



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 146 • NUMBER 064 • 1st SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Friday, December 9, 2011

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 9, 2011

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1005)

[*English*]

FAIR REPRESENTATION ACT

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of Bill C-20, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act and the Canada Elections Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand in this place and talk about Bill C-20, our government's bill to move towards fairer representation by population in the House of Commons.

When Bill C-20 is passed, hopefully in a few days, it will be a fulfillment of a long-term commitment by our party to try and ensure that we get fairer representation by population in this place. I say "fairer" because I do not think we could ever achieve perfection in terms of population and representation that would be proportional to all provinces and fair to all provinces. In fact, some estimates suggest that if we were to look at exactly fair and accurate representation by population, we would need over 900 members in this place. Clearly that is not acceptable. It is not acceptable to our government and it would not be acceptable to the Canadian public.

However, we have recognized the fact that some of the faster growing provinces, specifically Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, have been significantly under-represented in this place for many years. That is because the status quo formula that deals with population increases of provinces is flawed. In fact, if we stayed with the status quo, we would see significant under-representation, in those three provinces in particular, from now and into the future. The bill would address that.

We have amended the formula so that now and in the future there would be more accurate estimates of population. The formula would give this government, or the government of the day, the opportunity to increase seats in those provinces that have faster growing populations. That is just a fundamental aspect of democracy. We

recognize the fact that a vote in one region of the country should weigh no more than a vote in another region of the country. Unfortunately, currently, that is not the case.

I will give a couple of examples to illustrate what I am saying here.

In my home riding of Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre, I represent approximately 80,000 constituents. Yet, here in Ontario, there are certain ridings where the member of Parliament represents well over 170,000 constituents. Members can see that one could successfully argue that my vote in the House of Commons weighs more than the vote of a member of Parliament in Ontario who represents over twice as many people.

The formula we have brought forward addresses that inequity. We have amended the formula to increase the number of seats in those faster growing provinces. As such, members of Parliament would have an opportunity to truly reflect the wishes of their constituents. At the same time, we assure this House and the Canadian people that we will not unduly punish those provinces with smaller, slower growing populations.

The formula we have developed considers an average population size by riding, which is approximately 111,000. The formula would see an additional 30 seats introduced to the House of Commons: 15 in Ontario, 6 in British Columbia, 6 in Alberta and 3 in Quebec. This would bring our total in the House of Commons to 338. More importantly, it would ensure that in the three fastest growing provinces by population, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, the number of members would more accurately reflect the population, and that population is how we ultimately determine how many members of Parliament serve in this place.

I do not want to dwell too much on the formula. I think that has been debated long and hard over the past weeks. However, I do want to point out that if we do not address this inequity, we will have a situation where the boundaries commissions will start to do their work in February of next year, and start aligning boundaries based on the old population estimates.

● (1010)

We have to pass this legislation now. We have to pass it in this place and get it into the Senate. It has to pass in the Senate before the end of the year because the boundaries commissions need to start their work early next year. The Chief Electoral Officer of Canada has advised us that if we do not get this legislation passed before the end of this year, it could jeopardize the efforts of his office to get new boundaries and new members of Parliament in place before the next election, scheduled for 2015.

Government Orders

There is a sense of urgency here. That is why I am imploring all members of this place to join with us and make sure we get speedy passage of Bill C-20 before we rise for Christmas.

When the boundaries commissions start their work in February of next year, hopefully they will be working with new population estimates provided by Statistics Canada. These estimates would allow them to better determine not only how many more seats may be required in each province, but also where those boundaries would be. This is an important piece of work. We know that there would probably be instances in the three provinces with the faster growing populations where current members of Parliament might end up in a new riding with new boundaries but not even reside in that new riding. This is where we would need interventions from the general public, members of Parliament and all stakeholders. We would need to try and ensure that not only is there fair representation but also that those problems that might occur through boundary redistribution are dealt with.

Each province will have a new boundaries commission assigned, a three member board to deal with the process of establishing new boundaries. I suggest to all members that they actively involve themselves in this process. They will want to ensure that, when boundaries are to be changed in their province, they have an opportunity to speak to the boundaries commission. They would want to ensure that they are not unduly affected by significant boundary realignment. Not that it would be deliberate, but the mere function of adding seats, for example, 15 more seats in Ontario's case, would change boundaries significantly.

In the case of Ontario, where one member of Parliament may be serving over 170,000 constituents, there is a very real possibility that riding would then become two ridings. Depending on where the member of Parliament resides in that riding, he or she could find himself or herself as a sitting member of Parliament, but not in the riding that he or she once had. Therefore, all members should pay particular attention to the process.

I want to point out one other unassailable fact. In Canada, we pride ourselves for being one of the most progressive democracies in the world. We pride ourselves for ensuring that all of our citizens are well represented by their members, whether at the federal, provincial or municipal level. If we do not pass Bill C-20 and deal with the fact that our population is growing rapidly, we will have a situation where our citizens are under-represented and do not have an effective voice in the House of Commons. This is something that we will not allow to happen. That is why Bill C-20 has been brought forward for consideration by the House.

Finally, while Bill C-20 may not be a perfect solution, it is a far better solution than the status quo population by representation legislation. We are trying to ensure that not only do we address the inequities today, but also that we address the inequities as we move forward.

•(1015)

Ten years from now, when we go through the next boundary realignment, the formula that we have introduced in Bill C-20 will ensure that those provinces that have faster growing populations will get the representation they deserve.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask the member why is it that his government does not recognize what 95% of all Canadians want? Canadians do not believe it is necessary to increase the number of members of Parliament.

In fact, when the Prime Minister years ago was not the Prime Minister, he advocated that the House of Commons be somewhere around 265 members. He suggested that, at the very least, we should put a cap on the number of members of Parliament. Many Canadians are wondering what caused the Prime Minister to change his mind.

I do not need to table a poll. I suggest we consult with our constituents. We would find that a vast majority of them, over 95%, would say that we do not need more politicians. The government might not want to hear that, but that is the reality.

Canadians want to know why the Prime Minister is flip-flopping on his opinion. Why, when he was in opposition, did he say that we do not need any more members of Parliament, that we should be reducing the number of parliamentarians in the House of Commons? Why the change?

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I am sure my hon. colleague feels better now that he has had his daily rant.

Let me point out a couple of quick facts. First, we have a couple of constitutional provisions that we must observe: the Senate floor and the grandfather clause.

Second, the Liberal solution is to start picking winners and losers. That is unacceptable to us. I would suggest if the member opposite had done his homework, as I have done, and consulted with premiers of various provinces, he would find this would be unacceptable to the premiers as well.

What we are doing is ensuring that there will be fair representation. No province is to be unduly affected by reducing the number of representatives it has; it is a fact that our population is increasing yearly.

This will be a solution that not only gains the support of the Canadian public but gains the support of all provinces. Under the Liberal plan of taking seats away from provinces, I can guarantee that would start a loud and vocal opposition and would unduly affect government relations between the provinces and the federal government. That is something we do not want.

Our Bill C-20 addresses the matter fairly and accurately.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague on the other side raised some important issues: the quality of representation and the urgency of the situation.

Urgency means something different to me. What is urgent for my constituents and my riding is solving problems. For example, I live in a community affected by the forestry crisis. The five largest employers in the region have closed their doors. People have much more serious worries, such as the lack of Internet access, for example. Service Canada services are being moved online, so people in my riding do not have access to these services right now.

Government Orders

As for quality of representation, everyone working here should be more productive and target the problems that the public deems more serious and practical.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with Bill C-20 today, so I would like to focus my remarks on the bill under discussion. Although I recognize there are other issues of importance to the member opposite and his constituents, we are debating Bill C-20.

I would only point to the matter of urgency. The Chief Electoral Officer has indicated we must get this bill passed quickly because the process of boundaries commissions looking at realigning boundaries will occur regardless of Bill C-20.

Some members of the opposition have suggested that we should wait a bit to investigate, discuss and debate the bill longer. They say that if a year from now, we determine that we want to pass Bill C-20, that will still give the boundaries commissions time to do their work. That is not the case. It would be a duplication of effort because boundaries commissions will start their work in February, whether it is under the status quo or under the new Bill C-20. If we had a situation where Bill C-20 were delayed by a year, the boundaries commissions in each province would have done a year's worth of work. They would then have to go back to square one under the provisions of Bill C-20.

We need to get the bill passed and passed quickly.

• (1020)

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure to stand in the House to discuss Bill C-20 today, the fair representation act.

Our government received a strong mandate to move toward representation by population in the House of Commons. As the representative for Etobicoke Centre and a proud Ontarian, I am delighted that the Government of Canada is moving in the right direction to ensure that the under-represented provinces, such as my own, receive the representation that they deserve.

Each and every citizen of this great country deserves to have representation that is fair and balanced. The fair representation act would move every province toward representation by population and, in particular, by reflecting three distinct promises our government made to provide fair representation: first, allocating an increased number of seats now and in the future to better reflect population growth in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta; second, maintaining the number of seats for smaller provinces; and third, maintaining the proportional representation of Quebec according to its population.

We campaigned on these promises and Canadians voted for a strong, stable, national, majority Conservative government, which is here to deliver on the promises we made to Canadians. We gave our word and the Prime Minister and the government will keep the promises that we made to Canadians.

The representation of the provinces in the House of Commons is readjusted every 10 years using the formula established in section 51 of the Constitution Act. The current formula dates to 1985 and was

designed to provide modest increases to the size of the House. While the 1985 formula has been successful in limiting the size of the House of Commons, it has created a representation gap for the faster growing provinces, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

The current formula maintains this serious under-representation and, in fact, will worsen as time passes and as the Canadian population continues to increase.

As an example, well over 60% of Canada's population is, and would continue to be, seriously and increasingly under-represented using the current formula. The combined effect of fixing the divisor at 279, in combination with the existence of the seat guarantees in the Constitution, has prevented Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta from receiving a share of seats that is commensurate with their relative share of the overall population. This is not acceptable and, most to the point, it is not fair. Bill C-20 would address this problem.

The formula in Bill C-20 is principled and is a reasonable update designed to bring those provinces closer to representation by population, while at the same time maintaining the seat count of the slower growing provinces and ensuring that Quebec maintains the level of seats that is proportionate to its population. In fact, the fair representation act brings every province closer to representation by population.

The three large faster growing and under-represented provinces would move closer to fair representation and would be fairly treated in the future. That is then fair. In this way, the foundational principle of representation by population would be much better respected and maintained now and in the future.

Population growth within those provinces has been even higher in large urban and suburban areas. Canada's new and visible minority population is increasing largely through immigration and these immigrants tend to settle in fast-growing communities in our fastest growing provinces. The situation inadvertently causes Canadians in large urban centres, new Canadians and visible minorities to be even more under-represented than is the average.

It is clear that this situation undermines the principle of representation by population in our country and the need for Bill C-20 to become law as soon as possible.

The pragmatic course of action, namely the application of the new formula, would be to add an additional 30 seats to the House of Commons for a total of 338. In terms of the provincial breakdown, Ontario would receive 15 new seats. Alberta would receive 6 new seats and British Columbia would receive 6 new seats. Quebec would receive three new seats as a result of the new representation rule, which would ensure that its seat total does not come under the number of seats proportionate to its population.

Finally, the bill provides an adjustment to the formula in order to account for future increases in population counts following future censuses

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For the 2021 and each subsequent readjustment, the bill provides that the electoral quotient would be increased by the simple average of provincial population growth rates since the preceding readjustment.

The serious and increasing under-representation of our faster growing provinces, Ontario first among them, is a serious problem that requires an immediate solution. The Chief Electoral Officer told the procedure and House affairs committee that passing this bill before the new year is the best scenario. We are moving quickly to meet the deadlines we face in the new year to best facilitate the process that will bring these changes into place for Canadians.

• (1025)

In addition to the updated formula for allocating seats, Bill C-20 also proposes amendments to the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act that aim to streamline the timelines in the current boundary readjustment process. There will be no change to the timelines relating to the parliamentary phase of the electoral boundary process and, most important, Canadians will continue to have the same opportunity to voice their opinions on boundary changes during public hearings held by the commissions, as the parliamentary secretary said earlier.

The updates to the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act follow recommendations made in the past by the procedure and House affairs committee, the Chief Electoral Officer and the Lortie Commission of 1991.

Since the fair representation act was introduced, many of my constituents have rightly demanded to know how much the new seats in Parliament will cost. I will be clear in stating that the annual cost per MP are estimated at approximately \$642,000, for a total of \$19,281,00 for the 30 new MPs. During each election, there will be a cost of approximately \$505,800 per new riding.

Yes, there is an additional investment to be made, and at the end of the day our government's first and top priority is the economy. We remain focused on the mandate that Canadians have given us to secure the economic recovery through a low tax plan for jobs and economic growth.

However, maintaining fair representation costs money and I will not be apologetic over these costs and the benefits they provide Canadians, because this is the cost of democracy and ensuring that all Canadians benefit fairly and uniformly. If nothing is done, Canadians living in the fastest growing provinces will only become more and more under-represented under the status quo. Clearly, this is not fair.

Every Canadian's vote, to the greatest extent possible, should carry equal weight. In my own riding of Etobicoke Centre, along with my colleagues in the greater Toronto area, the need for Bill C-20 could not be greater. Having effective representation is a necessary requirement for a healthy democracy and to ensure the voices of Canadians are heard by their elected officials.

It also enables parliamentarians to effectively serve the people who sent us to the chamber on their behalf. Without Bill C-20, this would become increasingly difficult to achieve.

As I mentioned earlier, urban Canadians are under-represented. This has serious consequences. In Etobicoke Centre, for example, my office deals with an enormous number of immigration case files, social security issues, employment insurance, passport requests and many other government services. By increasing the number of seats in urban areas, Canadians will be better served.

Like all members of Parliament, I have a modest budget and staff to fulfill these responsibilities. Although Bill C-20 comes with a fiduciary commitment, this is money well spent and well regulated. By increasing the number of seats in Ontario, our government is ensuring that Canadian voices are heard and that they are served by their elected officials, as well.

The updated seat allocation formula contained in the fair representation act moves every province toward representation by population. It is a fair, reasonable and principled solution that addresses the unacceptable under-representation of some provinces and fulfills our government's long-standing commitment to move toward fair representation. This bill would ensure that the vote of each Canadian, to the greatest extent possible, has equal weight. It keeps our three commitments to Canadians and delivers fairness.

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am always amazed when members stand up in the House of Commons and think they truly believe what they are saying but need to read the entire speech.

I want to offer a couple of analogies for the member. He talks about representation by population. The United States has over 300 million people and I think it is represented by about 660 representatives in the Senate, the House of Representatives and their executive. If we go by its theory, if we have 300 million people in Canada, is the member saying that we should have over 3,000 members of Parliament?

I would remind the hon. member, for whom I have great respect, that ever since the debate started I have not received one email, phone call, letter or fax, and have not been stopped once in the mall or at a store where people were saying "Please, Peter, please give us more members of Parliament. This is really what we want."

However, I will not argue the point. The member says that some ridings are disjointed. There is no question about that. When a riding in Prince Edward Island has 39,000 people and another one has 170,000 people, that is incorrect and it needs to be fixed. The member is absolutely correct.

However, to really fix this problem there are two flies in your ointment of the argument that you are presenting. One is that historically, when Canada came together, Quebec was assured a certain percentage of the seats in Canada. This bill would diminish Quebec's standing in Canada, as well as Atlantic Canada's standing. When we look at the percentages—

Government Orders

•(1030)

The Speaker: I must stop the member there. I know he might not be finished but he has already taken a minute and a half and there are other people who might like to ask questions. I would remind the hon. member that I do not have a particular formula or any flies in my ointment.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre can respond.

Mr. Ted Opatz: Mr. Speaker, I thought we were going to compete with speeches for a moment.

The hon. member and his party seem to be fixated on the United States. They have gone to the United States to fight against Canadian jobs and have used the United States as a model for representation. However, I remind the hon. member that we live in Canada. We are very proud of this country, a country I served for 33 years in uniform, and will continue to do so.

Quebec would remain proportionally represented, which is fair to Quebec and to the rest of Canada. There is an imbalance in the member's party's plan in that it would over-allocate seats in one area and under-allocate especially to the fastest growing provinces. That is not fair to Canadians and it is not fair to his constituents.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech but he barely read the bill. At this time of the debate it is time for the government side to answer a lot of questions, instead of deflecting them all the time with empty slogans, like winners and losers, and these kinds of very simplistic views.

I have three questions. First, why did the Prime Minister change his mind? Why was he willing to decrease the number of seats and now wants to balloon the number of seats by 30?

Second, why does the Minister of Finance want to cut everything by 10% and increase the House by 10%? He cuts everything but gives more politicians to Canadians.

Third, which Canadians want more politicians other than politicians? He can quote the premiers as much as he wants, but the people do not want more politicians at a time when the government is asking Canadians to make sacrifices. Which country in the world feels obligated to always increase the number of seats—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: England is reducing.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: —when it is time to rebalance?

An hon. member: New Brunswick is reducing.

