any way give Parliament the right to ignore the provinces' prerogatives in terms of the constitutional rules pertaining to their representation in this House.

Could the NDP be consistent and respect the Constitution when it comes to both Senate and House reform? The Conservatives are flouting the Constitution when it comes to Senate reform. Does the NDP intend to flout the Constitution at all costs when it comes to House reform?

• (1725)

**Ms. Françoise Boivin:** Mr. Speaker, we could have a very interesting debate with the hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville. The NDP's position on the distribution of seats and on maintaining Quebec's political weight, which the hon. member has deemed to be unconstitutional, simply recognizes the unanimous motion adopted by this House giving Quebec the status of a nation within a united Canada. We did not hear any province or territory object to this fact.

When a motion such as this one is adopted, members play politics to look good, but when the time comes to act on such a motion, they are happy to ignore it. The NDP's positions on Senate reform and maintaining Quebec's political weight are not inconsistent in any way.

**Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her comments. I would like her to explain why it is important that this issue be taken to the people and that they take part in the debate.

**Ms. Françoise Boivin:** Mr. Speaker, what a great question. The people should be consulted because it is their House and their Senate. The Senate was created to ensure that all regions of the country would be well represented and to serve as a counterbalance to the House of Commons, where members are elected and where the system is not based on proportional representation. This allows Conservatives, for example, to have a majority with only 39% of the vote.

We want to transform the Senate, which is supposed to represent the Canadian people. We have reached this point in our constitutional life. Seventy-one per cent of Canadians want to have a say in the lifespan and viability of the Senate.

*Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since it is related to the debate, I would like to talk about the Senate's financial statements from March 31, 2010. The costs were: pay and benefits, \$71,685,000; transportation, \$12,883,000; facilities, \$11 million; and professional services, \$4 million. The total is \$107 million. Since we have a deficit budget, I think it is appropriate to bring up the costs of an unelected, undemocratic and unrepresentative Senate. I thank my colleague for mentioning it.

There is something strange in the Conservatives' Bill C-7. The government says that it wants to respect basic democratic principles, but at the same time, candidates for election to the Senate must be nominated by a registered political party, meaning that the Conservatives would refuse to accept an independent candidate. What does my colleague think about that?

**Ms. Françoise Boivin:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question, but I do not want to start a debate with the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

When I first read the bill, that was the impression I was under. However, there is indeed an additional clause that provides for the possibility of having an independent candidate. That is how I understood it.

Nonetheless, in my opinion it is nothing but tricks—there is no other word for it—because the thing that comes out of all this is the fact that the Prime Minister is never required to choose the person who was duly elected by the public. That alone leads me to believe that once again this is just smoke and mirrors to give people the impression that the Conservatives are being democratic.

When the Conservatives were elected in 2006, they said they were going to start doing what the Liberals had stopped doing and that is to govern properly. The Conservatives were going to be transparent, do things better and be scandal-free. Look at them now. It did not take long before they were up to their eyeballs in alligators. The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie criticizes their antics almost every day.

Somewhere along the way, we traded one bad thing for another, and that is what has to change.

---

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[English]

### IMPORTATION OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ACT

The House resumed from October 20 consideration of the motion that Bill C-311, An Act to amend the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act (interprovincial importation of wine for personal use), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** When the question was last before the House, the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo had four and a half minutes remaining in his speech.

The hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo.

**Mr. Peter Braid (Kitchener—Waterloo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to continue to speak to Bill C-311, brought forward by my colleague from the riding of Okanagan—Coquihalla who is doing great work serving his constituents.

The amendment contained in Bill C-311 is clearly long overdue. There are also clear advantages to adopting it. For example, this progressive amendment to the legislation would reduce red tape by lowering the regulatory burden on the wine industry. This is a priority for our government. We are determined to help businesses and entrepreneurs succeed, keeping taxes low, investing in projects of national importance, and maintaining Canada's brand as one of the best places in the world to invest.

Consistent with our government's commitments, this long-awaited reform would reduce barriers to internal trade. This anachronistic aspect of the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act is out of step with global trends to liberalize internal trade. Once adopted, this amendment would remove an irritating federal obstacle to trade.

Bill C-311 sends a strong signal that Ottawa is getting out of the way on an issue that is squarely within provincial jurisdiction. The federal government does not have the authority or means to stop the interprovincial movement of goods at provincial borders. The IILA merely serves as an umbrella under which the provinces and territories exercise their authority to control the importation of wine products into their jurisdictions.

Provincial and territorial governments administer a system of licences and permits to distribute, transport, detail and use alcohol products. They would be free to develop or amend their own legislation, should they so choose, to enhance or expand the interprovincial trade in wine. For instance, some provinces and territories designate communities as being dry or impose community-controlled restrictions on the purchase of alcohol. Nothing in Bill C-311 precludes them from continuing to do so.

Most crucial, this legislation would respond to the needs of the business community in an industry currently being held back from achieving its full potential. Individual wineries, most particularly those in British Columbia and in my home province of Ontario, along with the Canadian Vintners Association, have repeatedly requested permission for more liberalized domestic access to their products. As one example, according to local media reports, Vineland Estates in Ontario receives at least 100 requests for its products from consumers in other provinces every month, a need it is currently unable to satisfy because to do so is illegal. Being free to sell wine directly to consumers would enable Canada's winemakers to expand their operations and create jobs in local communities. Bill C-311 takes us closer to making this happen.



*Private Members' Business*

Canadians have been calling for an exemption to the IILA to remove the federal obstacle for individuals to purchase wine directly from wineries anywhere in Canada for their personal consumption. They should be able to buy a favourite wine made in a neighbouring province without worrying about breaking the law. These calls have the backing of numerous municipal and provincial chambers of commerce in wine producing regions across the country as well as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce because they know the impact this could have on jobs and economic growth. Members of the opposition have also endorsed these necessary amendments, no doubt because their own constituents are also telling them it is time to act.

In an era when it is possible to buy products from just about anywhere on the planet, via the Internet, and have them shipped in a matter of days to people's homes, it is almost unbelievable that Canadian consumers are currently contravening federal laws if they attempt to purchase wine from their favourite out of province winery. We can take an important step toward putting an end to this restrictive practice by voting today to adopt the amendment contained in Bill C-311.

I strongly encourage—

● (1735)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Resuming debate. The hon. member for British Columbia Southern Interior.

**Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in support of Bill C-311, An Act to amend the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act (interprovincial importation of wine for personal use).

Over the past years, as our former agriculture critic, I have been working with the Canadian Vintners Association, CVA, on behalf of wineries in my riding and right across the country to get some movement on this important issue.

At the request of local vineyards and the CVA, I have written a number of letters to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food on this issue. For example, on September 21, 2010, I wrote the following letter to the minister:

Please find attached copies of letters that I have received from Mr. Tim Martiniuk, General Manager of Stoneboat Vineyards in Oliver, BC and Mr. Dan Pazkowski, President of the Canadian Vintners Association. These letters outline the need to modify the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act (IILA) to allow Canadian consumers more flexibility when purchasing wine at local wineries.

I concluded my letter by saying:

On behalf of our BC wineries I would like to thank you for the efforts you have already undertaken with the Provinces to improve the accessibility of our excellent wine among Canadians. I encourage you to explore other federal options that will facilitate a workable solution. Please be assured that you can count on my support on any initiatives that will advance this issue.

Yesterday I met with Mr. Pazkowski, as well as with Mr. Luke Harford, vice-president of the CVA, on another important matter that concerns our Canadian wine industry, that of the 21.2% excise duty that is paid on all wines sold in Canada that do not come under the VQA or Canadian-grown label. What this means is that Canadian blended wine producers pay an extra 10.78¢ per litre of excise duty which is hurting their industry. I will be following up with the minister on this issue.

As a result of yesterday's meeting, Mr. Pazkowski, at my request, has sent me the Canadian Vintners Association talking points on Bill C-311, hot off the press, which I would like to share with the House in the time remaining.

The first question that is often asked is:

Why is this important to Canadian producers?

According to the association, and I agree, this change would:

Facilitate better choice for Canadian consumers so that more Canadians can enjoy the full range of great Canadian wines.

Ensure that Canadians who have visited wine producing areas and tasted the products can continue to get the products they have enjoyed as tourists if the wine is not available at local liquor boards.

Help Canadian producers increase their market share at a time when imported wine products are increasing their portion of the market and dominating liquor board listings.

Will this undermine the current system of provincial liquor authorities?

A personal exemption is NOT intended to undermine or destroy the current system of liquor boards. Despite the best of intentions and the support of liquor boards in producing jurisdictions for the Canadian wine industry, liquor boards are not able to carry the full range of Canadian wines, due to supply requirements, space restrictions, etc.

Allowing a limited amount of 100% Canadian wines to be supplied directly to Canadian consumers from wine producers or to transport wine across provincial borders would represent a very small percentage of total wine sales. A personal exemption of 12-24 cases per year per adult consumer is not going to undermine the liquor board system.

For small wineries, these sales could represent an important revenue and profit stream they would not otherwise receive. The products likely to be traded are small volume but higher value wines which are not available in liquor boards and are of interest to premium wine consumers. Higher profits by wineries are shared with governments in the form of higher taxes.

● (1740)

Who would participate in an electronic direct delivery of wine across provincial borders if a personal exemption was put into place?

Such a system would respond to the desires of a "select group" of wine connoisseurs/consumers who want variety, quality and regional wines. This select consumer group has a shopping strategy and is willing to:

pay the transportation fee

order a set minimum quantity (e.g., 6-12 bottles)

order more expensive wines at a price point of at least \$15 per bottle

consider both online and retail purchases

Yet another question that is often asked is:

How much 100% Canadian wines would be sold under such a system?

It is difficult to accurately measure the volume of wine sales from wineries that would be sold to tourists and wine enthusiasts. We anticipate that Canadian tourists are currently purchasing wine while on vacation at wineries and transporting this wine across provincial boundaries, without knowing they are violating the IILA.

US data shows that Direct Sales represents approximately 2% of total production in the US, of which approximately 1% is DCT shipments (tasting room delivery, internet, phone, wine club).

Based on the US model, approximately 1% of total 100% Canadian wine sales would take advantage of direct sales which could represent approximately 27,500 cases per year and would be drawn from wines that are not available at a local liquor stores via tasting room deliveries, internet, phone or winery wine club purchases.

This would also stimulate greater interest in retail sales at both wineries and liquor boards, resulting in greater market access across Canada and greater tax revenues and sales for both wineries and liquor boards.

*Private Members' Business*

The next question that is asked is:

Do Liquor Boards have a Meaningful Minimum Personal Exemption

According to the Vintners Association:

Liquor Boards have steadfastly opposed any amendments to the IILA to facilitate interprovincial trade in Canadian wine, even though total 100% Canadian wine sales across Canada represent a mere 6% of total wine sales.

With growing consumer pressure, liquor boards have further attempted to circumvent proposed amendments to the IILA by recently introducing small volume personal exemption limits.

For example, in Ontario the LCBO Board of Directors recently adopted a policy permitting Ontario residents of legal drinking age to transport 9 Litres of wine (equivalent to one case of 12 bottles) on their person from another Canadian province or territories, as long as it is for personal consumption. Other provinces have lower personal exemption limits [for example] Newfoundland (1.14 Litres) and PEI (2 litres) etc.

The Vintners Association would like to make two important points:

(1) Provincial personal exemptions are restricted to wine transported on your person, and do not permit the use of winery wine clubs, internet, phone, etc. This restricts the use of modern technology and limits the opportunity for Canadian consumers to access wines unless they travel to BC, Nova Scotia [or other provinces] which does not happen often in a country the size of Canada. Alternatively, you have the option to use the slow and expensive liquor board private order program.

(2) Provincial personal exemptions (e.g., the LCBO policy) are technically illegal since it contravenes IILA Section 3(1) that all alcohol entering a province be purchased by or on behalf of the Crown and Section (5) that anyone who contravenes the IILA is liable to penalties on summary conviction.

To ensure that liquor boards treat the issue seriously, it is important that Bill C-311 include a reasonable quantity. Industry fears that leaving the quantity to the provinces will provide limited benefits to Canadian consumers and would fail to address the spirit of Bill C-311.

I will continue with another question that is posed in this document, which is:

Are Provincial Private Order Programs effective?

The answer is:

Many liquor boards have introduced private ordering programs for wines that are not available at their provincial stores. This system requires consumers to request that liquor boards facilitate their communication with wineries, pay a premium for this service, and wait as much as 12 times longer for receipt.

