



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, February 15, 2012**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 15, 2012

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1400)

[*English*]

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

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### FOREIGN INVESTMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pursue a matter that I have addressed to members of the honourable Conservative benches in relation to state Chinese-owned investments in the oil sands. I have been attempting to discover what national security reviews and what foreign investment reviews took place.

The hon. Minister of Industry told the House that the government has improved transparency. In fact the recommendations for greater transparency to the government in 2009 were explicitly rejected. I will be pursuing this matter in the House. I call on my hon. colleagues to help us get to the bottom of this.

Canadians want to know, if we are selling out Canada's interests to China, who is minding the shop? Which foxes are minding the chicken coop?

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### NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

**Mr. Colin Mayes (Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on February 2, I attended the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C., hosted by the President of the United States.

Over 3,500 delegates representing government, business and clergy leaders from the United States as well as from 123 countries attended the breakfast. Eric Metaxas, who authored many books including the compelling stories of William Wilberforce and Bonhoeffer, was a keynote speaker. The theme of the event was

the great commandment contained in the Good Book: “Love thy neighbour as thyself”, and “serve one another in love”.

Public policy, military strength or redistribution of wealth is not the recipe for peace in the world. Only the divine spirit of love will overcome oppression, hate and aggression. This message is so simple to see. Why is it so hard to attain?

It was encouraging to attend this event with so many world leaders who understood solutions for world peace lay in the hearts of mankind and not in the might of mankind. Love is a little word. Only people can make it big.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

### FLOODING IN MONTRÉGIE

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi (Saint-Jean, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding, the Richelieu River frequently floods, causing expensive damage to the property of many residents. Floods like those that occurred in 2011, which affected many Montérégie families, could have been prevented.

The federal government has a history of ignoring the recommendations made in many studies that it commissioned, recommendations to carry out infrastructure work as quickly as possible. Once again, this government stood by, doing nothing, and once again, rising water levels turned the lives of thousands of my constituents upside down.

[*English*]

What will it take for the government to act?

[*Translation*]

A class action suit was recently filed claiming damages in excess of \$200 million. I support these angry citizens, and I ask the government to keep the promises made in 1937 and build the infrastructure needed to protect people living near the river.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### CARPENTER HOSPICE

**Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my wife and I had the honour to attend the 10th anniversary gala for the Carpenter Hospice in Burlington.

*Statements by Members*

Since May 2002, the Carpenter Hospice has served more than 1,200 residents who have ranged in age from 21 to 103. The hospice provides individuals who are dying with high quality palliative care in a home-like setting. It meets their physical, emotional and spiritual needs, making the last days of their lives together with their families peaceful, comfortable and meaningful.

The Carpenter Hospice is blessed with an incredibly dedicated team of caring volunteers and staff. I want to thank all those individuals, community groups and businesses that have contributed to the hospice. They have provided an opportunity for families and friends to gather and to celebrate life with those close to their heart. The residents of Burlington thank the Carpenter Hospice for being there for them for the last 10 years.

May God bless the Carpenter Hospice family and the families it serves.

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**NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA DAY**

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it was on this day in 1965 that, under the watch of Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson, the Maple Leaf flag was first raised over the Peace Tower here in Ottawa. Since that day, nearly half a century ago, the Maple Leaf has served as a banner and as a beacon to millions.

For more than 47 years the red and white Maple Leaf flag has fluttered over our heads as a reminder that this nation has been built through the hard work and dedication of both those born here and those who have adopted Canada as their home. Together, we have constructed a society that cares for the vulnerable, values our seniors, educates our children and celebrates the diversity of languages, cultures and beliefs ascribed to by our neighbours.

Canada's national flag may be unpretentious but it represents so much more. It represents a trust that is placed in each one of us, to leave our children a Canada better than the one given to us.

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**NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA DAY**

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate National Flag of Canada Day. It has been 47 years since our national flag was inaugurated. Our national flag, designed by George Francis Gillman Stanley and John Matheson, made its first appearance on February 15, 1965. Now the date is celebrated annually as National Flag of Canada Day.

Although simple in design, Canada's flag well reflects the common values we hold so dear: freedom, peace, respect, justice and tolerance. The Maple Leaf flag pays homage to our geography, reflects the grandeur of our history and represents our national identity. Canada's flag is a symbol that unites and honours Canadians of all origins who through their courage and determination have helped to build, and are continuing to build, our great country.

Let us be proud of our flag. Let us recognize how privileged we are to live here in Canada, this magnificent country that encompasses our history, our hopes and our future.

[*Translation*]

**HOOKED ON SCHOOL DAYS**

**Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Quebec is marking Hooked on School Days this week, February 13 to 17. As a high school teacher myself, I know that dropout prevention is a key factor in ensuring that Canadians get a good education and succeed in life. Fourteen regions in Quebec have organized hundreds of activities to mobilize communities and rally around our youth to talk to them about hard work, perseverance, the risks associated with dropping out and the advantages of having a diploma.