Hon. Stéphane Dion: New Brunswick would decrease its seats. England will decrease its seats. In our country, a member of Parliament and an MPP or an MLA split the task as so much of our federation is decentralized. In most countries of the world, the jobs the MPPs and ourselves are doing is done by one MP because there is a central government. Why would we increase the number of seats when we have so many colleagues at the provincial level who are dealing with the—

The Speaker: I must interrupt the hon. member. There are only 30 seconds left for the member for Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Ted Opatz: Mr. Speaker, the anger quotient in that corner of the floor seems to be rather high today. I would remind the hon.

member and his party that Canadians did speak and that is why they placed the Liberals in the corner.

We on this side of the House believe in Canada. We do not talk about what other countries do. We talk about what Canadians do. This government focuses on what Canada and Canadians need and

•(1035)

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is out of time. I would ask hon. members to be mindful of the fact that only one member of the House is supposed to be talking at a time.

We will move on with the debate. The hon. member for Davenport.

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise and speak to Bill C-20. As we know, representation and the redistribution of seats is a delicate balancing act. It is a vital exercise in nation building and we need to balance many issues. We need to balance the fact that we have huge northern ridings that are having a hard time—

The Speaker: Order, please. If hon. members want to carry on a discussion, I would encourage them to do it outside of the chamber so that the member for Davenport can be heard.

Mr. Andrew Cash: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is Friday morning and everyone wants to speak on this important piece of nation building, which is what it is.

We have rural ridings that are large geographic areas that currently are struggling to gain access to their member of Parliament. We have large northern ridings that span the size of the United Kingdom. We have, of course, fast growing suburban ridings and more and more densely populated urban ridings.

In other words, we cannot accurately and fairly redistribute the seats just by looking at lines on a ledger. That is not what nation building is about. Nation building is about listening to the different voices in our country, listening to and responding to the different needs, realities, struggles, and hopes of the various regions in our country.

Oftentimes we say there are several different regions, but within those regions there are other regions. I would argue that the rural-urban dichotomy is one which we really need to think about and research, and thoughtfully proceed with more fair and balanced representation in this place on the basis of not just population numbers.

On our side of the House, we agree that these fast growing provinces need better representation. However, we on this side of the House also acknowledge and believe that the weight that Quebec currently holds in this place should be maintained. We believe those things. This bill does not achieve any of that. It does not go far enough for Ontario, Alberta or British Columbia, and it certainly does not go far enough for Quebec.

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The government likes to bring in the bean-counters and we cannot build a nation with bean-counters. That is not how we have ever done that in this country. This is a living, breathing thing, and we need to respond to the realities of this country in a similar fashion.

In this current Parliament, we have seen the government run roughshod, essentially, over democracy in this place. We have seen it invoke time allocation nine times. Now we hear the Conservatives talk about how it is important for Canadians to have their voices heard in the House of Commons when at every opportunity they try to curtail that voice from actually being expressed here.

The Conservative members often talk about having discussed these bills ad nauseam and it being time to pass them. Meanwhile, we have 50-60-65-70 new members in the House of Commons. I think that the communities that these new members represent would like to have their voices heard in this place. We need to set this bill in the context of the government's propensity, whenever it feels it is in its favour, to run roughshod over parliamentary democracy.

We have several different, sometimes competing, interests. It is incumbent upon us as parliamentarians and it is incumbent upon the government, if it chooses to take that responsibility, to actually try to balance all of these concerns and to move forward in a way that builds this nation. The Conservative government likes to pit groups against each other. We saw that very early on when it tried to pit young workers against older workers in the lockout of CUPW workers.

● (1040)

We have seen time and time again that the reflex of the government is to divide. The reflex of the government is to play. As my hon. colleague over here said in his question/speech, it likes to come up with winners and losers. That is not what we are here to do.

We are here to bring people together, so that we create winners in this country, not some winners and some losers. That is what we on this side of the House believe in. That is why this bill does not go nearly far enough. It does not go far enough at all.

One of my colleagues opposite has said that Canadians deserve to have representation that is fair and balanced. We agree that Canadians do deserve that.

However, we have a system of first past the post, which has created a scenario where, on the government side, 39% of Canadians voted for the government and, on this side, 61% of Canadians voted for other parties.

When we are talking about how we are going to fix the democratic deficit in this country, certainly the conversations that Canadians are having, and I think the hon. member opposite would agree, are more about the issues and distortions that first past the post create in our country than they are about the redistribution of seats.

We have several questions before us. The Senate is another example. I do not see many people in this country storming my office, pleading with me to advocate on behalf of Senate reform. They are wondering why we are spending \$100 million on a non-elected Senate that actually shuts down bills that this democratically elected House passes. That is shameful. That is why more and more Canadians question the validity of the Senate; that is not to question

the validity of those good senators who do some good work. We are talking about the institution here.

We have significant issues before us. The reason that we are here is to advocate for fair representation. We have no disagreement that there are some issues that need to be solved here. There is no question about it.

Fast growing provinces are not accurately represented here. There is no question about it. However, at the same time, we as a country have passed a unanimous motion that the Québécois form a nation in a united Canada. It is incumbent upon us to maintain the weight that Quebec has in this House.

We need to move beyond the divide and conquest approaches of the government to actually truly fix the democratic deficit in this country, which certainly includes seat redistribution, but it also includes a real examination of our electoral system and first past the post.

● (1045)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I understand the Conservatives' position on this particular bill. The Prime Minister has had a flip-flop. At one time, he used to believe that we should be reducing the number of members of Parliament. Today, for whatever reason, he is going against what public opinion really wants. He has made the decision to increase the size of the House of Commons. I understand the Conservatives' and the Prime Minister's position today. I wish it would change, but I understand it.

It is with regard to the New Democrats where I am a little confused, and I think many viewers would be confused. All we really get from them is that the province of Quebec should not have to respect the principles of representation by population. I understand that aspect of it. Where I fall short, and I think viewers fall short, is just how many more members of Parliament should be added in order to accommodate what it is that the New Democrats are advocating for?

Do they want to see 350 members of Parliament? Do they have a plan like the Conservatives have put forward. The Conservatives are saying 338. The Liberals are saying 308. How many MPs does the NDP want to see in the House?

Mr. Andrew Cash: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member heard me say that this is an exercise in nation building, not an exercise in partisan one-upmanship or, in my view, dangerous populism. We are talking about fair representation. Speaking of which, the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier in June was quoted as saying that his party is not against the idea of Quebec getting more seats, but will wait to see the whole picture.

Canadians really wonder where the Liberals are on this issue because they seem to be all over the place. It bears mentioning that we are the only official party in this place that advocates for proportional representation. That is a key issue here.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the thing that troubles me in conversation with my constituents is that all the attention is adding more members of Parliament and somehow that is going to serve the needs of constituents across Canada.

Government Orders

We have witnessed over the past two years the Prime Minister freezing the budgets of constituency offices. There are rumours afloat that there may be even further cuts if we increase the number of members of Parliament. That is one of the greatest discoveries I made in getting elected, is how important members of Parliament and their staff are in the constituencies.

We have cuts to the civil service that delivers EI and services to seniors. In my constituency there are three university campuses. I have many community leagues who are struggling to deliver the services that the government is not delivering.

I wonder if the member could speak to why it is that we are pushing for an answer being proportional representation and proper financing, so that constituencies can deliver the needs of the people of Canada.

Mr. Andrew Cash: Mr. Speaker, democracy is not just about seat redistribution. When the member opposite talked about all the people coming into his office with EI issues and immigration issues, maybe the member opposite should start talking to his cabinet colleagues about why we are flooded with these issues. This is about democracy too.

I think my colleague on this side speaks to a very important issue which is that if we are going to actually serve our constituents better, many things need to be in place and this conversation around seat redistribution is an important conversation, but it is not the only one that is going to solve the democratic deficit here in this country.

Ms. Eve Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-20, the fair representation act, as it would provide much fairer representation for my home province of Ontario. What the bill addresses is the serious and increasing under-representation of our fastest growing provinces, especially Ontario.

This under-representation is a serious problem that requires an immediate solution. Something must be done. This problem is only going to get worse if we keep the status quo. Happily, we have a solution to fix this problem and a government that is interested in fixing it, not just using the problem to score political points.

Our government is committed to addressing this problem with the fair representation act. Bill C-20 provides a principled update to the formula allocating House of Commons seats that is fair for all provinces. This is an important point. Increasing representation for the faster growing provinces should not be done at the cost of pitting region against region, or Canadian against Canadian. What we have seen from the opposition parties on this issue is quite the opposite. Their proposals, both in their own way, compromise the democratic representation of some Canadians in the name of making political statements.

The NDP, on the one hand, would guarantee a province a fixed percentage of seats in the House regardless of its share of the population. That is not in keeping with our formula that moves all provinces closer to representation by population. The fact is the NDP proposal would introduce a new factor that would cause further under-representation of the faster growing provinces, like Ontario, provinces that we need to treat more fairly. The change proposed by the NDP is not something this House and our Parliament can do on its own.

The Liberals, on the other hand, present a proposal that would be a recipe for provincial anger and conflict. The Liberals propose taking seats away from the smaller, slower growing provinces and giving those seats to the larger, faster growing provinces.

We make no apologies for addressing the significant and increasing under-representation of ordinary Canadians. Our bill does that, just as we promised it would. We also make no apologies for believing that this problem should not be fixed by inflicting seat losses on other provinces.

Just as we are ensuring that no province can move from being overrepresented to under-represented as a result of this formula, we are also ensuring that no province would lose seats through this formula. That is why we made three distinct promises on House of Commons representation in the last election to ensure that any update to the formula would be fair for all Canadians in all provinces. First, we said we would increase the number of seats now and in the future to better reflect population growth in places like British Columbia, my home province of Ontario, and Alberta. Second, we would protect the number of seats for smaller provinces. Third, we would protect the proportional representation of Quebec according to its population.

We would have to move away from those promises in order to implement either of the opposition parties' proposals. We are not going to do that.

Our government received a very strong mandate in the last federal election to deliver on the commitments we made, and we are doing exactly that with the fair representation act. It is important that these three commitments be taken together. When taken together, the update to the formula allocating House of Commons seats would be fair across the country. The practical result of Bill C-20 is that every single Canadian moves closer to representation by population.

Our first commitment is the importance of introducing a seat allocation formula that is more responsive to population size and trends. This legislation would move the House closer to fair representation for Canadians living in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, while maintaining the number of seats for slower growing provinces, and ensuring Quebec's representation is equal to its population. By introducing a seat allocation formula that is more responsive to population size and trends, the fair representation act would move the House closer to representation by population both now and well into the future.

● (1050)

The practical effect is that Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta would be entitled to new seats under the fair representation act. Ontario, with the largest population, would receive 15 new seats. Historically, we have always been under-represented in the House. I believe my residents deserve equal voice in the House. Alberta would receive six new seats rather than only three. British Columbia would receive six new seats rather than only one. Quebec's representation which will equal its population means that it will receive three new seats.

Statements by Members

This is the best formula to move all provinces toward representation by population in a principled manner. This fair representation would have a direct effect on my riding in Mississauga and on the greater Toronto area as a whole. Canadians, especially new Canadians and visible minorities, would be much more fairly represented than they are now. Ontario residents are entitled to fair representation, and the populations of our ridings would be much more manageable.

Our second commitment is that the government will address under-representation in a way that respects the representation of smaller provinces. This is a long-standing commitment of our government and our party. Canadians have given us a strong mandate to deliver in this regard.

The fair representation act is fair for all Canadians, not just for some provinces. It is a measured investment that brings every single Canadian closer to representation by population. We have committed to protect the seat counts of the smaller provinces and we will keep that promise.

Finally, our third commitment under the fair representation act also provides that the seat allocation formula would apply a representation rule. If a province becomes under-represented as a result of the application of the updated formula, additional seats would be allocated to that province so that its representation would equal its share of the population. Based on population estimates, Quebec would be the first province to receive new seats in order not to become under-represented by the application of the updated formula.

Quebec has 23% of the provincial population and will have 23% of the provincial seats in the House of Commons. My colleagues have said that before and I will repeat that again. Quebec would be fairly represented under this bill. That said, the representation rule is nationally applicable and applies equally to every single province in the country that enters the scenario.

This representation rule is a principled measure that ensures smaller and low-growth provinces would not become under-represented in the future. They would maintain representation that is in line with their share of the population. That is fair as well.

In conclusion, this bill, the fair representation act, is the best formula to address the under-representation of Canadians living in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia without causing undue conflict. It is reasonable. It is principled. It is nationally applicable. Most importantly, it is fair to all Canadians. It will achieve better representation for Canadians living in faster growing provinces while maintaining representation for smaller and slower growing provinces. It is eminently more fair for Ontario. It brings every single Canadian closer to representation by population. It delivers on our government's long-standing commitment to move toward fair representation in the House of Commons.

The fair representation act is principled and reasonable legislation that needs to be passed as quickly as possible. I encourage the opposition to work with us on this important piece of legislation for Ontario and for all Canadians.

●(1055)

The Speaker: The hon. member will have five minutes for questions and comments after question period.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

FRED PAGE CUP

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to congratulate the Truro Junior A Bearcats in my hometown. The team will host the 2013 Fred Page Cup.

The Fred Page Cup is the eastern Canadian Junior A hockey championship. It will showcase the best Junior A hockey players from Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.

I congratulate Stu Rath, Keith MacKenzie, Shawn Evans, and the rest of the Bearcats organization for being awarded this tremendous opportunity.

I would like to let members and all Canadians know that this event will be held in the Central Nova civic centre, a brand new facility which is under construction right now, thanks in part to a \$10 million federal government investment announced by the Prime Minister himself in February 2010.

The Fred Page Cup is going to be a tremendous event. I cannot wait to drop the puck at centre ice with the Minister of National Defence, who is also a great Truro Junior A Bearcats fan, and then see the Truro Junior A Bearcats hoist the cup in victory.

I invite everyone to come and see the Fred Page Cup in Truro and enjoy some of our world-class hospitality.

* * *

●(1100)

[Translation]

SOS RICHELIEU

Mr. Tarik Brahmi (Saint-Jean, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely shocked and disgusted today by the theft that took place on December 7 at SOS Richelieu.

This assistance organization, which was created in the aftermath of the disastrous flooding that devastated a large part of the Montérégie region in the spring and summer of 2011, surprised everyone with its quick response and incredible effectiveness across the Haut-Richelieu region.

A total of \$17,000 in gift cards was stolen. These gift cards, donated by extremely generous business owners in the riding of Saint-Jean, were to be handed out to the flood victims' children at the children's Christmas party organized by the Fraternité des policiers et policières de Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. I commend this association for its solidarity.

On September 25, I even personally invited these people from SOS Richelieu to congratulate them.

I want to reiterate my support for the entire SOS Richelieu team and especially its president, Michel Fecteau, and to let them know that they can count on me, the members of the NDP and my colleagues from Chambly—Borduas and Brome—Missisquoi to help boost morale among the families affected by the flooding.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last spring Canadians elected a government that is listening and keeping its promises.

Canadians told me they wanted a government that would make keeping their children and communities safe a priority. As promised, within the first 100 sitting days of Parliament, we will pass Bill C-10.

Farmers in my riding told me that they wanted the freedom to market their own wheat and barley. We are delivering by passing Bill C-18.

I regularly hear how wasteful the long gun registry is. I am very pleased that the government is passing Bill C-19 to end this discrimination against law-abiding citizens.

People across Canada have also told me of the need for increased transparency and accountability for first nations governance. I am proud that the government has introduced Bill C-27.

We have listened and we have acted.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, rising global greenhouse gas emissions present clear evidence that the fight to prevent dangerous climate change is being lost, and we must not let that happen. That is why the stakes are so high at the climate conference in Durban and why constructive solutions are so urgently needed. How shameful that the Conservative government has been described as “swinging a wrecking ball through the conference”.

Canada's emissions continue to increase and will fall well short of our required reductions as well as the watered-down Conservative targets for 2020.

Under the current government, the oil and gas industry receives \$1.3 billion in annual subsidies. In effect, Canadian taxpayers are paying almost \$9 for every tonne of CO₂ pollution the industry emits. That is backwards. In Europe the polluter pays per tonne of CO₂. The result in Germany has been the creation of almost half a million new green energy jobs.

The conference in Durban ends today, but the battle to prevent climate change is far from over. The government must respect the majority of Canadians who want Canada to help construct, not obstruct, solutions.

Statements by Members

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of the House to the situation in Camp Ashraf, which the Iraqi government has demanded be closed by the end of the month.

The camp, which is home to over 3,000 political refugees, has been protected by the U.S. and coalition forces. However, with the U.S. winding down its operation in Iraq, there are concerns that this will displace thousands of people who will have nowhere to go.

Canada encourages the Iraqi government to extend the closure deadline in order to allow remaining residents sufficient time to take the required steps to seek asylum and to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to consider and process applications.

We call on Iraq to meet its obligations under international law and ensure that Camp Ashraf residents are not forcibly transferred to another country where they could suffer.

Canadians, and indeed all people, expect no less.

* * *

[Translation]

HOMELESSNESS

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a group of individuals. We often see them on the street, but we do everything we can to ignore them. I am talking about homeless people.