In conclusion, I think Bill C-311 is a reasonable compromise. I would like to thank my colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla for introducing this bill.

● (1745)

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be part of the debate on this private member's bill, Bill C-311.

[Translation]

I wish to congratulate my colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla, a riding in the beautiful province of British Columbia, on this very sensible bill. I am pleased that all the parties in the House seem to agree that it is a good thing to do.

[English]

I also want to congratulate my colleague from Kings—Hants for being the seconder of this bill and having spoken on behalf of the Liberal Party in support of it.

[Translation]

I represent a riding in British Columbia that has a large wine industry.

[English]

The wine industry is of growing importance in my province.

We have heard from members who have spoken to this bill that the current law makes no sense. We are dealing with a law that dates from 1928, the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act, which was passed more than 80 years ago. This law was brought into force following the lifting of prohibition on alcohol. Some of the elements of the law at that time were overly restrictive because there was no clarity as to how the use and sale of alcohol would proceed following the period of prohibition.

What happens under that law established 80 years ago is that people visiting a vineyard in the province of British Columbia who come from another province in Canada would be able to taste wine, buy a bottle or two and consume it in B.C. However, they would not be able to take any home or order any to have sent home. This makes no sense from many perspectives, one of which is the trade barrier that it implies.

We are one nation. We are a united nation. We are a nation of Canadians who are united in many ways. One way to unify us is to reduce barriers to trade, to increase the prosperity of small businesses and their workforces. When there is a trade barrier that does nothing to protect people, it is important that we look at those laws, update them and change them. That is exactly what Bill C-311 is all about. It is time to change that law.

The changes proposed are widely supported. I know some of my colleagues have been speaking about that. It is a change that is supported by Canadian consumers who enjoy agri-tourism, visiting vineyards and going on wine tours. For example, the circle tours which have been developed in British Columbia are an important tourist product. People from other countries and provinces are invited. Some drive through the interior of British Columbia, one of the most spectacular parts of Canada, and through the Okanagan. They stop at wineries, enjoy high-quality meals, see the magnificent art on the walls, go on tours to see how wine is made and enjoy the products. It makes no sense whatsoever that if tourists visiting a winery come from south of the border, for example, they are able to have wine shipped to them, but if they come from Alberta, Nova Scotia or Quebec, they are not able to do that without breaking the law.

The law is actually quite strict. There is a \$200 maximum penalty for a first offence. For a second offence, the penalty is between \$200 and \$1,000 or imprisonment of three to six months for the default of payment. I know some in the House might think that more and longer prison sentences are a good thing, but we all agree that for bringing wine from one province to another, it is completely ridiculous. This penalty actually goes up to between 6 and 12 months for each offence after the second offence. This is a very out-of-date law.

*Private Members' Business*

● (1750)

*[Translation]*

Some concerns have been raised about the provinces' responsibilities in that regard. Will the federal government be acting in an area of provincial jurisdiction? I would like to say that that is not the case with Bill C-311, because it allows the provinces to set their own limits regarding the quantity of alcohol and bottles of wine that can be transported between provinces. This means that if a province does not want to import any wine and wants to stop all such imports, it can set the maximum amount at zero. Thus, the quantity or existence of this interprovincial exchange remains in the hands of the provinces.

*[English]*

Who is for this? It is very strongly supported by the vintners, of course, as well as the business community and even the provinces. I note that the solicitor general of British Columbia was publicly considering taking steps to reduce the effects of this antiquated law that made it an offence to take wine across a provincial boundary.

According to the vintners, the proposed amendments are widely supported by the Canadian wine industry. They are pleased to be able to facilitate consumer choice in wine. It is good for small business, for tourism and for people who love to sample wine from other parts of the country and bring it back to share with their families, friends and neighbours.

Having recently been on an economic tour of the interior of British Columbia, I noted that some of the rural communities that were struggling to develop their economies after a downturn in their logging industry. The local provision of jobs through logging are turning to agri-tourism. The vineyards and wineries are a high quality example of agri-tourism in British Columbia. In fact, our wineries are among the best in the world. We have a solid reputation for award winning wines. We want people to not only come and travel throughout British Columbia and bring their tourist dollars and leave them with the small businesses, the hotels, the restaurants and wineries, but we want them to be able to take some of that product home with them, or order that product.

Small and medium-sized businesses are the bulk of the wine industry. Almost all of Canada's wineries are small businesses. This is a very important part of rural economy and it is growing. The number of Canadian grape wineries has increased by roughly 300% to more than 400 wineries. British Columbia, of course, is one of Canada's wine centres and gives the other provinces a run for their money in terms of awards and recognition.

These are small businesses and our small and medium-sized business sector in Canada is incredibly important in terms of job creation, innovation and recycling money in the Canadian economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises employ two-thirds of the private sector workforce, overall. The wineries are an important segment of this.

In British Columbia, the B.C. wineries are happy to see this bill brought forward, so are wine lovers across Canada who can continue to appreciate and share with their friends the bounty that our vineyards produce.

● (1755)

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to take a moment to congratulate my colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla for his excellent work on this legislation. He has certainly been a strong advocate for his riding and the many excellent wineries and vineyards of which his constituents are so proud.

I would also like to take time to acknowledge the contributions and the hard work of the member for Kelowna—Lake Country, whose efforts have been essential to the strong progress of the bill.

As other speakers have already noted, there are many compelling reasons to support my hon. colleague's private member's bill.

I would first like to start with a short story. I am a member from British Columbia. My parents lived in Ontario and they would come out for a visit every summer. As part of their treat, and part of what they did during the summer, they explored some of the wonderful wineries around our province. We found a sparkling wine that was of particular joy to our palates. For many years during their visits, this wine helped us celebrate births, different activities and celebrations. When they were in British Columbia, we always enjoyed this sparkling white wine.

I thought it would be nice to have this sparkling white wine when it came time to celebrate their 50th anniversary in Ontario. I did not know at the time about the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act. It turned out to be an absolutely impossible task to provide the sparkling white wine for this festive event. I was quite surprised to learn that.

Why was that such a challenge? It really goes back to the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act that dates back to the days of the temperance movement.