I would like to commend the work of Academos E-mentoring, an organization in my riding of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine that helps students connect with professionals who can guide them in their career planning. I would like to congratulate the youth employment agencies in Marquette, West Island and NDG. I would also like to congratulate the elementary and secondary schools that have organized appreciation galas, merit galas, scholarships, plays and all kinds of activities to promote staying in school.

Dalbé-Viau and Jean XXIII secondary schools, Martin-Bélanger elementary school, the Jeanne Sauvé adult education centre and the Lester B. Pearson School Board will be particularly active in this week's events. Congratulations.

I would also like to thank West Island Youth Action, the Lachine and NDG youth round tables, the Comité d'action—

•(1410)

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Calgary West.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Rob Anders (Calgary West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this evening there will be an important vote to save taxpayers money. I would like to thank the members of Parliament from Yorkton—Melville and Portage—Lisgar for their hard work and dedication to abolish the Liberal gun registry.

Allan Rock promised that this registry would only cost \$2 million. Access to information reports have proved it cost over \$2 billion that should have been used to crack down on real criminals. All the registry has done is target law-abiding citizens while doing nothing to reduce crime. People are being forced to navigate red tape, waste time filling out forms and deal with bureaucracy.

We will destroy all records pertaining to the registration of long guns. Our government instead is enacting important mandatory minimum sentences for drive-by shootings. We are also creating longer sentences and tougher bail conditions for using a gun in the commission of another crime.

Once again, I urge all members of Parliament to vote for abolishing the long gun registry.

**STAN REYNOLDS**

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the passing of one of Alberta's most prominent historical collectors. On February 9, 2012, Alberta lost Stan Reynolds, the inspiration of the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, at the age of 88.

Stan was born in Wetaskiwin in 1923. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1942, where he served in a night fighter squadron that defended Britain during the Second World War. Upon his return to Wetaskiwin, Stan opened a used car dealership, which became so successful that it established Wetaskiwin as a major centre for auto sales.

Stan was always passionate about Alberta's history. He often collected machines that played a major part in Alberta's development. Through this, Stan was able to obtain many artifacts. They were displayed in the Stan Reynolds Museum, which he owned and operated for nearly two decades. In 1981, Stan donated 850 of his most important pieces to the Province of Alberta, which provided a foundation for the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, established in 1992.

Stan received the Alberta Order of Excellence in 1999, the Order of Canada in 2000. In 2009, he was inducted into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame for his role in preserving aviation history.

I want to thank all members of the House for taking a moment to honour the life of Stan Reynolds, one of Wetaskiwin's, Alberta's and Canada's great citizens. I know he will be missed.

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**HMCS VANCOUVER**

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this weekend friends and family will gather at CFB Esquimalt, home of the Canadian Maritime Forces Pacific, to welcome home HMCS *Vancouver*. It has been deployed overseas since July 2011.

I look forward to joining the 225 families of the *Vancouver* ship's company as they welcome home the sailors, helicopter detachment and command team as they arrive back from the Mediterranean.

The Vancouver crew, helicopter squadron and command team have performed bravely and steadfastly overseas for these many long months. In doing so, they have once again proven Canada's commitment to peace, democracy and international security.

I salute also the bravery and hard work of the families who have been busy at home running households and taking care of children while their loved ones have been away. I also recognize the work of the many community groups which have helped provide support to military families, especially the Military Family Resource Centre.

Congratulations also to the Esquimalt base personnel and Pacific Fleet command for their ongoing support while the *Vancouver* was away. On behalf of the residents of Greater Victoria, I extend a hearty welcome home and thanks to all the *Vancouver* ship's company.

*Statements by Members***NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA DAY**

**Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Maple Leaf forever. It was not our flag until this date in 1965, but our flag has become part of us. It reflects our courage and determination as we work together to build this great country.

Although it was not the flag of Sir John A. or Mr. Diefenbaker, it is our flag today. It was our flag when we welcomed the world at Expo for our centennial, when Paul Henderson defeated the Soviets 40 years ago, and when we send the men and women of the Canadian armed forces overseas to defend freedom and the rule of law.

We are proud to be here representing Canadians under our single red maple leaf that was raised 47 years ago. On behalf of our Conservative government, I would like to wish all Canadians a happy Flag Day.

\* \* \*

● (1415)

[*Translation*]

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, we are a few hours away from the abolition of the long gun registry that taxpayers have worked hard to pay for. The NDP has been saying loud and clear: this registry is useful. The police use it 17,000 times a day on average, and it costs taxpayers only \$4 million a year to maintain it.

I want to acknowledge the exceptional work of dozens of groups and associations that have fought on behalf of women and children who are victims of violence. I have tremendous admiration for the committee known as Ensemble contre la violence faite aux femmes, which has dedicated time and resources in the national capital region to ensuring that the voices of those wanting to keep the registry were heard. I want all the courageous women who vehemently opposed the abolition of the long gun registry to know that there is still hope. The NDP is fighting to defend the interests of women. We are working tirelessly to build a Canada that is safer, more sensible and more humane.