Because of the economic crisis and job losses, their numbers are increasing. This summer, shelters were at 90% capacity, which is unheard of. Imagine how full they must be now that winter is here. Moreover, this phenomenon is not unique to urban centres; the number of homeless people is on the rise in my riding of Hochelaga, which is about five kilometres from downtown Montreal.

Despite the skyrocketing needs, federal funding is a third of what it should be. Several vital programs have been denied assistance. For instance, Cap Saint-Barnabé in Hochelaga needs more support. The government needs to deal with what is quickly becoming an emergency situation and provide funding to community groups immediately.

Here is my suggestion to government members: the next time they meet a homeless person in the street, they should look that person in the eye. Perhaps then they will understand.

* * *

● (1105)

[English]

HEAD INJURIES

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to bring awareness to an issue I have championed for years in my role as a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, and that is the prevention of injuries among Canada's youth.

Statements by Members

Injury prevention is critical to providing safe environments for Canada's children to grow up healthy and active. Tragically preventable injuries are one of the leading causes of death of Canadian kids.

In my riding of Simcoe—Grey, I was pleased to hold a helmet clinic at Matthew Co-op in Collingwood to highlight to children the importance of wearing helmets.

[*Translation*]

I am proud to be part of a government that has taken real steps to reduce sports-related head injuries among Canada's youth.

[*English*]

Our government's national injury prevention strategy, launched nine months ago, is making significant strides in investing in the initiatives to reduce head injuries. Organizations like the Sandbox Project and ThinkFirst are just two of the many organizations that have brought awareness to head injuries and concussions.

I urge all members of this House to encourage young people to stay active, play sports and, most importantly, play safe by wearing a helmet.

* * *

[*Translation*]

EASTERN OTTAWA RESOURCE CENTRE

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the holiday season is a time for all Canadians to embrace the spirit of Christian love and sharing. However, what are happy memories for some can cause anxiety in others.

[*English*]

As we prepare to offer our families and loved ones tokens of affection, let us go beyond the symbols of consumerism. Let us offer real love and sharing. Let us focus on the real meaning of Christmas. Reach out and lend a hand to someone in need.

In Ottawa—Orléans the best way is to assist the Orléans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre at 613-830-4357.

[*Translation*]

May we never forget to reach out to those in need. In Ottawa—Orléans, the best way to do so is through the Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre, at 613-741-6025.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

* * *

WHITE BIRCH PAPER

Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the 600 workers of White Birch Paper in Quebec City, their families, the suppliers, and customers waiting for delivery of their orders continue to be held hostage by investor Peter Brant. Unless Justice Robert Mongeon deems the shutdown illegal and requires the plant to continue operating 24/7, 365 days a year, all these people will be at the mercy of a billionaire's whims, two weeks before Christmas.

The Quebec City mill has a full order book and White Birch Papers has tens of millions of dollars in liquid assets. The current owner is refusing to top up the employees' retirement fund after years of failing to make contributions. This holdup of our industrial gems is tantamount to the despicable abandonment of our honest citizens by vultures who are incapable of contributing to our society.

For too long our government has sacrificed our men, women and children to these criminals masquerading as respectable people. Dealing with these economic crimes is on the NDP's agenda.

* * *

[*English*]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not long ago, Canada's natural resource industries were considered the old economy. No more hewing of wood and drawing of water for us; we were all going into that new information economy.

Our natural resource industries have come roaring back and are now the backbone of the Canadian economy. A recent BMO forecast said that economic growth would be the strongest in provinces dominated by the resources sector. The recent 3.5% third quarter increase in Canada's GDP was largely driven by a surge in exports of natural resources from rural Canada.

From mining to energy, from agriculture to forestry, from commercial fishing to trapping and from angling to hunting, these sectors are all carried out in rural Canada. They represent environmentally sound sustainable use at its very best. Interestingly, rural Canada represents about 20% of the Canadian population, but accounts for close to 50% of the value of Canada's exports. Talk about punching above our weight.

I represent a truly rural riding and I am proud of the contribution that rural Canadians and our natural resource industries make to our country.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, December 10, is Human Rights Day. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created 63 years ago, and we have recognized the extraordinary work of those who defend human rights throughout the world every year since then.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has declared the theme for Human Rights Day 2011 to be social media and human rights.

This year, the Arab Spring showed the extraordinary power that social media have to identify and denounce human rights abuses. Human rights defenders from Tunisia to Yemen took to the streets to demand the establishment of true democracy and an end to human rights violations. Through social media, activists throughout the world, from New York to Cairo, are able to engage in discussions and organize peaceful protests that focus on the importance of human rights for everyone.

Respect for human rights is everyone's responsibility. On this important day, I would like to pay tribute, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, to all those who defend human rights.

* * *

●(1110)

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Brampton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 30th anniversary of Canada's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It happens on December 10, Human Rights Day.

Canada was one of the first countries to sign and ratify this convention, which set international standards for eliminating gender discrimination. It provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men in economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

Promoting equality for women and their full participation in the social, economic and democratic life of our country is a priority for our government. In line with our treaty obligations under this convention, we continue to take targeted action so women and girls are safer, more secure and much more economically successful.

* * *

ROBERT RIDEOUT

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour a great Newfoundland who recently passed away. A great family man, a great soldier and a dear family friend, Robert Rideout, or Bob Rideout as most of us knew him, lived, married and raised his family in the town of Botwood.

In 1942, at only 17 years of age, Bob joined the 166th Field Regiment as a gunner and went to war overseas in Great Britain and Italy. After World War II, Bob devoted decades of service to the Royal Canadian Legion. He was a branch president and became a life member of Branch 12 in Grand Falls—Windsor. He was also commanding officer of the Botwood Sea Cadet Corps. For many years, Bob Rideout spent countless hours visiting veterans all over the province.

In 2005 he was awarded the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation. In 1999 he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

At his funeral, Father Eugene Morris said that Bob Rideout exemplified the term "service", service to his family, service to his community and, indeed, service to his country.

Statements by Members

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I commend individuals like Nguyen Van Ly, Gao Zhisheng, Joseph Zen Ze-kiun and others who continue to struggle to promote freedom.

As Canadians, we should bear in mind that the rights we enjoy are not always shared by others around the world. Criminalization for apostasy and blasphemy disproportionately affects the religious minorities.

Regrettably, egregious violations of the right to religious freedom against individuals continue. Some examples include Baha'is and Sufis facing mistreatment in Iran, Christians being forced out of Iraq, Copts facing attacks by extremists in Egypt, and Ahmadis continuing to face discrimination in Pakistan.

Sadly, places of worship, including churches, mosques, synagogues, shrines and monasteries, have been attacked or vandalized.

Our government will continue to promote freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law around the world.

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[Translation]

LANGUAGE OF WORK IN QUEBEC

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, once again, I am pleased to rise to defend the French language in this House, but I am also sad because we have yet to see many results.

There are all kinds of concerns about the difficulty of working in French in Quebec, and the best idea the Conservatives could come up with was to create a committee, which we have not heard of since.

It is a non-committee with no mandate, no time frame, no chair, no budget, nothing concrete, nothing other than the government's clear attempt to buy time, hoping that the situation will resolve itself, but everyone knows that it will not. It is quite the opposite, in fact. Problems continue to multiply, in banks, at Air Canada—with the potential move of 140 employees—and even in the Canadian public service.

I want to commend the work of the NDP, which has done its homework and is proposing practical solutions to problems facing francophone workers.

Once again, I urge the government to accept our offer of help and to work with us to recognize the language rights of francophones.

Oral Questions

●(1115)

*[English]***CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS**

Mr. Brian Jean (Fort McMurray—Athabasca, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this has been a fantastic week for Canada-U.S. relations, our trade relationship and, most important, the Canadian economy.

I thank the Prime Minister, because on Wednesday he travelled to Washington, D.C., to announce the new beyond the border agreement with the President of the United States. Following the announcement, key economic stakeholders from both countries viewed this deal as very favourable. In fact, John Manley, president and CEO of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, said that this “announcement represents a significant and much-needed step forward in Canada-U.S. cooperation, building on the success of the North American Free Trade Agreement”.

Our government has laid out a practical but ambitious plan to create jobs at home by improving the flow of goods and people across the Canadian-U.S. border. Going forward, we will continue to focus on what really matters most to Canadians: creating jobs and strengthening the Canadian economy.

ORAL QUESTIONS
*[Translation]***POVERTY**

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the gap between the rich and the poor in Canada is growing. According to the OECD, 10% of Canadians have an income of less than \$10,000. In my riding, homeless shelters are full to overflowing. These people do not have a voice. They are helpless in the face of the government's inaction.

While the big banks are reaping record profits, the poor are becoming increasingly poor. How can the government justify this injustice?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are pleased with the success our economic action plan has seen over the past few years. Many new jobs have been created.

However, we are well aware that there is still a lot of work to be done. That is why we included measures in the budget to speed up job creation, so that all Canadians can have a good quality of life.

As the federal government, our top priorities will continue to be job creation and economic growth.

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THE ECONOMY

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the six biggest banks in Canada made \$25.5 billion in profit this year. To reward them, the Conservatives are giving them \$1.4 billion in tax cuts. We know for a fact that these gifts do nothing. No jobs will be created.

In other words, while families are having difficulty making ends meet, they are paying taxes to give gifts to banks. What exactly does this do for Canadians?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, providing support to low-income Canadians has been a huge priority for our government over the past six years. Let us look at some of the initiatives we have taken: we have taken over one million low-income Canadians right off the tax rolls, so they are not paying a dollar of tax themselves; we have increased the basic personal amount Canadians can earn without paying taxes; we have introduced the working income tax benefit to support low-income Canadians; we have increased the guaranteed income supplement for our most vulnerable seniors; and, finally, we lowered the GST, one of the taxes that low-income Canadians pay the most, from 7% to 6% to 5%. The NDP voted against each and every one of these initiatives.

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier-Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to take just one example, we could certainly do a lot more for seniors.

We are all for a healthy, well-regulated financial sector in this country, but that does not mean we should pamper the banks. The Royal Bank of Canada made \$6.7 billion last year. The Conservatives saw fit to contribute almost \$400 million to that profit in tax giveaways. How does that make sense?

Why are the Conservatives putting the Royal Bank before out-of-work Canadians?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not the case whatsoever. The member opposite, and Canadians, would be interested to know that banks in this country pay more than \$8.4 billion in taxes.

Let us talk about seniors. The member opposite talked about seniors. We are the ones who brought in substantial support, the biggest increase in the guaranteed income supplement in 25 years, and the NDP voted against that. We brought in income splitting to make retirement easier for couples; the NDP voted against it. We took more than a million low-income seniors entirely off the tax rolls; the NDP voted against it. These were good measures to support low-income seniors.

●(1120)

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the big six banks might be celebrating under the Conservative government, but Canadian families are not getting any further ahead. Jobless numbers are going up, not down. Life is getting more expensive, not more affordable. The \$1.4 billion the government just blew on tax cuts for profitable banks could have been used to create jobs.

The government sure likes to play Santa to the banks, but why are Canadian families only getting a lump of coal?

Oral Questions

Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadian families are gaining the benefit of the tax reductions that this government has put forward. As has been mentioned here earlier today, we have taken over a million low-income Canadians completely off the tax roll, which has helped families in need. An average family of four in this country pays \$3,000 less than it did when we came to government. That is what Canadians want to hear.

[Translation]

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the National Bank completed the round of publication of results of large Canadian banks by announcing that it made a record net profit of \$1.2 billion. Meanwhile, Canadians are having difficulty since job losses are piling up. A total of 19,000 jobs were lost in November and 54,000 full-time jobs were lost in October.

Since the Conservatives cling to the belief that tax cuts must be given to banks that are making billions of dollars in profit a year, here is a simple question. How many jobs will the Conservatives create with this gift of \$1.4 billion for the banks?

[English]

Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the job number that matters to Canadians is that 600,000 more Canadians are working today than were working at the end of the recession. That is because of the policies we put in place. It is because businesses are paying less tax, so those businesses can reinvest in themselves and can hire more Canadians. It is simple economics.

The NDP has voted against every one of those plans that we have put forward. We will continue to support our businesses so they can hire Canadians and get them back to work.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that at a press conference this morning the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development announced that he would be calling for yet another audit into the affairs at Attawapiskat.

I would like to point out to the government a simple fact, which is that it has not followed the recommendations of its own Auditor General with respect to its own activities, in particular having to do with the appointment of so-called third party managers.

There is no provision for a dispute resolution mechanism, there is no building of capacity for chiefs and councils, and there is no provision for any involvement by chiefs and councils in the selection of the third party manager.

Why is there a double standard? Why not apply the standards of the Auditor General to the—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is taking responsibility for the real challenges that we are seeing in Attawapiskat.

I should note that there has been some public comment that resources allocated toward health care, education and housing would somehow be diverted to support band administration. This is not the case. Not a single dollar will be used for that purpose, and the money to support the third party administrator will come from money that is set aside for band administration.

We are concerned about the huge challenges facing Attawapiskat. That is why we are getting involved and taking significant action to support these vulnerable people.

[Translation]

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot deny a very clear fact, and that is that since 2003, the Auditor General has been frank about the need for change in the very program that the government has just imposed on the Attawapiskat reserve. They have refused to follow the recommendations of their own Auditor General and, in the meantime, they are talking about the council's responsibility when they are not prepared to accept their own responsibilities. There is a double standard here, and that will create even more problems between the government and Indians across the country.

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is taking action to ensure that there is support for the families in Attawapiskat, who are facing a cold winter coming.

Immediately since the state of emergency, we have allocated \$500,000 in emergency funding to renovate five homes for families in urgent need of shelter. We are working quickly to provide temporary and long-term housing for more than 20 families, and our government will be working with our partners.

We have already sent 10 composting toilets, 20 high-efficiency wood stoves and other basic necessities. More supplies will be flown in during the coming days. This is real action for families in Attawapiskat.

● (1125)

Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister of Canada had the unmitigated gall yesterday to refer to mismanagement on the reserve, when it is the government's own mismanagement that has been called to account on three separate occasions in three separate audits by the Auditor General of Canada.

When will the government take responsibility for its grotesque failure to apply the basic standards of accountability and responsibility to itself? That is where the responsibility lies. That is where the mismanagement lies. It always has and it always will, and the Conservatives will turn around and blame the victim every single time.

That is what they—

The Speaker: The Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously there are challenges in the management of this reserve, since \$90 million has been spent since 2006 and we still have people living in these types of conditions.

Oral Questions

We have spent \$4 million on housing, \$10 million for water infrastructure and \$40 million in education, but Canadian taxpayers are not seeing the results for their hard-earned tax dollars. That is why this government and this minister have acted quickly to ensure that we provide the help our fellow Canadians in Attawapiskat so desperately need.

* * *

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, the Associate Minister of National Defence described a flight on a search and rescue helicopter from a fishing camp as “a very routine endeavour indeed”.

“Routine” is taking a taxi to an airport. “Routine” is taking a taxi to work.

I would like to ask the associate minister exactly what he means by “routine”. How frequently does the minister use a search and rescue helicopter to get back from vacation?

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence was on leave at his own expense. He was called back to work on very short notice. Government aircraft were used in this case for government business. Every rule—much more exigent, demanding rules—for the use of government aircraft was followed. This is a government that has reduced the use of government aircraft by 80% compared with the previous government.

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if indeed this is the only time the minister was hoisted in a basket by a helicopter and taxied to his next destination, how in the world can it be considered routine?

A minister takes a joyride in a search and rescue helicopter, then he makes up a story, then he changes the story, then he threatens to sue the people who question him.

My question today is simple. How can the minister explain the use of a search and rescue helicopter for a personal trip, and after all this, how can Canadians expect to have confidence in the Minister of National Defence?

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this side we do not expect the member opposite to show respect for the dedication of this minister, from taking part in training missions to visiting our troops when they are on missions abroad carrying out the business of Canada. This minister has shown dedication of an exceptional quality.

In this particular case, he was on holiday. He was there at his personal expense. He was called back to work on short notice. He followed the rules, and those rules are much tougher than they have ever been in this country.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Associate Minister of National Defence

refused to answer a very simple question. I will repeat it in order to give one of his colleagues a chance to answer it.

This week, Senator John McCain said that after 10 years and hundreds of billions of dollars, “we still do not have an aircraft that provides the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps with the combat capability they need”.

Can the Conservatives tell us how they interpret Senator McCain's comments? What will it take for them to realize that the F-35s are a disaster?

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is procuring the best aircraft in the world right now for the Royal Canadian Air Force. We are doing so to fulfill a very important mission: protecting Canada's sovereignty and carrying out overseas missions with our NATO allies, missions like the one in Libya.

This project, which will result in the acquisition of aircraft in a few years, is moving ahead as part of a joint plan with our allies, and we are very proud of it.

• (1130)

[English]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am always surprised at how the government can give such convoluted responses to such simple questions.

Senator McCain said there has been a 61% increase in development and acquisition costs since the program started. However, the Conservatives are still quoting a 10-year-old price from Lockheed Martin.