Unfortunately, the outdated provisions of the IILA have serious consequences for Canadian consumers and businesses. We are lagging behind our major trading partners on this important issue. The United States struck down barriers to direct consumer sales back in 2005. As long as certain provisions of the IILA stay in place, Canadian consumers will remain at a distinct disadvantage by not having access to wines from across Canada. Furthermore, this legislation intrudes into areas of provincial responsibility, an area where this government has no desire to be and does not belong. Our preference is simply to get out of the way and let the provinces go about their business in areas of their jurisdiction.

That is why the amendment only deals with the federal aspects of the prohibition-era law, which restricts the movement of wine across provincial boundaries.

Bill C-311 would ensure that provinces would maintain the ability to set policy regarding provincial exemptions on wine importation. They would be free to enhance or expand the interprovincial trade in wine as they saw fit.

*Private Members' Business*

There are also practical considerations related to this bill. For instance, although the IILA provides penalties for non-compliance, the law is challenging for the federal government to enforce. The proposed changes will make the IILA more relevant to the current travel practices of Canadians and will remove an unenforced section of law.

More to the point, our government's goal is to reduce, not create or maintain, barriers to provincial trade. We are working closely with our provincial and territorial counterparts to advance this goal.

However, the bill is not solely about governments' rights and responsibilities. It is fundamentally about giving consumers greater choice.

Currently, Canadians do not have easy access to made in Canada wines, which are internationally recognized as being the best in the world. Even though Canadian wines win awards around the globe, they are often not available outside the provinces in which they are produced. Liquor boards have limited space shelf and have tried to expand choice through private order programs, but they can be slow and costly. As in the case I was relaying earlier, it was just so cumbersome and burdensome that it was not worth the time and effort.

These costs are also a deterrent to the wine industry, especially small and medium-sized businesses trying to get a foothold in the marketplace. The wine industry is growing all across Canada beyond the well-known locations such as British Columbia and Ontario. Nova Scotia, Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are all involved in the wine-making business as they diversify their economies. These fledgling firms need our support, not government interference. Of all the arguments in favour of Bill C-311, few matter more to business people than the potential economic spinoffs of this legislation. This is particularly true in British Columbia, one of the most important wine regions in Canada.

● (1800)

To appreciate the importance of the sector to the provincial economy, let me provide a broad overview of the industry and members will see how much is at stake.

The wine industry in British Columbia is one of the fastest growing agri-food sectors. In 1988, B.C. was home to just 14 wineries. Today it boasts almost 200 wineries, 710 vineyards, producing 60 different varieties of grapes.

Or put another way, British Columbia now has 9,100 acres under vine, up from just 1,000 acres planted in 1989. People will find crops in all five wine growing regions of the province including the Okanagan, Similkameen and Fraser Valley as well as Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. In fact, I am proud to say that the wine industry is also of growing importance in my riding of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

Tourism across the province greatly benefits from the promotion of B.C.'s wine sector and it provides added value to visitors from around the world. Events such as Sun Peaks winter wine festival serve to cross promote our excellent regional wine as well as other attractions available in the region.

To translate these numbers into production volumes, one-third of Canada's grapes are grown in the province. The value of these crops is \$40 million annually.

Let us extrapolate those to jobs in the province. The swelling ranks of people employed in both growing and harvesting the crops, hosting festivals and visitors and other related industries is extensive. Everything from festival planning to wine barrel production revolve around B.C. wineries.

Along with the growth in the sector has come exceptional skill. In 2010, B.C.'s maturing wine industry won over 1,600 medals in competitions around the globe. The province is especially recognized for its outstanding dessert wines.

This success is attracting global attention. According to Sotheby's International Realty Canada, people are coming from all over the world to see B.C.'s wine success story for themselves. It cites the examples of the Okanagan Valley, which is increasingly attracting international visits to its growing wine tourism region as well as its spectacular lake and scenery. It is worth noting that the Okanagan Valley has been named a Frommer's Top Travel Destination, a prestigious global ranking.

In addition to boutique wineries, tours and festivals, upscale restaurants, championship golf courses and luxury hotels, all cater to wine tourists. Many of these individuals fall in love with the idea of having their own vineyard. As a reflection of this interest, Sotheby's has created a distinct Vineyard Collection to market wine-related properties, drawing prospective buyers from as far afield as China, Italy and Germany.

A further spinoff of this interest and attention is a growing export market. Demand for high quality B.C. wines internationally has led to a nearly 300% increase in exports to Asia since 2008. Similarly, Canadians are free to purchase imported wines from other countries. How ironic that we cannot have access to these quality products grown right in our own backyard.

Even if Canadians buy wines on site when visiting wineries in other provinces, they are not permitted by the IILA to bring those purchases back home with them. Yet they can bring foreign wines through the border when they travel outside the country.

Consumers of domestic wines should not be shortchanged by the outdated Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act, a problem that this private member's bill will finally address. For the first time in nearly a century, it will be possible for wine producers to sell their products openly and freely into other provinces in keeping with provincial laws. Unlike the 1920s, they have access to modern technologies like the Internet that make such sales simple and cost-effective. At the click of a mouse, even the most discerning wine palate could be satisfied with an award winning wine produced by Canadian vintners.

I call on all members to lend their support to this worthy and long overdue legislative change. Canada's wine makers are counting on it.

• (1805)

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I too am very pleased to rise in this House and add my support to Bill C-311.

When the member for Brossard—La Prairie rose to speak on behalf of the New Democrats to kick off this debate, he indicated that we were supportive of the legislation and that we would be pleased to discuss it at committee and perhaps enhance the bill to make it even better for the wineries in Canada.

We are talking about Bill C-311, An Act to amend the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act (interprovincial importation of wine for personal use). The proposal is to amend the Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act by providing a new exemption to the prohibition on the interprovincial importation of intoxicating liquors. This would allow the importation of wine from one province to another by individuals who bring wine or cause wine to be brought into another province for personal consumption. We are talking about a minor change to the legislation, but an important change.

Many other members have very ably outlined some of the technical aspects of the bill, but I want to take this conversation down to the local level to talk about why wine importation is so important in our individual communities.

In my riding of Nanaimo—Cowichan, I am very blessed to live in a rich agricultural area. We have many wineries in the Cowichan Valley. I want to talk about a recent festival because it highlights the rich diversity of Nanaimo—Cowichan. Many other members share this kind of riding, but I think it is important to highlight what this means to our local wineries, restaurants and farmers.