Why will they not agree with Senator McCain that this program needs rethinking? Why will they not put this deal out for competitive bids?

Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this project has already generated important results for Canadian companies, generating jobs and growth across this country. There is \$370 million in firm contracts for Canadian companies, many of them in Quebec, 65 of them engaged in this project. We continue to follow its progress through the Joint Project Office.

However, Leon Panetta, the Secretary of Defense for the United States, was very clear when he came to Halifax, as was the State Secretary of Norway when he came before us in committee. This is the best project for us and for many of our allies. It is going ahead.

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[Translation]

SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the agents who process employment insurance claims are not being allowed to work overtime during the holiday season, unlike in previous years. Thank you, Conservative government.

Yet this is the time of year when Service Canada must meet the increased demand for assistance from unemployed workers. These fathers and mothers do not know how they are going to pay their bills and still be able to give their children a few presents.

Has the Conservative government become the Grinch who stole Christmas?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the exact opposite is true. We recognize that there is always a surge in EI claims at this time of year. That is why we have a very long tradition of adding extra resources to process claims. We continue to respect that tradition and are adding more resources.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): That is very good to hear, Mr. Speaker. The reason there is a rise in EI claims is that too many Canadians are unemployed. There are a number of ways in which the government could show some heart but, in this particular instance, the government has chosen a totally different track.

First, the government cuts front line EI workers and now it is putting the kibosh on overtime. Consequently, families in Toronto, for example, who are unemployed, and there are many, are wondering how they will make ends meet.

The government could choose to be Santa Claus or choose to be the reindeer even. Why does it choose to be the Grinch?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has his facts totally backward. We agree with the OECD which said recently that employment was the most promising way of tackling inequality. That is why our number one focus for the last three years has been on jobs and economic growth.

We have brought in a number of ways to help Canadians get back to work, things like the home renovation tax credit that created jobs right away in small communities even like those in my riding. We also had the rest of the economic action plan that created over 600,000 new jobs. However, the hon. member and his friends keep voting against all these ways to help.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment spent several days in Durban this week, at Canadians' expense, only to sabotage the Kyoto protocol.

Any reason is good enough to justify Canada's withdrawal from this agreement, even though it is vital to our planet and future generations. This minister is embedded in the tar sands. He wants to maintain the status quo whereas the rest of the world is moving forward to create a new energy economy.

Did the minister go to Durban just for the fossil award?

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have said in this House many times this week, the Government of Canada

supports the development of an agreement that would have all major emitters around the table see real change in GHG emissions.

• (1135)

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder the minister is in Durban advancing the agenda of his big old friends. That is who he spends his time with. He has met with oil lobbyists almost three times more than he has met with environmental groups, and this is for a Minister of the Environment.

Why is it no surprise that, after all these meetings with oil companies, his government still broke its promise to regulate emissions from the oil sands this year?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we seek to understand the viewpoints of all stakeholders with regard to environmental stewardship, which is why we consult industry and environmental groups and why we have a strong sector-by-sector regulatory approach that seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and balances both environmental stewardship and economic sustainability.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week, Statistics Canada projected a 70% rise in Canada's aboriginal population over the next two decades. Given these numbers and the limited dollars being invested, we can project that even more aboriginal people will be living under the appalling conditions that Canadians have witnessed in the past few weeks. One in four aboriginal children already lives in poverty.

When will the government finally honour its treaties and deliver the necessary dollars for the infrastructure for Canada's aboriginal communities?

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been working in collaboration with willing partners in the first nations communities because we understand the demographics. We understand the infrastructure needs. We have invested significantly more than any other government. We continue to find productive and innovative ways to address these issues. We also want to get value for money.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in a document called "A Guide For Ministers and Ministers of State", dated 2011 and signed by the Prime Minister, in section F.4. under the heading "Ministers and the law" there is the statement, "All government activity must take place in accordance with the law".

It is rather surprising that that needs to be written down, but it is good to hear.

Oral Questions

A court of competent jurisdiction has ruled that the conduct of the Minister of Agriculture is “an affront to the rule of law”. Therefore, the minister has violated the Canadian Wheat Board Act and he has clearly violated the Prime Minister’s guidelines.

What are the consequences for ministers who violate the Prime Minister’s guidelines?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the consequences for western Canadian farmers when we pass this bill will be that they will finally have marketing freedom. They will have the same freedom as farmers across the rest of the country.

As noted, the judge himself said that this decision had no practical impact. Nevertheless, despite that, our government will be appealing that ruling and I am told that we will be appealing it today.

* * *

[Translation]

JUSTICE

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last spring, this government chose to be found in contempt of Parliament rather than disclosing the real costs of its tough on crime bill. Today, we know why. The Institut de recherche et d’informations socio-économiques estimates the cost of their more-prisons-less-justice bill at \$19 billion, most of which will be paid by the provinces. Nineteen billion dollars for an approach that was a dismal failure in the United States, instead of investing in prevention and protecting our youth. That is shameful. When will they recognize—

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

[English]

Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are concerned about crime and that is why they gave our government a strong mandate to keep our streets and communities safe. The cost of crime on society far exceeds the cost of fighting crime. This report referred to is ridiculous. As we have already disclosed, the federal cost of our current crime legislation will be less than 1% of what the opposition claims.

Part of keeping our communities safe is keeping dangerous criminals behind bars, not releasing them on to our streets before they serve their sentences.

* * *

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, millions of Congolese people voted at 63,000 polling stations. After the vote, each polling station posted its results outside. Today the election commission is tallying the results, but it is using only the total figures; there is no way to verify the accuracy of the results. International observers with the Carter Center have asked the election commission to post the results of each individual polling station. The Congolese diaspora is asking for the same.

Will the Canadian government add its voice to those that are calling for transparency in the elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

• (1140)

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will first acknowledge the interest of my colleague in this important issue. We are obviously very concerned with the violence and the significant amount of protests there have been as a result of the elections in the Congo. We want to see the most open and transparent election possible and the reporting of those results.

I completely agree with the member opposite. Canada would be very pleased to support such a request.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians play by the rules and they expect their government to do the same. As the chief justice of Alberta, Catherine Fraser, said in a ruling earlier this year:

When government does not comply with the law, this is not merely non-compliance with a particular law, it is an affront to the rule of law itself...

My question is a simple one and a yes or no will do. Does the government agree with the statement by Chief Justice Fraser?

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are in agreement with western Canadian farmers that they want certainty as soon as possible. They want certainty on January 1, 2012. They want to know that they can go out and start to book their contracts for next year and they want to know that they can deal with the people who they want to deal with. They want freedom and we will give them that.

The hearings are proceeding through the Senate committee. The bill will go back to the Senate. We look forward to the passing of Bill C-18 and we look forward to western Canadian farmers finally having the same freedoms that everyone else in Canada already has.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Madam Speaker, I did not hear any yes or no there.

[Translation]

Perhaps the government will not answer the question because it has a habit of breaking the law, as it did, for example, by going over its election budget, in violation of the Elections Act; by destroying government documents, in violation of the Access to Information Act; by sharing veterans’ personal information, in violation of the Privacy Act; and now by ignoring prairie farmers, in violation of the Canadian Wheat Board Act.

Why does this arrogant government, which is always on the defensive, seem to think that there is one set of rules for it and another set for the rest of Canada?

[*English*]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Oberg came down, he asked if members would join with him in interfering as much as possible with this bill. He asked them if they would hold the bill off until our introduction of it would disrupt the markets in western Canada. It looks like the NDP members took him seriously.

We need to get this bill passed. We need to get it in place so western Canadian farmers can begin to plant their crop, grow their crop next year and harvest their crop with the certainty that they will be able to market it as well.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the agreement concluded this week between the United States and Canada raises a lot more questions than it answers. Canadians are worried. They want to know exactly what this agreement means for them and their families. They want to know what information will be shared with the Americans and how long the information will remain on file in the United States. They also want to know whether their right to privacy will be respected.

Can this secretive government promise to answer Canadians' questions? Can it tell us what it intends to do to protect Canadians' rights?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this agreement is all about jobs, economic growth and trade with the United States. I know our NDP friends do not support free trade with the United States.

Why does the member opposite not trust Barack Obama, the president of the United States? Why does the member believe that he will do malicious things with information? That is really surprising.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, every time they sign an agreement, Canadians get the short end of the stick. This agreement will necessarily have repercussions on tourists who come to Canada every year. Is this going to complicate their lives? We do not know. Is this going to cost them a lot of money? We do not know. Is this going to discourage them from coming to Canada? We have no idea.

Can the Conservatives be transparent for once and tell us what impact this agreement will have on the thousands of restaurants, hotels and small businesses that rely on tourism?

•(1145)

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been very transparent. We have tabled the entire

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agreement, the entire action plan that will help to create jobs and opportunities, right here in the House of Commons.

We have seen a decline in the number of tourists in many border communities since 9/11 and since the passport requirements. What this will do is make it easier for more Americans, our biggest market for tourism, to come to Niagara Falls, more Americans to come to Vancouver, more Americans to visit Quebec City and more Americans to visit the Maritimes.

We are very pleased with that. The tourism industry is excited about this initiative. We will continue to move forward and create more jobs.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while our Conservative government is committed to promoting jobs with the next phase of Canada's economic action plan, the tax-and-spend NDP does not agree.

As Canadian families prepare for the Christmas season, the NDP is publicly demanding that new tax after new tax be imposed on families. It demands that we take more and more money out of the pockets of Canadians through higher taxes to pay for its tax-and-spend schemes.

Would the Minister of Finance please tell Canadians why our government rejects the NDP tax-and-spend approach?

Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the last question, the Minister of Foreign Affairs missed one important point. The NDP not only vote against every trade deal that we have put forward, it opposes every trade negotiation. Those trade negotiations create jobs in this country. The flow of people and goods across that border is so important.

What we are solely focused on is ensuring we create jobs within this country. Trade is supportive of that, but the policies that we put forward, which have created almost 600,000 net new jobs in this country, are results for Canadians, which is what Canadians asked for.

* * *

RURAL AIRPORTS

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government believes that it can pull the wool over the eyes of honest rural Canadians, sucker punch them, and then get away with it. Power corrupts.

Canadians learned the government is planning a fire sale of vital rural Canadian assets. On the chopping block are rural airports serving our most remote communities. These airports are a lifeline for Canadians living in small towns and rural communities from coast to coast to coast.

Why is the government abandoning rural Canadians?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, as announced in budget 2009, a review of corporate assets is being led by the greatest Minister of Finance in the world in collaboration with other fantastic ministers who are looking at various assets, including within the Department of Transport. Our government is committed to using hard-earned tax dollars in a way that is prudent and responsible.

That member should support the government.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what is worse than the government's empty answers and denials is that the secret documents that revealed the fire sale are blanked out. Canadians are left wondering which of our rural communities will be affected—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. There are far too many cross-conversations. I am having difficulty hearing the member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges. If members want to talk to each other, maybe they can do so outside of the chamber.

The hon. member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Mr. Speaker, Canadians are left wondering which of our rural communities will be affected by these closures. Canadians do not even know what other rural assets are being sold off because the government refuses to tell them.

Will the government come clean and tell these honest folk in rural communities which rural communities will lose out?

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Minister of State (Transport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to ensuring that taxpayers have the best value for their money. We want to ensure that government assets are used for the benefit of Canadians. If they do not benefit Canadians, the government will allow the assets to go to other people who will act for the benefit of Canadians.

The member should understand that the government should not own everything. If this member wanted it, the government would own all of the businesses and all the land in the entire country. That is wrong.

* * *

[Translation]

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the new aid to publishers program has completely missed the mark. Rather than helping local newspapers, it is pushing them into bankruptcy. There are no daily newspapers in a number of regions across the country. Weekly newspapers are an important source of information for the residents of these communities. We know that 75% of Canadians read their local papers every week.

Will the government promise to restore assistance to 2009 levels to protect regional newspapers?

• (1150)

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague knows, Canada Post decided to discontinue its \$15 million investment for

periodicals and community newspapers. Our government reinvested the \$15 million, but the NDP voted against it.

[English]

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, listening to this minister makes me believe we need to live in a big city to have a right to read a local paper.

Changes made to the program broke a help system that was working a lot better. Postal subsidy efficiently reduced costs for those papers. The money available to them now does not cover postal fees and simply is not enough.

These newspapers play a key role in the life of rural communities. Why is the government cutting help to local papers?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we formed government, \$75 million was being spent on local newspapers and periodicals. With the Canada Post subsidy today, we are spending \$75 million on local newspapers, magazines and periodicals. There were no cuts. It is the same amount of money.

As a matter of fact, it was Canada Post that decided not to continue on with the postal subsidies. What did our government do? We made up that difference and invested 15 million new dollars to support local newspapers. It was the NDP who voted against it.

We delivered. The NDP voted against it. Now he asks questions and says, "Where is the government?" We were here. Where was he?

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Sarkozy warned that, "Never has the risk of Europe exploding been so big".

Will the Minister of Finance take off his rose coloured glasses and take action to protect Canadian jobs? Will he cancel his planned \$600 million payroll tax hike in January? Will he listen to Canadian manufacturers and make the accelerated capital cost allowance permanent, and not just for two years?

Finally, will he cancel the government's plans to scrap the SR&ED program, which is so essential to creating jobs and opportunities in Canada's science and research and technology—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of State for Finance.

Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Liberals are a little late to the game. We have put in place policies that businesses asked for in the last two and three budgets. I believe that he was one of the Liberal opposition members who voted against it.

Let us hear what CIBC economist Warren Lovely said about Canada. He stated:

With the ranks of AAA-rated credits thinning out, market confidence in a European solution understandably shaky and political disharmony in Washington, Canada should continue to stand out for all the right reasons. Look for international capital to seek out Canada in size during the year ahead.

SERVICE CANADA

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this weekend a rally is going to take place against EI office closures and job cuts that are happening in Cape Breton. These job cuts will not only hurt Cape Breton, they will have a major impact on hard-working Canadians who need these benefits. The minister is already in trouble over wait times. What does she think is going to happen when she fires these Cape Breton workers?

Will the minister come to her senses, like Mr. Scrooge did, and help these unemployed Canadians by leaving these Service Canada jobs in place?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have as a goal getting the payments which Canadians are entitled to just as quickly and efficiently as possible. To that end, we are doing away with the old outdated paper heavy processing of EI claims. We are automating. We are bringing it into the 21st century, so that we can do things faster and get the payments right the first time. Unfortunately, all our efforts to do that have been objected to by the hon. member over there.

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SENATE REFORM

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, upon introduction of Bill C-7, the government said with great fanfare, “The measures introduced today will go a long way in making the Senate a more accountable and democratic institution”.

However—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I am going to ask colleagues one more time to please hold off their applause until the member is finished asking the question. Then they can feel free to applaud when he is finished asking his question. I will expect them to do that.

The hon. member for Hamilton Centre.

●(1155)

Mr. David Christopherson: Mr. Speaker, since Bill C-7, however, makes it illegal for elected senators to be accountable, my question to the minister is, where exactly is the accountability part in Bill C-7?

Hon. Tim Uppal (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government received a strong mandate from Canadians to reform the Senate. The status quo in the Senate is unacceptable. Senators can serve terms of up to 45 years without a democratic mandate from Canadians. Canadians find that unacceptable. We ask the opposition to support this bill and change the Senate, and not support the status quo in the Senate.

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats agree that the current status quo in the Senate is unacceptable. That is why we think we ought to get rid of it.

Accountability is a fundamental part of democracy. Accountability means that people run on a set of promises, make commitments to people, serve their terms in office, and when that is concluded, they

Oral Questions

go back to the people and say, “Here is what I did. How do I stack up? Do I deserve to be re-elected”? That is accountability.

Bill C-7 makes it illegal for senators to run for re-election and, therefore, they cannot be held accountable. I ask again, where is the accountability part of Bill C-7?

Hon. Tim Uppal (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians want a say in who represents them in the Senate and we are providing an opportunity for Canadians to have a say in who represents them in the Senate. The Senate itself must change in order to reach its full potential as an accountable and democratic institution.

The Senate must come into a 21st century democracy. We are taking reasonable steps to reform the Senate with the Senate reform act and I encourage members opposite to do the same.

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AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in July of this year Canada's combat mission in Kandahar successfully concluded. Canada's engagement in Afghanistan is now focused on four new key priorities: investing in the future of Afghan children and youth; advancing security, the rule of law and human rights; promoting regional diplomacy; and providing humanitarian assistance. This also includes a training mission based out of Kabul.

Given that our Canadian Forces have left Kandahar, could the Minister of Foreign Affairs please inform the House about how our government is honouring its international obligations with regard to detainees in Afghanistan in the context of this new engagement?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with the combat mission in Afghanistan now complete, I am pleased to inform the House that our government has signed an arrangement with the Obama administration to facilitate the transfer of detainees, captured by Canadian Forces in Afghanistan, to U.S. custody at the detention facility in Parwan. The U.S. operates this facility with the full agreement of the Afghan government and detainees can be prosecuted under Afghan law.