We just had a Cowichan wine culinary festival. The festival ran from Wednesday, September 14, to Sunday, September 18. When the invitation was sent out, all wine and culinary aficionados were invited to our wineries, farms and restaurants. The invitation talked about the range and variety of activities that would happen in the Cowichan Valley:

“Our community has rallied around our vintners, farmers, food producers and chefs who have created tasting or tour activities and events showcasing the best of Cowichan,” commented Mike Hanson, Festival Director, 2011 Cowichan Wine & Culinary Festival. “Together we are offering a truly memorable cultural destination experience”.

That is an important aspect of this. We are not just talking about growing grapes, but about making wine and incorporating it into a total experience. Of course, the Cowichan Valley is becoming quite

### *Private Members' Business*

well known for its winery tours, which incorporate visits to some of the restaurants.

The festival also offered an assortment of the region's best wines and ciders, tours and tastings, unique farm-fresh epicurean delights from organic farmers and food producers, live entertainment, green earth seminars, hand-blown glassware and your favourite bottles of wine over lunch.

Unfortunately, I was here in Ottawa during that period of time, so was not able to take part, but I know from speaking to people, despite the rain, that people came out in droves.

There was also an article on September 15 in the *Times Colonist* that said, “Duncan: an arbiter of good taste”. The columnist, Jack Knox, talked about the fact that we had the downtown Duncan grape stomp, which was literally where people gathered in downtown Duncan. There were a number of participants. The big barrels were set up, and people got in the barrels and stomped the grapes. The columnist suggested that perhaps this was a good anger management technique, but it really highlighted the kind of involvement that the Cowichan Valley has in supporting our local grape growers.

In the same article, the *Times Colonist* columnist pointed out that what has happened with Canadian wineries is that they are now focusing on quality, not necessarily price, and as other speakers have rightly pointed out, in British Columbia we have some very fine wineries that have taken awards all over the world. Over the past generation, the Cowichan Valley now has more than 20 wineries operating, and they are very fine wineries.

The columnist went on to say that because of their growth in wineries:

“With that came a degree of sophistication,” says Hilary Abbott, owner of Hilary's Cheese Co. in Cowichan Bay.

There is now also a site in Victoria, Madam Speaker, which I am sure you will be very interested in. It continued:

People who like well crafted wine like well crafted food. The Cowichan Valley really caught the Go Local bug, perhaps due to the growing conditions that have already made it a Vancouver Island breadbasket. Even Barber, the Canadian guru of fresh, good food, spent the last years of his life in this valley. “He liked to say this was the Provence of Canada,” says Abbott.

• (1810)

Cowichan Bay was a great example of the change. Languishing a bit in the 1990s, it saw a rebirth with the arrival of True Grain Bread, the nucleus around which other boutique food shops grew. “As a cheese company, we hitchhiked on their success,” Abbott says. The transition culminated in 2009 when Cowichan Bay became North America's first CittaSlow community, making it officially hip. “We like to think we're a culinary destination.”

For listeners who do not know what CittaSlow is, it is part of the whole international slow food movement that encourages us to slow down and enjoy our local food and the preparation of it. Little Cowichan Bay has become a leader in the CittaSlow movement in British Columbia.

People from British Columbia are very familiar with food expert Don Genova. In a blog he again talks about Cowichan Bay, but he expanded on the fact that we have Hilary's Cheese and True Grain bakeries. He also talked about the Cowichan Bay Seafood and Udder Guy's Ice Cream, which makes wonderful natural ice cream. People can tour down through Cowichan Bay and have our fine wines and fine local foods. It is the kind of rich diversity that this kind of grape growing has added to our community.

*Private Members' Business*

It is very important to bring that kind of reality to this kind of technical piece of legislation that we are talking about right now. In March a well-known B.C. broadcaster, Terry David Mulligan, publicly lugged 12 bottles from B.C., Washington State and Ontario, as well as some B.C. beer, across the Alberta boundary to draw attention to what he says was an antiquated law. The host of the *Tasting Room Radio* show was ignored by B.C.

Further on in this article, one of my colleagues was quoted as saying, "...changes to the law are supported by B.C. wineries, who say they want to be able to grow their business by allowing residents other than British Columbians to directly buy from them, and by members of a national vintners group".

I certainly am hearing some widespread support from our local wineries for this piece of legislation and I know many people in this House would benefit if I were able to bring a bottle of wine here to Ottawa and share it with my colleagues. They would be able to understand the fine wines that we produce in the Cowichan Valley. I am sure they would be ordering them online as quickly as they could.

In his speech, the member for Brossard—La Prairie quoted some stakeholders who were in support of the piece of legislation but who also raised some cautions around it. As responsible lawmakers, it is always important that we consider a bill and review the potential impacts. However, in one quote he made in a pre-budget submission, he said:

It is not possible to determine the impact of Bill C-311 on stakeholders, such as wine producers and provincial/territorial governments, in part due to differences among the provincial and territorial liquor-related statutes and exemptions contained in those statutes. In addition, prohibitions regarding the interprovincial/interterritorial importation of wine are not enforced consistently in respect of consumers and wine producers. Wine producers are unable to ship orders directly to individuals across provincial/territorial borders; however, individuals who transport wine from one province/territory to another on their person are rarely charged with an offence.

This pre-budget submission cautions us that we need to take a look at what the different provincial rules and regulations are to ensure we are not having an unintended consequence. That is always a responsible action on our part.

The other piece that some people have raised is that when we are looking at this exemption, we should consider whether the wineries are producing their wines from grapes that are all grown in Canada. There have been some issues. Some wineries have indicated their wine was made in Canada when, in fact, the grapes are imported largely from the United States and then processed here in Canada. There have been some concerns raised about that. The member for British Columbia Southern Interior, in particular, has always spoken in favour of labelling laws so that Canadians know exactly what they are getting.

I think this is a very positive move forward. I look forward to members in this House and other Canadians being able to take advantage of the fine wines in the Cowichan Valley and I urge all members to support this bill.

• (1815)

**Mr. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-311 and support my colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla and the other speakers throughout B.C. and across this nation who have already spoken

to this bill, which is similar to Motion No. 601 that I introduced in November 2010 and that helped move this team effort to the stage that it is today. It is great that the spirit of Christmas is alive and well. The unity and camaraderie is great to see within the House of Commons. It is something that we can all embrace.

As was mentioned, we are a country of unity, a family, and this is something that has been identified as an archaic piece of legislation, the Importation of Intoxicating Liquor Act, which was initiated in 1928, post-prohibition. The federal government of the day thought it would be good to give the provinces the ability to control the distribution of wine, beer and spirits and receive a little of the tax revenue. It did not anticipate something called the Internet back then. Fast forward to 2011 and what we have is something that, as I mentioned, is an archaic piece of legislation.

We want to encourage Canadians to enjoy internationally award winning wines that are produced in all parts of this country. There are actually over 400 wineries now across the nation. Over 200 in British Columbia, many of them right in my riding of Kelowna—Lake Country, have received international awards. I had the opportunity to host the agriculture committee last year. It was quite interesting. Members tried to make me be the mule to illegally bring back some of this fine vintage that they could not find in the liquor stores here in Ontario, for example.

I applaud the initiatives some of the provinces have taken to date, some baby steps. The Ontario Liquor Board says that we can purchase from its private purchase program. The reality is that it often takes over a month or two to purchase that and at a significant markup.

Many of these wineries are boutique wineries, the mom and dads small operations that produce maybe 3,000 or 4,000 cases a year. That is not enough to supply the liquor board, so they are really captive in their own province. In order to expand their market share across Canada, we need to break down the interprovincial trade barriers. It is good for the economy. It is good for jobs. It is good for agriculture. It is good for tourism. It is a win-win for everybody.

I know there have been some concerns expressed by some of the provincial liquor boards of a loss of revenue.

I have had the opportunity to speak with the Canadian Vintners Association and consultants who have looked at this in the U.S. A number of states have analyzed this and now over 35 states have gone directly to the consumer with a minimal, they are saying 1% to 2%, loss in revenue for the liquor board. However, overall, the macro perspective, if we look at the agricultural support and at the tourism initiatives, is that it is a benefit all across the country.

*Private Members' Business*

I had to laugh when I was approached by Shirley-Ann George about a year and a half ago. I had met her on one of the trade committees that I had been working on for five and a half years. Our country is working on over 50 trade agreements internationally. She came to B.C. and visited one of the wineries in the Okanagan. When she came back to Ontario, she was very disappointed that she was not able to find her vintners quality assurance, VQA, that blend produced in the Okanagan. After she retired, she decided to take it upon herself to start an organization called Free My Grapes. The website is active. She has had all kinds of people contacting her saying, "What is this? This is ludicrous".

The allowing of a personal exemption is something that we are encouraging the provinces to look at, whether it is 12 cases a year or something through a wine club or directly through vintners, something that is reasonable. We have been having discussions among all parties and we are basically in agreement here. We now have provincial parties across the country, even opposition parties, that have contacted me within the province of B.C. saying that they support this.

I think the time has come now to move forward, and bring this legislation into the 21st century. It will help, I think, demystify everything. As my hon. colleague from the Island just commented about Terry David Mulligan, I talked to him earlier today on how he had to host a tasting room show. I am not, by all means, a wine connoisseur, a sommelier. I just know a bad policy when I see one.

• (1820)

The fact is that this bill will take time to move through the process and many people do not understand that. We have democracy and we are working through the House. It will go through after Christmas, hopefully, and the committee will have 30 days to review the bill. It will come back to the House and then go the Senate. On May 8 Canadian vintners have their annual lobby day on the Hill. That is sort of the target date, we hope, when we can all raise our glasses and cheer the fact that we have broken this interprovincial trade barrier.

As we approach the Christmas season, I know people are engaged in festivities. I would ask that we all be responsible to one another, drink responsibly, and do not drink and drive. If people enjoy the beverages of Canada from coast to coast to coast, we can have a stronger community, a stronger agri-tourism sector and, most of all, support our small vintners by moving this bill by my colleague from Okanagan—Coquihalla through the House.

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, let me first thank the member for Okanagan—Coquihalla for bringing this bill forward. I would also like to thank the member for Kelowna—Lake Country, with whom I sat on the international trade committee in the last Parliament. We are in absolute agreement, except for one small discrepancy, which is that Niagara makes the best wine this country has seen.

Let me give credit to one of the vineyards. We will all hoist a glass with Niagara Grape if it gets a good VQA. It is actually 100% Niagara grapes, all grown in Niagara, and eventually put in a bottle.

Let me thank a gentleman by the name of Don Ziraldo. There was a time, unfortunately, in this country when the wine was not that good. Don Ziraldo said that it could be made better. He formed Inniskillin Wines many years ago with a partner and produced

quality wines that eventually led to all of the small vintners who now make, with a vinifera grape quality, fabulous wines from coast to coast to coast. There are some now in Prince Edward County, Nova Scotia and the Okanagan Valley, which I had the great opportunity to visit last year and sampled wines up and down the valley.

I encourage folks to come to Niagara and the Welland riding. The Welland Canal is synonymous with the Welland riding. There are two fabulous wineries in my riding. Henry of Pelham and Herder Estates are fabulous places to visit.

It is the right step to make. The bill will go to committee, where I am sure we can improve it and make it better. I would encourage folks to move this along because I want my friends to have wine made from Niagara grapes sent to the Okanagan Valley so people can have a great festive season next year.

• (1825)

**The Deputy Speaker:** I recognize the hon. member for Okanagan—Coquihalla for the sponsor's right of reply.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Okanagan—Coquihalla, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will begin by thanking the members of the House tonight for supporting Bill C-311. Many good questions have been asked and comments received. For me, it has been extremely heartening to hear from members from all sides of the House who also believe that having trade barriers within our own country because of an 80-year-old prohibition era law needs to come to an end.

When I set out to introduce the bill, it was out of concern for the many small family-run wineries in my riding and in the nearby ridings of Kelowna Lake Country and Southern Interior, wineries that are too small and cannot afford to sell to the large-scale liquor distribution monopolies.

I did not know then that Nova Scotia was an emerging wine region. I thank the member for Kings—Hants for his passionate and dedicated support for the wine producers of his region.

I also did not know that the province of Quebec is fast becoming a major wine producing province, with 5 wine producing regions and over 50 wineries.