Canadian officials will continue to be present on the ground to monitor all Canadian transferred detainees until they are sentenced or released. From the onset of our engagement in Afghanistan, our government has consistently adapted processes for transferring detainees in Afghanistan to ensure that we met our international legal obligations. We have determined—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government promised that it would not stand in the way of countries that want to have an international climate change agreement, but it has done just that, and so it has been shamed once again with the Fossil of the Year award. What the Conservatives do not understand is that by isolating Canada—

Hon. James Moore: You won it three years in a row.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. The Minister of Canadian Heritage wants to answer the question. I am sure he can once the member for Vancouver Quadra is finished.

The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

Ms. Joyce Murray: Mr. Speaker, Conservative members are laughing, but in fact they are going to be losing Canadian jobs because more and more countries are putting trade restrictions on products from countries like Canada that are climate change laggards.

Why are the Conservatives jeopardizing Canadian jobs with their backward approach to climate change? It is shameful.

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in spite of the Liberal government's inaction on climate change and its record of increased emissions, our government is taking an international leadership stand. We want to have all major emitters sitting around the table and developing an agreement that would see real change in greenhouse gas emission reduction. We have a sector-by-sector approach that will see domestic action at home. This plan is working.

With regard to the Fossil of the Year award, the member opposite should know that the real award that counts is that our country sits on top of the G7 with regard to economic growth and job creation.

* * *

• (1200)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, once again, the government is negotiating an agreement that would be very detrimental to Canadians.

If free trade talks with the European Union go ahead and Canada agrees to extend patent protection for prescription drugs by three years, the price of medications could go up by nearly \$3 billion.

The health care system is already struggling and families are having a hard time making ends meet.

When will this government understand that it needs to lower prices and not raise them?

[English]

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, we were successful in signing the comprehensive economic trading agreement with the European Union. There is something that will go

up in Canada, without question. There will be a \$12 billion annual boost to the Canadian economy, a \$1,000 increase to every family's income, and somewhere in the neighbourhood of 80,000 new jobs created.

In the meantime, we will continue to look after Canada's best interests, and that includes pharmaceuticals.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Richard Harris (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has acted responsibly to ensure that residents of Attawapiskat have access to safe and warm shelter for the coming months. We delivered urgent funding to renovate existing homes on the reserve and brought in much needed supplies quickly. What is more, we have provided the chief with a detailed action plan to address the situation.

Could the minister please update the House on what else we are doing for the community to ensure results for residents and Canadian taxpayers?

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our priority is the health and safety of the people of Attawapiskat. Real progress is being made for the residents and Canadian taxpayers.

Today I announced the purchase of 15 modular homes for delivery to the community. I have also ordered a comprehensive and independent audit to identify how money has been spent and what oversight measures have been taken in the last five years.

We want to ensure the people of Attawapiskat get the results they deserve and all Canadians expect.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Commissioner of Official Languages received 400 complaints last year about the language of work at Air Canada.

Four hundred complaints in one year clearly shows that there is a problem. What is Air Canada doing? The company is moving over a hundred jobs from Montreal to Ontario.

Does the government think it is normal that working in English is becoming the norm at Air Canada?

Mr. Pierre Poilievre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Air Canada has official language obligations. According to the act and the requirements that the federal government put in place a long time ago, Air Canada must meet those obligations. Our federal government supports the Official Languages Act, and we expect other organizations that have the same obligations to meet them.

*Routine Proceedings***GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES**

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government is about to require \$8 billion in cuts per year, twice as much as it anticipated in its economic statement presented just one month ago. At the same time, the Conservatives are going to spend \$19 billion on prisons, \$30 billion on fighter jets, and tens of millions of dollars on monarchist symbols and the commemoration of a forgotten war against the United States.

Will the Minister of Finance get his priorities straight by making cuts in those areas and guarantee that service to the public and transfers to Quebec will not be affected?

[*English*]

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this review is focusing on responsible government spending to ensure ongoing value for Canadian taxpayers. This review is also an opportunity to modernize how we do business. Canadians have trusted us to make responsible, reasonable and judicious decisions.

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POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We hear constantly from the Minister of State for Finance regarding the so-called \$3,000 tax break for the average Canadian family.

I wonder if the Minister of State for Finance would like to table the document showing that amount.

• (1205)

Hon. Ted Menzies (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for raising that. I would encourage him to go back and talk to his constituents. I think that many constituents across this country, and we are using the average family of four as an example, have actually got 3,000 more dollars. The best people to ask are the constituents who have that money in their pockets.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the House of Commons “Report to Canadians” for 2011.

* * *

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 responses to 14 petitions.

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION ACT

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-382, An Act respecting the appointment of a Minister of State (Education).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the reason I am introducing this legislation is that over the 14 years I have been here, many groups, including the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, the Canadian Federation of Students, various college associations and university groups have come to Ottawa, but they have not had a specific minister with whom to discuss their educational concerns.

We have a Minister of State for Sport, a Minister of State for Transport, a Minister of State for Agriculture, and a Minister of State for Finance, but we do not have a minister of state for education. Even though education is a provincial jurisdiction, I believe a minister of state for education could summarize the concerns of all educators, colleges and universities in this country in order to facilitate best practices working with the provinces and territories to address the educational concerns for the 21st century.

I would hope that all members of Parliament would permit the speedy passage of this very important legislation. I thank the hon. member for Davenport for seconding the bill.

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

* * *

PETITIONS

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to table a petition from the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Evron on behalf of the Canadian Religious Conference. This is a group of retired nuns who have served around the world and who are deeply concerned about the inaction of the government on climate change.

The petition supports the interfaith call for leadership and action on climate change. The signators call on the government to recognize that global warming is a reality, that climate change affects all Canadians and people around the world. We cannot wait for others. We should lead by example. Our emissions can be reduced.

The petitioners call upon Parliament to sign and implement a binding international agreement to commit to national carbon targets and a new national energy policy and to implement climate justice by contributions to UN funds for clean energy and mitigation for poor nations.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present this petition to the House. All the petitioners come from the wonderful city of Calgary, Alberta.

Government Orders

The petitioners say that they want to protect the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as the national public broadcaster as it plays an important role. In the current media environment, public broadcasting is an essential promoter in both French and English. Canadians benefit from a shared national consciousness and identity as seen through CBC/Radio-Canada. CBC/Radio-Canada plays a crucial role in the conversation in this country. Every dollar that Canadians invest in public broadcasting creates almost four dollars in economic value.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to maintain stable and predictable long-term core funding for the public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada, in support of its unique and crucial role.

CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

One has to do with child pornography. Citizens are concerned about the creation, use and circulation of child pornography. They are calling on the government to protect our children by taking all necessary steps to stop the Internet as a medium for the distribution of child victimization and pornography.

• (1210)

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from folks who are very familiar with the issue of chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency. They are concerned about that. They call on the House of Commons to urge the Minister of Health to consult experts who have been actively engaged in the testing and treating of CCSVI, to urge the Minister of Health to proceed with phase III clinical trials and to urge the Minister of Health to require follow-up of patients with Doppler ultrasound and clinical examinations.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FAIR REPRESENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-20, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act and the Canada Elections Act, as reported (without amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

The Speaker: Before statements by members started, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs had five minutes left for questions and comments.

The hon. member for Louis-Hébert has a question for the hon. parliamentary secretary.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her speech.

There is one thing that she did not talk about much in her speech, which is the urgency of adopting this bill, which has resulted in yet another gag order. I would like to hear whether she thinks it is urgent that we pass this bill immediately. I will quote clause 5 of the bill, which states:

Unless the context indicates otherwise, in these rules, the population of a province is the estimate of its population as at July 1 of the year of the most recent decennial census.

We have just had a census, so the people who will set the riding boundaries will use the figures that will be published on June 1, 2012. In light of that, why is it so urgent that we pass this bill right now? We could have a few weeks of debate and it would not affect anything.

Ms. Eve Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

[English]

For many years now, residents in my riding of Mississauga—Brampton South, the residents of the greater Toronto area, the residents of Ontario in general, and of Alberta and British Columbia have been enduring under-representation. How much longer should this go on?

Canadians send us to this hallowed chamber and expect us to act. There have been reports that continue to sit on shelves collecting dust. We have put forward a very principled proposal that respects and reflects the representation and the population of every province in this country. It is a proposal that does not hurt any province. I think it is something that all members in this chamber ought to be supporting. I really do not understand why any members on that side would oppose it, especially if they are from Ontario.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a question in regard to the Prime Minister's position on the issue. This is an issue which I do plan to pursue and I plan to share with my constituents the response which she will provide.

Prior to becoming the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister advocated that the number of members of Parliament should be reduced. In fact, he suggested that there should be 265 to 295 members. Then he became the Prime Minister. Most Canadians believe as I do, that we do not need more members of Parliament in the House of Commons. What caused the Prime Minister to change his mind, to flip-flop?

I think Canadians would find it hard to understand why the Prime Minister believes we need more members of Parliament today than he used to believe just a few years back.

• (1215)

Ms. Eve Adams: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned during my remarks, there are three proposals on the floor today.

Government Orders

I think the one that comes from the NDP has most of us scratching our heads. It entrenches a fixed proportion, which simply means those provinces that are under-represented currently will continue to become more and more under-represented, and that is patently unfair to Ontario and to places like B.C. and Alberta.

The Liberal proposal is an interesting proposal, I will certainly grant that. The challenge, though, is that it will hurt certain provinces like Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I do not understand the need or the rationale to do that.

However, the Conservative proposal is a very principled proposal, a proposal that will finally address the under-representation that Ontario has faced for many years, without hurting other provinces, and that is fair. It is a very reasonable proposal and a reasonable way to move forward.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Tarik Brahma (Saint-Jean, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to speak today about Bill C-20.

Many things have been said about how the regions must be represented fairly. In order to emphasize the inconsistency of Bill C-20, the bill presented today by the government, I would like to focus on a case that has not been discussed very much to this point, and that is the case of Prince Edward Island.

Four of the 308 members of the House currently represent Prince Edward Island, when really the province should have just one representative. If we can abandon the purely mathematical approach that would have us divide the number of inhabitants by an electoral quotient in the specific case of Prince Edward Island, why can we not do the same for Quebec?

If this dead-simple and rather mean mathematical approach that would have us divide the population by an electoral quotient were used, the entire province of Prince Edward Island would have only one member of Parliament. The principle that we have accepted is the result of the Senate floor clause—one of the clauses that allows a province to have a different number of representatives than it would if the number were determined based solely on mathematical calculations—and it must also be applied to other specific cases. Quebec is one of them since Quebecers are one of the three founding peoples of Canada. If we want to respect the spirit that prevailed when Canada was created, Quebec must be allowed to maintain its political weight in the House.

Prince Edward Island has a population of 135,000 people, and it has four members of Parliament. Some ridings in provinces like Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta have 125,000 constituents. When we compare these numbers, we see that, on one hand, we have 125,000 constituents being represented by one member and, on the other, we have 135,000 constituents being represented by four members. This is not a purely mathematical calculation. On the contrary, in keeping with the spirit that prevailed when Canada was created, this country's culture includes the principle of fair representation, not just in the mathematical sense but also in terms of economic, geographic and historic realities.

If we accept the Senate floor clause—even though the NDP is far from a strong supporter of a Canadian Senate—we must keep in mind that Canada is a very big country with historic, geographic and

social specificities, since it has more than one founding people. We must therefore not apply a purely mathematical approach. To my knowledge, when the Conservative government introduced this bill, it never questioned the over-representation of Prince Edward Island.

There is a well-known saying that what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Either we are consistent and apply a mathematical formula, in which case Prince Edward Island would have only one member, or we accept the fact that representation will not be purely mathematical, but will have some significance, in which case special dispensation must be applied.

• (1220)

Special dispensation also applies to the territories. We have three territories that each have an MP, although if we used a mathematical formula, those three territories would likely be lumped together and represented by a single MP. So another exception is being made there.

The NDP is saying we should maintain the 24.35% for Quebec. Doing so would indeed depart from the mathematical formula and pure accounting principles, but this special dispensation embodies the unique nature of each part of the Canadian population, the people that make up this great democracy, this great historic and political space that is Canada today. It is because of these special dispensations that some provinces are overrepresented and others are underrepresented right now.

What is the NDP's position? We want more seats for those provinces that are growing rapidly, but we also want more seats for Quebec in order to maintain the 24.35%.

The results on May 2, 2011, gave us a historic opportunity to show Quebecers that they are welcome in the great Canadian family. This is a historic moment that has probably been underestimated. It is hard to see it because it is happening right now before our eyes. When historians look back at this time, they will understand its significance and its importance. It is a historic moment that has given hope to the most skeptical Quebecers, those who were the most reticent about the Canadian federation. Today, we must welcome them into the great Canadian family with a non-partisan bill, as the government is proposing, and a bill that sends a clear message to skeptical Quebecers that we want to welcome them into the great federal family.

I would like to commend the work of the hon. member for Compton—Stanstead. In introducing his Bill C-312, he did in fact take into account the special sensibilities of Quebecers. Today, as it will in the future, his bill is reaching out to the most skeptical and the most fearful to let them know that they are welcome.

Our bill will make changes to improve the representation of the provinces that are currently under-represented—Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta—but it will also maintain the weight of Quebec and the nation formed by Quebecers in this House, as stated in the 2006 motion, which, I remind hon. members, was adopted unanimously by this House.

I will stop there because I think the case of Prince Edward Island is a prime example of why there must be exceptions to purely accounting rules. I am available to answer any questions.

Government Orders

•(1225)

[English]

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the statements by the member opposite, particularly those regarding Prince Edward Island. We from the Maritimes are well aware that in some of the provinces we could be called overrepresented. However, in P.E.I.'s case in particular, it is protected by the Constitution of Canada, which says that every province has to have at least as many members of Parliament as it has senators. This gives P.E.I. a floor of four members of Parliament because it has four senators. Quebec does not have the same constitutional protection, so when we put forward a plan, we must take care to ensure that it is in line with the Constitution; otherwise, it will not pass the Supreme Court of Canada.

I know that the member opposite was just using P.E.I.'s special circumstance as an example, but it cannot really be applied. Our formula provides opportunities for Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario to gain seats. It moves everyone closer to representation based on population. It is an effective balance.

I would like to hear the member opposite's comments on that. Was he aware that P.E.I. had this constitutional protection, or is it something that is just coming to light now?

[Translation]

Mr. Tarik Brahmi: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member opposite.

Unfortunately, I do not think he got the right translation or maybe he did not get the translation at all, because I talked about the senatorial clause in my speech. I encourage the hon. member to read the blues. He will see that I talked about the senatorial clause from the beginning. I assure the hon. member that I am aware of this clause. I know that it is one of two clauses that enable Prince Edward Island to keep four seats. If we look at the letter of the law, we could say that Prince Edward Island is protected by a constitutional provision that Quebec does not have.

That said, I would also like to talk about the spirit of the law. Yes, we can simply look at the letter of the law and say that Quebec is not mentioned, so too bad; it does not have a right to maintain its representation. But the spirit in which the legislators created this federation was to respect the founding peoples, and even though this provision is not written in black and white, I think that that was their desire. I think that this desire to have representation for Quebecers is exactly what has made this federation so blessed.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to continue along the same lines as my colleague, who gave a very good speech indicating that he wants to set things right for Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario, and to respect the senatorial clause, which in any event is in the Constitution.

He has made the mistake, like the government, of not questioning the grandfather clause that requires us to add seats but never take any away. Only Canada does this. Furthermore, he wants Quebec to have a guaranteed 24.4%. If we apply all these rules, it becomes almost impossible to have a House that is a reasonable size because every

time we give more seats to the other provinces, we have to add seats for Quebec, and then the other provinces are under-represented, and so forth. We could easily have more than 350 seats. That is the first problem. The second problem, and my colleague is quite right about this, is that it is unconstitutional for Parliament alone to decide that the percentage of seats a province has will be frozen for all time. This also touches on the issue of the provinces' prerogative. I want my National Assembly to be respected, in other words that it can have a say in constitutional changes. I know that it is calling for change in the Canadian Parliament, but—

•(1230)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I must give the hon. member for Saint-Jean equal time to respond.

Mr. Tarik Brahmi: Madam Chair, I thank my colleague for his pertinent remarks. He is an expert in these matters and I cannot argue with him.

However, the fact remains that the Liberals' suggestion of reducing the number of members in the House is not a good idea because, in the end, MPs would have to represent larger numbers of voters. If we want members to be close to their voters, we cannot accept the Liberal Party's suggestion of reducing the number of MPs while the population is increasing. It would be contrary to the demographic trends in this country.

[English]

Mr. Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton—St. Albert, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is indeed an honour for me to rise and add my comments at report stage with respect to Bill C-20, the fair representation act.

As members know, representation by population is one of the fundamental principles of democracy. In fact, it is one of the principles that this country was founded upon.

In researching the debates leading to the British North America Act and the formation of Upper and Lower Canada with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in 1867, members would know that the Fathers of Confederation insisted that the House of Commons would be based on the concept of representation by population; that all Canadian citizens in the new country of Canada would have an equal voice in electing members to this chamber and an equal voice in the affairs of their nation; and that their members would, within reasonable limits, represent the same number of people.

Those principles that our country and Constitution are based on are as valid today as they were in 1867, so it will come as no surprise to the members of the House that I support Bill C-20 and congratulate the Minister of State (Democratic Reform) for introducing this legislation. In my view, it will remedy some of the current deficiencies in representation in this chamber.

This legislation, as members of the House know, does not dictate the number of seats that each province would get; rather, it sets a formula and changes the formula that determines the representation in this House.

Several provinces in our Confederation are growing much more quickly than others. I happen to represent an electoral district in one of those faster-growing provinces, the province of Alberta. The other faster-growing provinces are British Columbia, where you, Madam Speaker, are a representative, and Ontario.

Government Orders

On representation by population, I think we can agree on two things: that it is a principle that ought to be adhered to to the greatest extent possible, and that true and perfect representation by population is impracticable in a country as diverse as Canada.

Simply stated, on the one hand we have too many densely populated areas. Around the GTA, for example, Mississauga, Brampton and other suburbs are densely populated and growing arithmetically. Conversely, we have very sparsely populated parts of our country: the Arctic, the Northwest Territories, Yukon, even northern Alberta. Driving an hour north of my riding of Edmonton—St. Albert, one begins to enter the sparsely populated parts of our province.

We will never have perfect rep by pop because there has to be some accommodation for the less densely populated areas to be represented. Of course those provinces and territories are entitled to representation, and they require and deserve a voice on national issues.

Over time, representation in this place has been modified by a number of formulas, each superimposed upon the other, and we have talked about them today. There is the Senate floor clause, I think from around 1915, which guaranteed that no province could have fewer seats in the lower chamber than it had in the upper chamber. Then there is the 1985 grandfather clause, which dictates that no province could have fewer seats than it had at that time. We have a number of rules superimposed upon each other, and those rules, coupled with the fact that some provinces, including mine, are growing very quickly have led to the current disproportion.

It is a significant disproportion. According to the Mowat Centre, 61% of Canadians are currently under-represented in this chamber. Worse, visible minorities in visible minority communities are particularly under-represented. That is because they tend to reside in under-represented densely populated urban areas, largely but not exclusively in the Greater Toronto Area of Ontario.

I was speaking with my colleague from Brampton West after question period. According to the 2006 census, in his riding he has the highest number of constituents in this country.

• (1235)

Based on the 2006 census, the population of Brampton West was 170,422 people, but he advises me that those numbers are five years old and that there are likely more than 200,000 people living in his constituency.

More significantly, 53% of those, according to the member, are visible minorities. This creates some really distinct problems when we try to represent both that number of people and that number of visible minorities.

As I know from representing the good people of Edmonton—St. Albert, the majority of what we refer to as “casework” is immigration work on behalf of individuals attempting to get visas for their relatives or to expedite their path to citizenship. I represent a relatively homogenous riding in Alberta, but casework still takes up probably close to 70% of the files that come to my office from constituents needing my assistance, so I cannot imagine the workload for a member like the member for Brampton West, who

represents, according to him, 200,000 people, half of whom are visible minorities.

The bill tends to remedy those deficiencies by working toward representation by population, although admittedly not achieving it in any perfect form.

Under the new formula, the calculation would give Ontario 15 additional seats, British Columbia six additional seats and my province, Alberta, six additional seats. Because of Quebec's unique status within Confederation, Quebec would be provided with three additional seats to allow its representation to be comparable to what it is currently.

This is a great attempt at moving toward representation by population.

I want to share an anecdote, because I have some experience in this matter.

I know the members of the Liberal Party are advocating that provinces such as mine be awarded extra seats but that the size of the House not be increased. We were faced with a very similar problem in Alberta about eight years ago, when I was the MLA for Edmonton—Calder. We had a comparable situation in that the city of Calgary was growing very quickly; the city of Edmonton was growing, but slowly; and rural Alberta was either staying constant or, in some parts, actually getting smaller. As a result, the people of Calgary were under-represented in the provincial legislature, and we had to wrestle with this very same issue.

Ultimately the decision we made was similar to what the Liberals are currently proposing federally: the provincial legislature would stay at 83 seats, but to accommodate that, we would take two seats away from rural Alberta and one away from Edmonton and give those three seats to Calgary. I know the member for Crowfoot remembers that situation.

The outcry, which ought to have been predictable, was loud. The citizens of Edmonton would not and did not accept that one of their members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta would be taken out of play and that they would have one less representative. They felt disenfranchised.

They spoke loudly, first through letters to the editor. Editorialists wrote that the MLAs for Edmonton were not standing up for Edmonton. They subsequently spoke in the next election about their dissatisfaction. Of course, that was not the only issue, but they were certainly dissatisfied with the loss of a member of the legislature.

I say to my friends opposite who advocate keeping this House at the same size by reducing the number of members from certain provinces that the citizens of those provinces will not accept it. They will argue, and argue correctly, that they have been disenfranchised, that they have lost membership in this House and that they care about representation. They will be upset.

This formula, which expands this House marginally, would allow for more representation for faster-growing provinces such as mine, Ontario and British Columbia, but it would not take away seats from any province. Therefore, it is a good compromise and a step toward representation by population, which is a fundamental concept of our democracy and needs to be preserved.

Government Orders

● (1240)

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Madam Speaker, I listened to my colleague opposite very closely.

He said that Quebec's status in this House would remain the way it was prior to the implementation of the bill, if it passes. That is simply not true. The member knows that Quebec's seat representation would drop by a percentage point.

Why the vagaries around the language? The hon. member knows that is the case. Why is he trying to say the opposite?

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Madam Speaker, under the formula, and it is a formula, it is not a dictation of seats, but based on population in the 2011 census, Quebec would be afforded three additional seats under the formula that is proposed in this bill. I am a little confused as to why the member believes that Quebec would lose representation. Quebec's representation would be within a very small margin of 24% or 23.8%, which is about what it is currently. In fact, Quebec would not lose seats. It would gain three seats.

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the example in his province where it has been difficult to reallocate seats. However, it is happening in every province. It has happened in Manitoba where Winnipeg had more seats and rural regions had less. It is happening today in my province of Quebec. It will happen in New Brunswick where there seats decrease would be decreased.

Everybody is doing that around the world and Canada is over-represented. We have a very decentralized federation and we have a lot of MPs who do not have the same scope of responsibilities than in a more centralized country. France, a county with twice our population, has 577 MPs. The United States, a country ten times more numerous than ours, has 435 representatives. Russia, a country four times more numerous than ours, has 415. And it goes on.

We are over-represented. The member's own boss said that in the past before he was Prime Minister. Why not reallocate in keeping the size of the House, as everybody is doing and as Canada used to do at the federal level, not a long time ago.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Madam Speaker, I do respect the member's work and his expertise on this file but I disagree with his premise. As he will know, my province of Alberta, which I talked about what we did there eight years ago, is actually increasing the size of its house prior to the next election in the spring of 2012.

However, the issue is not the size of this House. The issue is the disparity of the House between regions, such as those in Brampton and those in sparsely populated areas such as in the north. The disparity between densely and less densely populated areas is growing and it has never been larger in the history of our country.

The member talked about internationally. His figures are correct but the disparity of Canadian weighted votes by provinces has never been greater and it is larger than in Germany, Switzerland, Australia and in the United States. I agree with the member with respect to the numbers but the issue that is being addressed by the bill is the disparity between the sparsely populated and densely populated areas and, based on international standards, Canada is out of sync.

● (1245)

Mr. Kevin Sorenson (Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the insight that he showed in his speech in regard to what has taken place in Alberta. I am wondering if perhaps he has not hit the nail on the head of why we see the Liberals responding with the type of legislation that they would like to see. The former Liberal leader just said that we can expect that rural will get less. However, we have seen where the Liberal Party has been wrong on so many issues dealing with rural. They have been wrong on the Canadian Wheat Board issue. They have been wrong on the gun registry issue. They have been wrong on many other issues—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I must give the hon. member for Edmonton—St. Albert 30 seconds to respond.

Mr. Brent Rathgeber: Madam Speaker, I am not sure my friend from Crowfoot asked a question, but I do agree that the government and the minister, the member for Edmonton—Sherwood Park and my friend, have widely consulted with Canadians. Canadians in faster growing provinces, such as British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta, want and demand greater representation in the House. Citizens from other provinces do not want to lose representation and I think the member struck the right compromise.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am happy to rise in the House to speak to the bill. The bill is extremely important because it would affect the makeup of the House and, therefore, directly impact the representation of Canadians moving forward.

The way these seats would be distributed must be discussed. Correct seat distribution is essential to our democracy. Ensuring that Canadians are fairly represented is paramount. As members of Parliament, we must do what we can to ensure that representation is protected in the House.

I am happy to stand and speak to this today because of the significance of the bill to the correct representation of Canadians. I and my caucus colleagues on this side of the House are supportive of the notion of seat redistribution. That being said, we must ensure that seat redistribution is done properly, as the redistribution of these seats will have a direct impact on our local communities, especially communities such as mine.

My constituency is the most populace in the Scarborough region. I represent over 130,000 constituents. How would this bill affect the people I represent? Would my community be divided and, if so, how would this division happen moving forward?

As MPs, we and our teams work as community builders. We have meetings with our constituents. We attend and organize local events that bring our communities together. We visit schools and have conversations with the children and parents. What we are doing is civically engaging the citizens of Canada, one constituency at a time, in our democracy and in our civic processes. MPs and their teams work to build communities and bring communities together.

Government Orders

Moving forward with this seat redistribution bill, we need to ensure that, when the constituencies are broken up, it is done along community lines and that communities are not divided because we need to ensure that we are helping them thrive rather than causing further division within them.

The process of seat distribution should really be an opportunity and an exercise in nation building. It is essential to ensure that each province has the number of seats it is entitled to based on not only its population but also on the principle of proportionate representation.

It is also essential that Quebec, having been unanimously declared a nation within Canada, maintain its current weight in the House, which is historically accurate to the time that our Constitution was written. Unfortunately, that is another area where the bill falls short. The bill would do nothing to protect Quebec and its weight in the House. In fact, the bill would reduce Quebec's weight. It also has no safeguards to ensure that Quebec's weight does not continue to diminish moving forward. This lack of protection is not unique for Quebec only but for all other provinces and territories as well.

I will use Prince Edward Island as an example. It currently has four seats for an Island with the population of almost 141,000 people. That is just 10,000 more people than in my one constituency alone, which is divided into four seats. We need to ensure that these seats and the type of representation that Prince Edward Island has is protected moving forward. The system was set up by the Fathers of Confederation to ensure that the people of our country are represented adequately and well. If Prince Edward Island is working, then we need to move toward a system that ensures that our members of Parliament have the opportunity to meet with their constituents and ensure that we are able to provide the type of representation and service for our communities that the communities in Prince Edward Island get. We need to ensure that we are able to have those conversations with our constituents.

I will now talk about the other areas in the country that would be diminished. Along with Quebec, Atlantic Canada would see its weight of representation decreased or diminished in the House of Commons. Northern Canada would be facing the same kind of problem.

● (1250)

As I have said, the correct distribution of seats is vital for our democracy, so we need to ensure that we get it right. We need to ensure that we are having conversations with the provinces and territories so that they receive the number of seats they are entitled to. Unfortunately, this bill would still leave the provinces and territories under-represented and would not redistribute seats to the provinces that are most populated. We need to do this in a way that allows for proper consultation with the provinces and territories, which has yet to happen. We need to ensure that the provinces and territories have a buy-in to the plan. At the moment, there has been little commitment to this plan by the premiers of the provinces and territories.

If the government is serious about proper representation in the House of Commons, I will make some suggestions about what it should do. It should sit down and have conversations with the provinces and territories to discuss fair representation. A form of fair representation may be proportional representation and maybe even

reforming or eliminating the Senate to allow for more proper representation in the House.

The New Democrats are very supportive of seat redistribution. In fact, we were the first party to introduce a bill on this very topic. The difference is that our bill gave additional seats to the fastest growing provinces and Quebec to ensure that the historic weight was maintained.

At the end of the day, we need to use this process of seat redistribution as a nation building exercise. Sir John A. Macdonald, our former prime minister, who was also a Conservative member, was a nation builder, but the current Conservative government is not even living up to its own party's history and is deteriorating the legacy of our Fathers of Confederation. This process needs to bring us together as Canadians and not rip apart our nation and communities or pit region against region. We must consult with the provinces and Canadians and ask whether this bill would do enough to achieve better representation by population while, at the same time, building a stronger Canada. In my opinion, this bill would not.

At the end of the day, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta would remain under-represented in the House. I will throw out some numbers with respect to the proposed new seats in this bill. We would see the percentage of representation in the House diminish and be less than the actual percentage of the population in all four provinces. The projected percentage of population for Ontario, for instance, is 38.91%, whereas the percentage in the House would be 36.12%. Quebec would go down from its historic weight in the House.

This really needs to be an exercise in nation building. Nation building is about true fair representation that is inclusive of all in the country. If we are going to do an exercise in nation building, we need to ensure that the House represents all Canadians. That means ensuring there are more women in the House who represent 52% of our population, more aboriginal people, more newer immigrant communities being represented, more youth and more persons with disabilities.

I will end my remarks in saying that our former leader, Jack Layton, a great parliamentarian and member of Parliament, lived to build this nation and unite this country. That is what we all need to be doing, working to bring this country together and strengthen it, not to be pitting region against region and diminishing the quality of representation in the House. We need to ensure that we are doing better to represent all Canadians.

● (1255)

Hon. Tim Uppal (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a few questions for the hon. member.

The member talked about numbers. Members have the numbers on how many seats will go to which provinces.

Where is the NDP plan? Where are the numbers? Why do the NDP members not talk about the number of seats they are proposing? I did not hear any numbers in her speech.

Government Orders

Does she realize that the NDP plan would require a constitutional change? Is the NDP proposing that we get into long drawn-out constitutional battles? I would like to know that from the member.

The member says she wants to talk about the bill more and have more consultation. We have debated the bill in the House quite a bit. I do not know if she realizes, but maybe she could make it clear, that we have a deadline coming up in February. If the member wants Canadians to have fair representation at the next voting opportunity, does she not think we should move forward and vote on the bill? We would ask the member to support the bill.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Madam Speaker, the minister's first question was about numbers. We have been talking about numbers. We are saying that we should ensure there is proper representation based on the percentage of Canadians within the areas. That needs to be done in consultation with the provinces. We need to ensure that we maintain the historic representation of parts of the nation.

The second question was about the debate on the bill and the fact that the government wants to hurry this process through. Proper representation is about the elected members to the House having the opportunity to debate bills. Once again the government has moved to stop debate. It is trying to not allow us, as elected representations, me as an elected representative of over 130,000 people, to debate. The government is trying to silence the voices of more than 130,000 people and many more.

Many of our members on this side of the House would like to have an opportunity to debate. However, we will not have that opportunity because the government continues to muzzle us.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was very interested to hear what my colleague from the NDP had to say.

However, I have to admit that I am a bit puzzled. We, on this side, and on the government side have been asking for concrete numbers. It is not out of maliciousness. It is a genuine desire to understand whether the member is aware of the consequences of her proposal.

The member talked about wanting to reach that 38% for Ontario. She already has said that 24% needs to be held for Quebec. I assume the member also wants to hit the actual numbers and proportions for Alberta and B.C. The reality is we cannot have more than 100% of the House being represented at 100%. It does not work unless we start taking away from smaller provinces.

None of our proposals would ever be able to reach 38% for Ontario. That is why we are so interested in hearing what numbers the NDP have to put forward.

• (1300)

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Madam Speaker, I have and many of us have said many times, it is about respecting the history of our country. It is about valuing the vision that our Fathers of Confederation had for the country. The other side does not seem to want to.

If we look at the actual formula, it is about ensuring that the percentage of the population is the same as the percentage of representation rounded up to one. It is about ensuring that there is proper representation in the House. We need to have the percentages

or the weight of the voices of the regions in our country represented in the House.

These other two parties seem to be saying that it is okay that some people in the country get a smaller or lesser voice than other people, that some Canadians are valued more than other Canadians.

We are saying that all Canadians are equal, and that is our proposal moving forward.

Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP): Madam Speaker, I give the government credit for acknowledging the fact that there is a democratic deficit in the country in terms of seats. However, the Conservatives talking about a democratic deficit is like me saying I do not like donuts. The Conservative Party is the most anti-democratic party I have witnessed in my 14 and a half years here.

We had legislation, passed by a majority of the House of Commons, and sent to an unelected body of party principals, I guess that is the most polite way to say it. What happened? The Senate killed the bill without a word of debate. Yet what do the Conservatives want to do for democratic reform? They want to add more seats.

Let us follow the logic of the Minister of State for Democratic Reform and his Conservative Party. He says that because B.C., Alberta and Ontario have more people now, they need more seats. Of 34 million people, they want to add another 30 MPs. The United States has over 300 million people and it has 650 or 670 representatives. If we follow his logic, if we had over 300 million people, there would be over 3,000 of us in this place. I do not know how big his apartment is, but he would not have a place to stay. That is problem one in their logic.