I thank the member for Brossard—La Prairie for his support of this bill, and also the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for speaking in support of this bill reminding us that there are great wines in her region of British Columbia as well. Of course, special thanks goes to all my colleagues in caucus, many of whom represent the great wine producing regions of Ontario and elsewhere in Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Before I close, I will clarify a few points on my bill. I want to make it clear that my bill only proposes to remove a federal trade barrier that currently restricts a winery's ability to sell its wine directly to customers across Canada for non-commercial purposes. While the bill would remove the federal trade barrier, it also makes it very clear that it is ultimately up to the provincial governments to set personal exemption limits as they see fit. Already, some provinces have taken a lead on this, and I commend those provinces. However, other provinces have cited the IILA legislation as a reason for not taking action.

I would also like to make it clear that my bill deals only with the inter-provincial movement of wine. My bill proposes no changes to how wine is imported into Canada, nor does it amend the Excise Act.

To summarize, my bill would make it easier for Canadian wineries to sell to Canadians.

There is much that we have disagreed on so far in this 41st session of Parliament. It gives me great pleasure to know that when it comes time to removing trade barriers that prevent Canadians from selling to fellow Canadians across this great country that our House can come together and be united on behalf of our constituents.

Again I would like to thank all members of the House for their support for Bill C-311.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5:30 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired. The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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

---

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

### STATUS OF WOMEN

**Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in Canada, women have been earning only 71¢ for every \$1 men earn for the past four decades. This is a serious problem. The fact that mothers— women who have children—earn approximately 50¢ for every \$1 earned by men is an outrage.

The government claims to be a world leader when it comes to women's rights, but it is not taking any concrete action to remedy the systemic discrimination against women in Quebec and Canada. They need quality child care, parental leave, affordable housing and economic independence. The NDP has been saying this for years, the feminist movement has been saying it for decades and women have been saying it for generations. It is nothing new.

This is not a complicated situation. We are talking about providing women with the tools they need to overcome income inequality in Canada. The past four decades of inaction in the matter of equal pay for equal work is directly related to the Liberals' and the Conservatives' lack of political will. Pay equity ensures that

Canadians with jobs of equal or comparable value receive comparable pay. Nothing could be simpler.

The undervaluation of women's work and their segregation in the work world are problems that are unfortunately deeply ingrained in employers' pay systems. We must rethink pay equity. In other words, if a job that is traditionally male-dominated is of comparable value to another job that is traditionally female-dominated, employees in both jobs should receive the same pay. It is not always easy to see that the gender-based division of work is the cause of the pay inequity that is still present today. That is why we need clear guidelines to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination.

• (1830)

[*English*]

We need comprehensive guidelines in place to safeguard against wage discrimination. In 2008, when the government had the chance to create a proactive pay equity law, it held in its hands the 571-page 2004 national pay equity task force report, which was written according to the federal review conducted over the course of four years. This report examined, extensively, federal pay equity legislation from 1977 to present. It recognized the inherent problems with the previous regime and called for proactive legislation to be enacted.

Not surprisingly, the government failed to enact proactive legislation, which has already proven to be successful in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. Instead, what Canadian women were given is the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act which effectively takes the right to be paid equal wages for equal value work out of the Canadian Human Rights Act and makes it negotiable as a labour right.

The very notion that wage discrimination based on gender, race or age could be framed as anything less than a charter protected human right is absurd. However, my grievance with the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act is that it is impractical as well as absurd.

A complaints-based process as opposed to a proactive regime relies on the ability of an individual to bring a grievance against her employer. This system not only encourages a protracted adversarial litigation process but, in addition, the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act prohibits labour unions from assisting their members in pay equity complaints.

We know from under the old complaints-based regime that it is nearly impossible for an unassisted individual to successfully prosecute a pay equity complaint. It was reported at length by the pay equity task force in 2004 that we cannot rely on the willingness of employers to move toward equal pay for equal value work.

I reiterate my question to the government. Canada is failing to provide Canadians with the tools they need to close the gender gap. When will the government commit to a proactive pay equity regime as the first step to improving gender equity?



*Adjournment Proceedings*

**Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to respond to the question from the member opposite about Canada's respect for women's rights and a purported pay gap that puts us behind some other countries.

Canada has an unparalleled record with respect to women's rights and making sure that the government has obligations in this area.

We are fortunate in this country. Our federal public service employees are among the best and the brightest, and their work is tied to the well-being of our country.

We expect much from our public servants. In turn, the public service offers women and men competitive salaries and a full range of family-friendly benefits.

We should be especially proud of the progress toward greater gender balance that has been made in the public service, particularly within the senior ranks.

Back in 1983, fewer than 5% of women were in senior management. Today, women make up 44% of the senior and executive ranks of the federal public service. That is almost 50%. That is almost half of the people in the senior public service. That is a significant increase.

Women are taking their rightful place in the federal public service. Their representation in many professional groups has also increased dramatically over the years. For example, women now represent nearly 56% of the economics and social science group, 55% of the law group, and about 46% of the commerce officer group.

Over the past few years, there has been a significant change in the face of Canada's public service. Women have played a big role in this change.

Today, women and men in the public service have equal access to all positions and identical wages within the same groups and levels.

The situation is not perfect, but remarkable progress has been made in addressing the wage gap between men and women in the federal public service.

Since 1999, the difference between total wages for women and total wages for men has been decreasing steadily. In fact, since 1999, this gap has closed by 6.8%.

Today, women in the core public administration make on average almost 90% of men's wages. With more young women entering the workforce in knowledge jobs, women's wages in the under 35 age category are 96.5% of the wages of men. This bodes well for the future.

My colleague opposite claims that we are doing nothing concrete. That could not be farther from the truth.

In 2009, we enacted the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act. This represents a much needed reform of the old complaint-based pay equity regime, which has proven to be a lengthy, costly and adversarial process. Our more modern collaborative approach is

proactive and will ensure that the strides women have made in the federal public sector continue to be maintained without the process being unnecessarily lengthy, costly and adversarial.

Our commitment to the fundamental values of fairness and equal rights between men and women is an example to the world.

• (1835)

**Ms. Mylène Freeman:** Madam Speaker, when we are speaking about pay equity, we are speaking about poverty, and poverty is a women's issue.

According to the Global Gender Gap Index, Canadian women make up half of the labour force in this country today. Women are working as much as men, and yet we are not earning as much as men. Not only that, but we have not been earning as much as men in the same pitiful way for decades. This is indicative of systemic discrimination in the labour force and it is not going to be solved with the government closing its eyes to the problem. It will come when we institute sound proactive legislation that safeguards these rights from the moment wages are set.