Problem two is this. The minister, in his question for my colleague, the member for Scarborough—Rouge River, said that if we were to do anything else, we would have to open up the Constitution for debate. Bring it on. The only way we can have true democratic representation in the House of Commons is to have debate with the provinces and territories.

This is the lazy person's way of doing it. The Conservatives just looked at the three provinces and said that since they had more of a population, they should have more seats. Also, they want to hurry the bill because they claim that if we do not, we will not get it done in time for the Elections Canada people need to redistribute the ridings and everything else that goes with that. Why is this all of a sudden the most pressing issue facing our country, to put 30 more politicians in the House of Commons?

I have great respect for the Minister of State for Democratic Reform. However, I have yet to get one email, one phone call, one letter, one fax or one comment anyone in a store or mall telling me that we should increase the number of members of Parliament in the House of Commons.

The government is correct though. When some MPs represent 39,000 people and others represent 150,000 people, that is wrong. That is an imbalance and it needs to be fixed. However, this bill does not fix it. Therefore, why not have true nation building?

Government Orders

In a great room just across the hall, there is a great picture of the Fathers of Confederation. There was a good man once, Sir John A. Macdonald. He participated in nation building. The Conservative government is not nation building; it is dividing the country.

Atlantic Canada will lose its weight of representation, as will Quebec, rural Canada and the north. The bill does nothing to bring more women to politics. It does nothing to bring more aboriginal people to politics. This does nothing for people with disabilities, the youth, or new immigrants.

The face of Canada is changing quite rapidly. The bill does not address any of those issues. All it does is recognize that three provinces have more people, so they should have more seats and we have to do it right away.

If the Conservatives truly want to nation-build, let us talk to the provinces, the municipalities and Canadians about what they think is fair representation. We in the NDP have two words that will really help our country: proportional representation.

We should think about this. The Green Party of Canada, with great respect to it, gets 4% or 5% of the national vote and gets one seat. The Conservative Party gets 38% of the vote, 55% of the seats, but has 100% of the power. Yet 62% of the voting people said “no” to that agenda. Therefore, what we have is a stable opposition majority.

I remember very clearly certain members sitting in the House complaining about the Liberals when they only received 36% of the national vote. They had 177 seats, but 100% of the power.

● (1305)

However, we do not have to play those games. We do not have to divide and conquer or pick winners and losers. Everybody in Canada should win with fair representation and with proportional representation. We are one of the few western democracies without proportional representation.

The first past the post system is a failure. This is why so many Canadians refuse to exercise their most democratic right. The Conservatives can put 30 or 100 more MPs in here and they will not increase the voter turnout in our country. The way to do it is through proportional representation, to encourage all Canadians, whether they vote the Green Party in Charlottetown, or the NDP in B.C., or Conservative in Saskatchewan, or the Bloc Québécois in Quebec or whatever, to vote and know that their vote actually matters, that their vote will have a say in the general overall numbers. Right now, it does not.

If the Conservatives want true nation-building, open up the entire discussion. This is a small, stop-gap measure. That is all it is. They have missed the opportunity, but it is not too late. There is no rush here. Canadians are not storming the Bastille saying that they need to have this by Christmas. I do not even think many people in the minister's riding are storming his office saying that he has to drop everything, that he should forget about food banks, homeless people, unemployed workers, businesses, the environment, that this is the number one issue facing Canadians. It is simply nonsense. We have lots of time for nation-building, but the only way we will do it is if we co-operate with the provinces, municipalities, aboriginal groups and the territories to truly make the House of Commons what it should be, a reflection of Canadian society.

Why do we not have 50% representation of women in this place? The bill does not address that. Why do we have so few aboriginal people in this place? This does not address that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (1310)

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask for a bit of order, please. Members may agree or disagree but the hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore has the floor and I would ask members to respect that.

The hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore.

Mr. Peter Stoffer: Madam Speaker, we have an opportunity to put this bill into the closet and come up with a new one. The government should work with the opposition parties and with everybody else in the country and truly develop a House that is reflective of Canadian society. If the government were prepared to do that, I think it would find willing participants in the Liberal Party, the Bloc, the NDP, the Green Party, whomever. Members will find Canadians very receptive to the fact that they will have a true opportunity to discuss this. Right now, all we are getting is 30 more seats, regardless of what the government of the day is.

As long as we have an undemocratic institution in the other place, it will not have been dealt with. Senate reform or Senate abolishment would be nice. If they want true democracy, they have to be accountable and representative of the people they represent. The bill does not do that. It is just a stop-gap measure. I can assure members that if it passes, and with their majority it probably will, in five, six or seven years we will be back at it again and we will have more seats added, according to the logic of the Conservatives.

Why do we not do it right? Why do we not get rid of the first past the post system, bring in proportional representation, abolish the Senate. If we cannot abolish it, because the provinces want to keep it, then make it truly independent of government so it is not beholden to the powers of the Prime Minister and his cabinet. That would be true democratic reform.

Then we will see more young people voting. Then we will see more women wanting to get involved in politics. Then we will see more visible minorities, people with disabilities and more aboriginal people. If we are able to do that, then we would leave a legacy for the next generation of people and maybe our pictures would be in the Hall of Honour for building a new country.

Government Orders

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Madam Speaker, as a fellow British Columbian you know very well that what the hon. member opposite said is entirely out of line, out of step and completely deaf to the fact of what you and I face in British Columbia, which is systemic under-representation in the House of the Commons and in the Senate, which this bill would absolutely address.

He said that all the bill would do is add seats to the House of Commons. That is not true. If he would read the bill, he would realize what the legislation would do. It would set in stage a formula over time that would bring this House of Commons absolutely into proper proportionate representation per citizen of the number of representatives in the House of Commons. That is what this bill would do. It would set in place a formula.

He also said that he does not have people beating down his door demanding that we add more members of Parliament to the House. That is not just what this bill would do.

I can tell members what he is also not hearing is demands from Canadians to have proportional representation. I have not heard citizens saying, “Gee, we really wish Canada had the political stability that Italy has”. That is not what Canadians want Canada to have. We have a responsible, effective system of governance that works, but it needs to be fixed for better balance. If the NDP really believes in proportional representation, why are the NDP governments of Manitoba and Nova Scotia and British Columbia not—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to give the hon. member time to respond because we will be ending this debate at 1:50 p.m.

The hon. member for Sackville—Eastern Shore.

Mr. Peter Stoffer: Madam Speaker, as someone who was raised in British Columbia, I know the politics of B.C. and the population of British Columbia very well. I do know that all my relatives and friends in B.C. are not clamouring for more politicians to come knocking on their doors.

However, if the minister wants true proportional representation, not just by the numbers of people in a particular area, he should openly admit that the first past the post system is fundamentally wrong. If he truly wants to represent the people of British Columbia, and in fairness to my friend the minister, he does not a bad job for the Port Moody area, the fact is having more of us here would not solve the problem. It does not address the fact that 40% of Canadians have turned away from voting—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being 1:15 p.m., pursuant to order made Wednesday, December 7, 2011, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on Motion No. 1.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 2. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it. I declare the motion lost.

(Motion No. 2 negated)

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 7. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it. I declare the motion lost.

(Motion No. 7 negated)

●(1315)

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 8. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

Private Members' Business

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: The recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

The House would normally proceed at this time to the taking of the deferred recorded division at the report stage of the bill. However, pursuant to Standing Order 45, recorded divisions stand deferred until Monday, December 12, 2011, at the ordinary hour of daily adjournment.

The hon. Chief Government Whip.

[*English*]

Hon. Gordon O'Connor: Madam Speaker, I ask that you see the clock at 1:30 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

BREAST DENSITY AWARENESS ACT

The House resumed from October 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-314, An Act respecting the awareness of screening among women with dense breast tissue, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak in support of Bill C-314 regarding dense breast tissue and the importance of breast cancer screening.

Bill C-314 calls on the federal government to use existing programs and initiatives to increase awareness about dense breast tissue and its impact on breast cancer screening. The bill's focus is on working with partnerships to improve information and share information on screening with women and their doctors. Several current government actions are highlighted. They are supported by other partner organizations focused on cancer, breast cancer and breast cancer screening. I will explain more about these actions in my remarks today, but I would like to begin with a few words about how critical the underlying issue is.

Every year, millions of Canadians are affected by cancer either personally or by the experience of a family member, friend or neighbour. I have personally been affected by this disease with the loss of my mother in 1989. Because of this and my role as a surgeon, I know about the importance of breast cancer screening and awareness. Breast health, regular checkups and exams should be a conversation in every home in Canada. It is one that occurred in my family home. As one can imagine, it is not an easy conversation for a single father who has recently lost his wife to have with his young

children. However, it is extremely important that parents have this conversation with all of their daughters.

Awareness starts at home, as well as in a doctor's office. Young women across the country should be in constant dialogue with family physicians when it comes to their breast health and determining what practices for screening are best for them. Breast cancer in particular is a major health concern. One in nine women in Canada develops breast cancer during her lifetime, making it one of the most common cancers affecting Canadian women.

In 2011, it is estimated that 23,400 women in Canada will be diagnosed with breast cancer, an increase from 2010. That represents about 450 women being diagnosed each week. Early detection of breast cancer through organized screening programs is an important public health practice. Our government has invested in partnerships that promote optimal screening. Our government works across different health sectors with partner organizations, as well as with provinces and territories that deliver health care services.

Together we want to improve screening and early detection and to provide information to women. That is exactly what Bill C-314 calls for: an assurance that we are doing all we can to increase awareness and to assist health care providers and women in making well-informed screening decisions.

This bill recognizes that we are taking action on this issue through a number of initiatives. We are reinforcing existing investments, commitments and action on prevention, detection and control. The bill also recognizes the important work done by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. This initiative was established and funded by our government. The bill highlights the work our government does through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Canadian breast cancer screening initiative. The knowledge generated through these initiatives is then shared with doctors and networks that include health organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society.

The central initiative supported by our government to fight cancer is the Canadian strategy for cancer control. This is a co-ordinated comprehensive strategy developed with government, non-governmental cancer organizations, cancer survivors, researchers and health care professionals. Screening and early detection is the main priority of the strategy. Breast density and its implications for screening is a part of this.

The Canadian strategy for cancer control is implemented by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The partnership is an independent not-for-profit organization that is working on prevention, early detection, treatment and the support for Canadians living with cancer. This organization has done much to ensure cancer patients and health care professionals across Canada have state-of-the-art knowledge about what works to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer.

Private Members' Business

Notably, the partnership has encouraged hard-to-reach populations to undergo screening, helping doctors to identify cancer earlier. Funding of \$250 million to the partnership was recently renewed for five more years, from 2012 to 2017. This funding will help the partnership continue its invaluable work on reducing cancer cases, enhancing the quality of life of cancer patients and increasing the likelihood of survival.

Through CIHR, the government is funding research on more effective diagnostics, treatment and prevention for all cancers, including breast cancer. Research investments in this area support important Canadian scientific work. I want to stress that the search for a cure is only part of the incredible research being undertaken in this country. Research is helping to reduce the burden of cancer on individuals and families through informing the development of prevention strategies.

● (1320)

As well, scientific research is helping to improve screening in health care settings. It is contributing to early diagnosis and, in many cases, allows access to better quality cancer care. This year alone \$22.7 million was spent on breast cancer research.

Bill C-314 highlights the importance of providing women and their doctors with the most recent information. Our government's Canadian breast cancer initiative contributes by making education and information resources available to communities across Canada. This work facilitates action on breast cancer, women's health, inter-sectoral collaborations, and stakeholder involvement.

The government supports the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's screening initiative, a key component of the Canadian breast cancer initiative. The screening initiative is a joint provincial-territorial collaboration to develop screening approaches. It contributes to improving breast cancer screening programs by developing nationally agreed upon quality indicators.

For women with higher breast density, breast cancer is generally harder to detect using mammograms, resulting in more frequent screenings. The Canadian breast cancer screening initiative supports national standards for prevention, early detection and screening. It seeks to develop and share best practices in breast cancer and women's health. Our government recognizes the importance of participating in cancer screening. Raising awareness around breast density supports this goal.

Through the screening initiative, we are working with the provinces and territories as well as local and non-governmental organizations to increase early detection and screening for populations less likely to be screened, such as newcomers to Canada, rural Canadians and persons with disabilities. This cross-Canada project enables the sharing of best practices, and ensures that information and support programs are available to women with breast cancer.

Through the Canadian breast cancer screening initiative and the Canadian partnership against cancer, our government helps the provinces and territories benchmark performance against national standards. It is equally important to share knowledge through health organizations such as the Canadian Cancer Society. The bill reinforces the current actions on breast cancer screening that reflects the government's commitment to keep Canadians and their families

healthy, to help doctors detect cancer, and to give women better information on which basis to make their decisions.

I want to commend the hon. member for Barrie for his initiative which will not only better the information women receive regarding their breast health but will also lead to earlier detection and to more women's lives being saved.

I came face to face with the ramifications of breast cancer when I lost my mother 22 years ago. Compounded by my role as a physician, it is why I am so passionate on this issue. I strongly urge every member of the House to support this bill on the awareness of breast cancer screening, so that we can stand unanimous in this chamber in support of women's breast health.

I once again commend the member for Barrie for his excellent work on this bill.

● (1325)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise here this afternoon to speak to Bill C-314. This bill calls on the Government of Canada to encourage the use of existing initiatives in order to increase awareness among women about the implications of heterogeneous or dense breast tissue for breast cancer screening, and to assist women and health care providers in making well-informed decisions regarding screening.

On behalf of our health critic, the hon. member for Vancouver Centre, I would like to say that the Liberal Party supports this bill. All efforts to raise awareness, to provide more information and to encourage communication must be supported.

[*English*]

As a family doctor, it became very clear to me and also in our work at the Women's College Hospital in Toronto that the world changed when books like *Our Bodies Ourselves* came onto the market, and women were empowered to know more about the choices in order to ask better questions of their doctors and demand better care.

The bill, which will respect the awareness of screening among women with dense breast tissue, is just that kind of initiative. So we as Liberals support any effort to increase awareness, to fund research, and to provide information to Canadians about cancer prevention and early detection. We know that we should be doing more of this in many areas of health, including health promotion, wait times and pharmaceutical strategies.

Private Members' Business

The proposed legislation calls on the federal government to work with the provincial and territorial governments to increase awareness among women about the risk factor involved in having dense breast tissue. It asks that we use existing programs. It asks that we identify the gaps in information for women and that we improve that information that is going to Canadian women. It asks that we address the challenges in detecting breast cancer in women with dense breast tissue.

This year, 23,400 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 5,100 will die. As the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour has said, all of us are touched by breast cancer in some way. My mother died of breast cancer as well. She had two different breast cancers that took her life even in what was to be a lesser kind of breast cancer: breast cancer after menopause. My sister has had breast cancer diagnosed before menopause.

As a physician, I recognize the importance of early detection and ensuring that patients have the best possible information and treatment. Any oncologist would say very clearly he or she would rather find these cancers early when indeed they can be treated. The problem is the dense breast tissue makes it difficult to identify breast cancer. There are too many stories of what was presumed to be a negative mammogram that was later on shown to have a cancer hiding in the breast tissue that was not visible to the radiologist at the time.

We are blessed now in Canada that almost 80% of mammography is done with the new digital approach which makes it much easier to detect the problems in dense breast tissue, but still we need to do more. We need to require more tests and appropriate screening. It means that we need to ensure that people reading the mammography are experienced radiologists. Now with technology, help is possible for very experienced people with tremendous expertise in mammography can read them at a distance. The new machine in Moose Factory allows the people a long way away to be the actual expert reading the exams.

We always have to balance appropriate testing without alarming the general population or Canadians with unnecessary tests that only put more pressure on the system. We believe that the federal government does have a role to play in facilitating best practices and funding research related to cancer prevention and early detection as part of the Canadian partnership against cancer.

It is interesting that the California state legislature recently passed bill SB 173 that would require mammogram providers to inform women if they have dense breast tissue and that they would benefit from more screening. But is also interesting that the California governor, Jerry Brown, vetoed the bill noting that while it was important, the bill should have used more careful language so as not to create unnecessary anxiety among women and strain the health system. This message was echoed by the California Medical Association because of its risk of leading to unnecessary MRIs and ultrasounds.

●(1330)

We are pleased to see that Bill C-314 calls for research, information sharing, and increased awareness for women about the problems related to screening for those with dense breast tissue, which makes it hard to identify these tumours.

For any Canadian who wants to look at the movement in the United States, it is at rudense.com. There is very interesting information. It asserts that breast density is one of the strongest predictors of the failure of mammography screening to detect cancer. There is a very interesting logo, "Are you dense? exposing the best-kept secret". Unfortunately the best-kept secret can take people's lives.

There are things that are coming forward: ways that we could detect the breast density on a scale of 1 to 4; letting women know which category they are in; what women should expect for themselves and their families in terms of the amount of screening; and the serious conversation women need to have with their doctors.

We in the Liberal Party are very keen on the idea of national clinical practice guidelines that every Canadian can come to know and understand. Therefore, regardless of their postal code, women could be asking for the best possible care based on the evidence-based clinical practice guidelines.

It means that family doctors are brought up to speed and can actually have meaningful conversations with their patients, not only about the clinical practice guideline but whether their individual situation places them in that average clinical guideline, or whether their situation is particularly special, such that a different plan of action or care plan should be there for them.

I am very pleased and thank the member for bringing the bill forward. We look forward to further debate.

As our party's health critic, I look forward to studying the bill with the hon. member at the health committee.

●(1335)

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak in support of Bill C-314, An Act respecting the awareness of screening among women with dense breast tissue, introduced by my colleague, the hon. member for Barrie.

The bill encourages the federal government to use existing initiatives to increase women's awareness of how dense breast tissue impacts breast cancer screening. We know that breast cancer is far too common in Canada. This year, some 23,000 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, a one in nine chance over a lifetime, and breast cancer will claim the lives of 5,100 women this year alone.

Private Members' Business

We know that breast cancer screening saves lives. We also know that women with denser breast tissue face added challenges with cancer detection through mammography. Targeting dense tissue, as the hon. member for Barrie attests, is one tangible way we can make a difference. We can play an effective role in the adoption of effective, efficient early detection practices in screening. That is why we are raising awareness and providing accurate information about screening. This helps women make better decisions, particularly if they have dense breast tissue.

Bill C-314 focuses on the efforts already under way to raise women's awareness about dense breast tissue and breast cancer screening. It also would help women and their doctors make well-informed decisions regarding their screening.

There are a number of elements in the bill that I will outline, along with current federal initiatives that support this bill. First, the bill requires our government to determine if there are breast density information gaps in relation to breast cancer screening. By knowing where these gaps are, we can plug the holes through research. In response to the first element, our government will continue supporting cancer research through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, or CIHR. A priority of CIHR's Institute of Cancer Research is early cancer detection. It is currently exploring partnership opportunities with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation for early detection funding. This research will address breast cancer information gaps.

Second, the bill would require that approaches be identified as needed to improve information for women. This would be done to address the challenges of detecting cancer in women with denser tissue and to raise awareness concerning these challenges. Bill C-314 also recognizes the responsibility provinces and territories have for delivering these invaluable programs. For example, when mammography identifies dense breast tissue, these programs notify women to obtain further testing. In Ontario, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Northwest Territories an annual recall system is in place for women identified with dense breast tissue. In other jurisdictions, follow-up is determined by the radiologist.

While breast screening programs are primarily a provincial and territorial responsibility, the federal government, through existing initiatives and partnerships, supports raising awareness of breast cancer screening and breast density. In response to this bill, the government will continue to support provinces and territories in raising awareness of breast density and its screening implications through the Canadian breast cancer screening initiative. This initiative is a partnership between the Public Health Agency of Canada and provincial and territorial programs. Through it, we are working with provincial and territorial governments to measure screening program performance nationwide. This means that all jurisdictions regularly share screening program information: lessons learned, best practices, share challenges and mutual questions of importance.

Part of the Canadian breast cancer screening initiative includes the Canadian breast cancer screening database, a national repository on breast cancer screening. Provinces and territories contribute to that database, which is then used to monitor and evaluate screening programs across Canada.

Bill C-314 would require the existing Canadian breast cancer screening initiative to share information on dense tissue in relation to cancer screening and any follow-up procedures. The initiative makes a tool available to assist in decision making pertaining to breast cancer screening. In the future, the tool will include breast density information. Sharing information about ways to improve these programs ensures women receive the full benefits of early detection.

• (1340)

I am pleased to note that our government will also begin discussions through the federal-provincial-territorial national committee for the Canadian breast cancer screening initiative regarding identification protocols for dense breast tissue. Through the committee, participating provincial and territorial screening programs are encouraged to share best practices on raising awareness of dense breast tissue.

The committee also provides opportunities for provincial and territorial governments to collaborate on screening recommendations and approaches. The Canadian breast cancer screening initiative will also continue providing information on breast cancer screening through its biennial report. This information will help to enhance organized screening across Canada.

Moreover, our government continues to take action through the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, which leads the implementation of the Canadian strategy for cancer control. This made-in-Canada approach, consistent with the bill, has a key role in accelerating effective cancer prevention and control strategies. It also works with and engages the cancer community to provide Canadians with information on screening.

Of interest, the partnership hosts a web based resource called, "Cancer View Canada". This portal provides information to Canadians on cancer issues, including screening, and it draws on the expertise of partners.

Renewed investments in the partnership, which was announced last March by our Prime Minister, allows the partnership to continue its important work. As members will see, there is much work already started that supports Bill C-314.

The bill also recognizes the important role of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and the Canadian Women's Health Network in providing reliable information to support women's decision making.

Private Members' Business

The federal government works collaboratively with various stakeholders and will continue raising awareness through these existing initiatives. Canadians do not have to wait to learn about these issues from their doctors. We have a responsibility to provide this current evidence in the most efficient and effective way possible, especially when the lives of Canadians may be at stake.

Through further awareness, Canadian women and their families can become more informed and they will make better decisions. They will also learn about breast density and its implications for screening.

I encourage all my fellow parliamentarians to support this very important bill. It would increase awareness for women regarding dense breast tissue. It is important knowledge to have, not only for them but in the interest of their loved ones. It could even save a life.

I thank the hon. member for Barrie for his concern about this issue and his willingness to ensure we are better educated about our health.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Madam Speaker, as a woman who, like most Canadians, has had friends and family struggle against cancer, I am proud to be given the opportunity to rise today in the House and state without reservation that I will use my mandate to search for practical and effective ways to fight cancer.

Canadians need first rate prevention strategies that include increased access to doctors, increased access to specialists, better screening, earlier screening, first rate equipment, dedicated funding and better access to necessary medications and progressive research. Access, equipment and funding are the silver bullets that make the most difference in the lives of cancer patients.

As I read the bill before us, I was searching for these targets but, I am saddened to say, I found none. It is not that Canada does not need a bill to help fight against breast cancer, it is that we need a better bill. There are real ways that the government can make a difference and Bill C-314 shirks that responsibility.

First, education and awareness are not enough to combat health care problems. I have seen again and again over the past six months how keen the government is to throw huge amounts of money at educational and awareness campaigns while ignoring the tangible systemic problems that need to be addressed.

Awareness is a first step, and I would never degrade the necessity of education, but what is a woman who discovers that she is at risk for breast cancer to do when she does not have access to a family doctor?

I come from Scarborough—Rouge River, an urban riding in the greater Toronto area. One would think that being in an urban centre, people would not have a problem in terms of access to doctors. However, from the day I was elected, I have heard constantly from my constituents that they do not have family doctors and cannot afford the time and money required to travel to a place where they can see a doctor or a specialist. With the state of public transit being what it is for my constituents, I cannot say that I blame them. I takes two hours one way to go downtown. Would hon. members travel hours and hours on public transit to go to the doctor's office? I know I would not.

Unless the government is willing to back this awareness campaign with federal money aimed at providing women with dense breast tissue direct access to doctors and state of the art screening equipment, such as a digital MRI mammogram machine, then all the education and awareness in the world will not really help these women.

I have witnessed this trend again and again. A federal program will take one shallow step toward addressing the real problem and that is where it stops.

This is a game of optics. The Conservatives want to give the appearance that they are taking action on health care issues, without actually doing anything.

The women of Nunavut do not have a breast cancer screening program at all. This is urgent. This is something that we can do that will have real effect on women's lives.

If the government is serious about preventing breast cancer, then the bill in our hands today would be, among other things, a comprehensive proposal to work with our provincial governments and territorial governments to create a breast cancer screening program in Nunavut. The women of Nunavut and other rural communities in the north are already at risk. They are farthest away from hospitals and are often some of the poorest in our country, as we have recently learned with the community of Attawapiskat and many others. It is utterly negligent for the government to deny them access to basic health care while providing, through the bill, education that says, rightly, that more women should be tested and more frequently.

I would ask the Minister of Health to explain this hypocrisy to the House today and, if she cannot, then to commit to creating legislation that will ensure that Nunavut has equal access to essential health services, as it is their right to have.

My colleagues and I are not alone in thinking that the bill is weak and ineffective. The Canadian Breast Cancer Network is the national link between all of Canada's breast cancer prevention organizations, including the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and the Breast Cancer Foundation of Canada, and they do not believe that the bill does enough to enhance screening for women at risk of breast cancer.

● (1345)

I know that the government has a hard time listening to expert advice from those members of civil society who know better than it does, but I beg the government to take note of three major recommendations that the Canadian Breast Cancer Network is saying will make a real difference for Canadian women.

Private Members' Business

First is new clinical screening machines, MRI digital mammogram machines, that are more routinely used on all women. We must invest in state-of-the-art technology to save cancer patients now. A government that can invest in fighter jets can surely afford the diagnostic machines that have been proven to save the lives of cancer patients.

Second, screening for all women should begin at the age of 40. The government must fund a federal program to establish screening programs for women aged 40 to 49. It is proven that early detection is paramount with breast cancer, and that is why a program that gives women access to doctors and screening before the age of 50 is crucial.

Third, the CBCN has identified that Nunavut must have a breast cancer screening program. We must work with the territorial government to fund this program to reach out to at-risk women instead of demanding that they travel out of territory to receive equal health care.

While the Canadian Cancer Society is, of course, eager for legislation aimed at preventing breast cancer, it has come out and said that this bill will not produce any tangible outcomes for breast cancer patients and their families.

It is also important that we speak to the needs of families when we talk about cancer.

Anyone who has had a family member with cancer, as I have, can tell us how important it is to be supported in the role of an informal caregiver. We do not have enough home care in any of our provinces or territories in Canada; when family members become ill, it almost always falls on their family and community to care for them. This has practical repercussions on people's lives. When I say "support", I do not mean only emotional and spiritual support for the patient. Although the value of emotional support is unquantifiable in difficult times, Canadians need practical financial support as well.

Alex Jahad, a physician who was the keynote speaker at the CAT conference, said in his address that informal caregivers are the largest invisible majority in health care. They are usually women who are also working and at the same time raising children. Less than one-quarter of these women receive any financial support from the system. In consequence, they themselves will develop chronic conditions and illnesses brought on by overwork and stress.

Dr. Jahad said that the amount of unpaid informal care that takes place in Canada translates to \$80 billion to \$90 billion of labour. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to remind the House about the NDP's position on increasing access to employment insurance for anybody who must take leave from work in order to take care of a sick relative.

There are real changes that can be made to help fight breast cancer, and we know what they are. The experts have told us what they are. This government is lacking the political will to take serious action. We must fund programs and create the legislation that will have real effects on the lives of Canadians, not just short-term bandage solutions.

● (1350)

Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC): Madam Speaker, before I get into the essence of the bill, I want to respond to a few of the comments made by the member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

This is a bill on breast cancer screening. I know she is new to this chamber, but a royal recommendation is not permitted in a private member's bill. Funding of doctors is not something one can do through a private member's bill. Therefore, I think it is inappropriate to suggest it is something that could have been added to the bill.

May I also add that it is a bit disingenuous, in the sense that the member for Scarborough—Rouge River is an active supporter of the Ontario New Democratic Party; when it was in power, for the first time in Ontario's history it cut medical enrolment, so the root challenge we face in Ontario, in her riding, exists because of the party she supported when it was in office. If we do not train and graduate doctors, we will not have them in our ridings to work on the many essential medical needs.

With regard to the bill, one in nine women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some time during their lives. According to the Canadian Cancer Society, over 24,000 Canadian women will have been diagnosed with breast cancer this year alone. Sadly, 5,000 of them will lose their fight.

Cancer care has been a critical issue to me, and when I was presented with the opportunity to present a private member's bill, I knew instantly that I wanted to do something in this field. Every year, thousands of Barrie residents in my riding participate in the CIBC Run for the Cure. It really is inspiring to see so many people who care so much about battling this insidious disease.

While putting thought to this bill, I felt it was important not only for women but for all of us to be aware of the fact that screening for breast cancer can save lives. Providing women with accurate information about screening is therefore important and will ultimately help them make decisions that are right for them. This is the essence of Bill C-314. Breast cancer is more easily treated and, in most cases, curable when found early.

Dense breast tissue is one of the top risk factors for breast cancer, and it is important for women to be informed of this fact. This can be done when they are screened for breast cancer by a mammogram, but women who have breast dense tissue should also know that the potential cancer may not be detected because it cannot be seen on a mammogram and therefore diagnosed by radiologists. It appears white on mammograms and therefore is more challenging to detect.

What Bill C-314 would do is highlight the importance of being informed and work with the provinces and territories through the national screening program in order to ensure that women receive this information.

For many women, especially young women, who have a higher incidence of dense breast tissue, having this information is essential to their decision-making process. This knowledge will provide them with the tools they need to make personal health care decisions.

Women who are informed that they have dense breast tissue may need to go for a different type of screening, such as an ultrasound or an MRI. Possible cancers may be deciphered more readily by a specialist using this type of diagnostic testing.

We are fortunate in Canada to have screening programs for breast cancer. Our provinces and territories deliver these programs to detect breast cancer early, before it has spread, so that treatment can be started. Providing more information through these programs will help women and their doctors make well-informed decisions regarding breast cancer screening. Targeting dense breast tissue is one of the means by which, through this piece of legislation, we can make a tangible difference in the fight against breast cancer.

I know too many loved ones, friends and even colleagues on the Hill, who have been touched by cancer. Through this bill I hope to not only make a difference but hopefully save lives.

I hope I can count on the members of the House to support this private member's bill, Bill C-314.

Also, I am thankful to Andrea Paine, in the Minister of Health's office, for her assistance, and I thank also Dr. Rob Ballagh, from the city of Barrie; Councillor Bonnie Ainsworth; Mike Richmond, from Toronto; and my assistant in my Barrie office, Shawn Bubel, who assisted on the drafting of this bill.

Private Members' Business

In Barrie we are building a cancer centre right now. This is one of the items I discussed with our CEO, Janice Skot. I appreciate her advice that it is this type of initiative that can really help make a difference.

● (1355)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: 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.

Some hon. members: On division.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Health.

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

The Deputy Speaker: It being two o'clock, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:00 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MS. CHRIS CHARLTON

MR. JOE COMARTIN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Québec	Lib.
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	Ontario	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	Manitoba	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	New Brunswick	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick	CPC
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Alberta	Ind.
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	Ontario	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	Ontario	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	Québec	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	Ontario	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	British Columbia	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	Québec	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	CPC
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	Ontario	NDP
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	British Columbia	CPC
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	Québec	NDP
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	Alberta	CPC
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	British Columbia	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	Alberta	CPC
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	Saskatchewan	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	Ontario	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasung	Ontario	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ontario	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	Québec	NDP
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	Alberta	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	British Columbia	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	British Columbia	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	Nova Scotia	CPC
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	Ontario	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	Ontario	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry ...	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent.....	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène.....	LaSalle—Émard.....	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon.....	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism ...	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin.....	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville .	Ontario	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands.....	British Columbia	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville.....	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue.....	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound...	Ontario	CPC
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.....	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude.....	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria.....	Ahuntsic	Québec	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval.....	Québec	NDP
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills....	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.....	Calgary East.....	Alberta	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre.....	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel ..	Québec	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec.....	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable.....	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	NDP
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat.....	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève.....	La Pointe-de-l'Île.....	Québec	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	CPC
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm.....	Québec	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London ...	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Rafferty, John.....	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert.....	Alberta	CPC
Ravnat, Mathieu.....	Pontiac.....	Québec	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik —Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River— Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas— Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix— Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversi- fication)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	British Columbia	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
VACANCY	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs)	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	Ind.
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted, Minister of State (Finance)	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	CPC
Rempel, Michelle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Richardson, Lee	Calgary Centre	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Kevin	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Kerry-Lynne D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Delta—Richmond East	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Savoie, Denise, The Deputy Speaker	Victoria	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and for Western Economic Diversification	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (14)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bezan, James	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven, Minister of State (Transport)	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Shelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	Saint Boniface	CPC
Hoepfner, Candice, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
Toews, Hon. Vic, Minister of Public Safety	Provencher	CPC
Tweed, Merv	Brandon—Souris	CPC
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway	Fredericton	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (105)		
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Peterborough	CPC
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Associate Minister of National Defence	Vaughan	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Gill, Parm	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Science and Technology) (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
James, Roxanne	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter, Minister of the Environment	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Kellie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
Menegakis, Costas	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oda, Hon. Bev, Minister of International Cooperation	Durham	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
Poillievre, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rae, Hon. Bob	Toronto Centre	Lib.
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Labour	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Greg, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
VACANCY	Toronto—Danforth	

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	CPC

QUÉBEC (75)

Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC
Groghé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	NDP
Michaud, Éline	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	NDP
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	BQ
Mulcair, Thomas	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of Industry and Minister of State (Agriculture)	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	NDP
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	NDP
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	NDP
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	NDP
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	NDP
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

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(As of December 9, 2011 — 1st Session, 41st Parliament)

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Ms. Eve Adams	to the Minister of Veterans Affairs
Mr. Gerald Keddy	to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway
Mr. David Anderson	to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board

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