Today, 1.6 million women live in poverty and it is easy to understand why. It is because the same wage gap that exists between men and women presents itself again in the wage gap between women with children and women without children. In addition, 52% of single mothers with small children live below the poverty line. More than half of single mothers with little children are in need.

[Translation]

Canada needs a national child care strategy. Our parental leave policies are not good enough and there is no strategy. The Conservatives have never taken the problem of the feminization of poverty seriously.

[English]

**Mr. Andrew Saxton:** Madam Speaker, this government respects the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

The Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act sets out a new proactive and timely approach to ensure that employees in the federal public sector receive equitable compensation each and every time their wages are set.

This new legislation replaces an adversarial complaints-based system under the old Canadian Human Rights Act with a collaborative one that ensures fair and objective recourse.

This government is committed to developing the regulations that will bring the legislation into force and will do so in consultation with employers and bargaining agents for the benefit of employers and employees.

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:40 p.m.)



# CONTENTS

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

<b>Religious Freedom</b>	
Mr. Hillyer .....	4121
<b>Federation of Canadian Municipalities</b>	
Ms. Savoie .....	4121
<b>Mayor of Williams Lake, B.C.</b>	
Mr. Harris (Cariboo—Prince George) .....	4121
<b>Iraq</b>	
Ms. Sgro .....	4121
<b>Child Pornography</b>	
Mr. Gourde .....	4122
<b>Poverty</b>	
Mr. Pilon .....	4122
<b>Poverty</b>	
Ms. Findlay .....	4122
<b>Riding of Kitchener Centre</b>	
Mr. Woodworth .....	4122
<b>Search and Rescue</b>	
Mr. Cleary .....	4122
<b>Coach of the B.C. Lions</b>	
Mr. Kamp .....	4123
<b>Violence Against Women</b>	
Mr. Donnelly .....	4123
<b>Violence Against Women</b>	
Mr. Vellacott .....	4123
<b>Iran</b>	
Mr. Cotler .....	4123
<b>Wreaths Across Canada</b>	
Ms. Adams .....	4123
<b>Firearms Registry</b>	
Mr. Harris (St. John's East) .....	4124
<b>New Democratic Party of Canada</b>	
Mr. Goguen .....	4124
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b>	
<b>Canadian Wheat Board</b>	
Mrs. Turmel .....	4124
Ms. Finley .....	4124
<b>Canada-U.S. Relations</b>	
Mrs. Turmel .....	4124
Ms. Finley .....	4124
Mrs. Turmel .....	4125
Ms. Finley .....	4125
Mr. Masse .....	4125
Mr. Fast .....	4125
Mr. Masse .....	4125
Mr. Fast .....	4125
<b>Canadian Wheat Board</b>	
Mr. Rae .....	4125
Ms. Finley .....	4125
Mr. Rae .....	4125
Ms. Finley .....	4125
<b>Aboriginal Affairs</b>	
Mr. Rae .....	4125
Ms. Finley .....	4126
<b>Search and Rescue</b>	
Ms. Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue) .....	4126
Mr. Fantino .....	4126
Mr. Kellway .....	4126
Mr. Fantino .....	4126
<b>Port of Montreal</b>	
Mr. Nicholls .....	4126
Mr. Lebel .....	4126
Mr. Nicholls .....	4126
Mr. Lebel .....	4126
<b>G8 Summit</b>	
Mr. Boulerice .....	4126
Mr. Clement .....	4127
Mr. Boulerice .....	4127
Mr. Clement .....	4127
<b>Aboriginal Affairs</b>	
Mr. Angus .....	4127
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North) .....	4127
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona) .....	4127
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North) .....	4127
Mr. Genest-Jourdain .....	4127
Mr. Duncan (Vancouver Island North) .....	4127
<b>Search and Rescue</b>	
Ms. Foote .....	4127
Mr. Fantino .....	4128
<b>Employment Insurance</b>	
Mr. Cuzner .....	4128
Ms. Finley .....	4128
Mr. Cuzner .....	4128
Ms. Finley .....	4128
<b>Employment</b>	
Mr. Julian .....	4128
Mr. Flaherty .....	4128
Mr. Julian .....	4128
Mr. Flaherty .....	4129
Mr. Patry .....	4129
Ms. Finley .....	4129
<b>Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency</b>	
Mr. Cleary .....	4129
Mr. Keddy .....	4129



<b>Message from the Senate</b>	
The Speaker .....	4140
<b>Points of Order</b>	
<b>Decorum in the House</b>	
Mr. Hillyer .....	4141

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

<b>Fair Representation Act</b>	
<b>Bill C-20—Time Allocation Motion</b>	
Mr. Van Loan .....	4141
Motion .....	4141
Mr. Comartin .....	4141
Mr. Uppal .....	4141
Mr. Lamoureux .....	4141
Ms. Boivin .....	4142
Mr. Chong .....	4142
Mr. Dion .....	4142
Mr. Boulerice .....	4143
Mr. Toews .....	4143
Mr. Harris (St. John's East) .....	4143
Mr. Bellavance .....	4143
Mr. Bélanger .....	4144
Ms. Borg .....	4144
Mr. Dusseault .....	4144
Mr. Warkentin .....	4144
Mr. Angus .....	4145
Mr. Lamoureux .....	4145
Mr. Tremblay .....	4145
Ms. Sims .....	4145

Motion agreed to .....	4147
<b>Senate Reform Act</b>	
Bill C-7. Second reading .....	4147
Mr. Dusseault .....	4147
Mr. Allen (Welland) .....	4147
Mr. Lamoureux .....	4147
Ms. Boivin .....	4148
Mr. Dion .....	4149
Mrs. Groguhé .....	4149
Mr. Boulerice .....	4150

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

<b>Importation of Intoxicating Liquors Act</b>	
Bill C-311. Second reading .....	4150
Mr. Braid .....	4150
Mr. Atamanenko .....	4151
Ms. Murray .....	4152
Mrs. McLeod .....	4153
Ms. Crowder .....	4155
Mr. Cannan .....	4156
Mr. Allen (Welland) .....	4157
Mr. Albas .....	4157
(Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to a committee) .....	4158

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

<b>Status of Women</b>	
Ms. Freeman .....	4158
Mr. Saxton .....	4159

**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*

Publishing and Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,*

*retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*  
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and  
Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5  
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943  
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the  
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les  
Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5  
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943  
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à  
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>