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[*English*]

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians gave our government a strong mandate to end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry once and for all. Today members from all sides of the House will vote on the future of this useless measure that has needlessly treated law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters like criminals.

### Oral Questions

Farmers, ranchers, loggers, hunters, anglers, outfitters and trappers make up my riding of Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette. Hunting is a part of my culture and my way of life, as it is for many of my constituents. They are honest country people who work hard and play by the rules. That is why we find the long gun registry so offensive. The long gun registry is an attack on our way of life, pure and simple.

This is a good day for Canadians, as we will move an important step closer to truly standing up for law-abiding citizens. Our government is focused on measures that keep Canadians safe rather than measures that merely attempt to make them feel safe.

I call on all members of the House to listen to their constituents rather than their backroom party bosses and vote to scrap the long gun—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

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#### BRIAN ROSS

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of this House to the passing of a fellow elected representative, Brian Ross. Brian served the citizens of Beaconsfield in my riding of Lac-Saint-Louis as the councillor for District 4. He was elected to city council in 2009. His election was a natural progression from his long-standing service as a well-known community volunteer.

In municipal government, Brian focused on public safety as a way of maintaining and enhancing the enviable quality of life of his city.

Brian was active in many of the organizations that serve to tie the residents of Beaconsfield together as a community, including the Lakeshore Soccer Association, Beacon Hill Pool and Toastmasters.

Brian's passing was far too early. It deprived our community of a caring, civic-minded and enthusiastic public servant and his family and friends of an infectiously positive spirit.

Allow me to express our heartfelt condolences to Brian's wife Shirley, his daughters Michelle and Christine, his parents William and Joyce and his brothers Fraser, Greg and Michael.

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[Translation]

#### MEMBER FOR PAPINEAU

**Mr. Robert Goguen (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Liberal member for Papineau made a surprising statement. He said that he might think about wanting to make Quebec a country. This is shocking coming from someone who grew up hearing about the virtues of a united Canada. What can we expect from a member of a federalist party who is suddenly considering Quebec's separation from Canada?

For our government, there is no doubt. We are committed to making Canada a strong and united country in which Quebec has an important place. In order to do so, our Conservative government recognized Quebec as a nation within a united Canada, restored fiscal balance with the provinces and established a formal role for Quebec at UNESCO.

Mr. Speaker, while the member is looking for reasons for Quebec to separate from Canada, our government is ensuring that Canada remains a strong and united country.

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[English]

#### NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Sudbury loves this country unconditionally. The question is not whether New Democrats will defeat the Conservatives and form a government for all Canadians, because the question is ridiculous. Of course we will.

Will the member for Sudbury give up on his Canada because of that government? Of course he will not.

New Democrats from every region will never stop fighting to put Canadian families ahead of Conservative insiders. Enough of the same old tired debates, enough of the divisive politics of the past. As Jack Layton said, "Travaillons ensemble".

The member for Sudbury is proud to be part of a strong team that includes 58 New Democrats from Quebec, elected on a commitment to work together to build a stronger and more united country, to take on the out-of-touch government and defeat it in 2015. That is how we build the Canada of our dreams.

The member for Sudbury invites all those who love this country to join with New Democrats and make it happen.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

#### MEMBER FOR PAPINEAU

**Mr. Jim Hillyer (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Liberal member for Papineau, Pierre Trudeau's pompous parliamentary prince, said something—

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

**The Speaker:** Order, please. Oral questions, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

#### GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' plan to cut services to Canadians is not necessary and could do more harm than good. Do not take the NDP's word for it. This morning it is coming from two international ratings firms. Analysts with Moody's and Fitch are questioning the Conservatives' plan to cut services. It will hurt the economy, it will hurt services and it will hurt families.

If the Prime Minister wants to cut, he should cut the size of his cabinet instead of punishing Canadians.

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the reductions the member talks about are considerably larger than what the government is actually contemplating. What we are looking at is a gradual reduction in the deficit, as we promised during the election campaign. This is the approach that has been praised by virtually every independent economic observer in Canada and around the world.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is always a choice. The Prime Minister's choices are bad choices. The Prime Minister can hardly accuse Fitch and Moody's of being New Democrats. This is what they say:

...doing it [cutting] too rapidly has negative effects and can be counterproductive as revenues grow [more slowly]... It is a risk [to growth].

Why is the Prime Minister stubbornly ignoring this fact and foolishly proceeding with cuts in services to the public?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the cuts that Fitch and Moody's are talking about are much deeper than the savings this government is looking for. We are aiming for gradual deficit reduction during this Parliament's mandate. This approach has received the approval of independent authorities, not only in Canada but around the world.

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today is a sad day for victims of violence. It is a day that exposes the Conservatives' hypocrisy when it comes to justice. On one hand, they say they want to destroy the firearms registry because it is an invasion of privacy; on the other hand, they give themselves the right to pry into everyone's computers. It makes no sense. It is illogical. It is hypocritical.

How does the Prime Minister justify this?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our bills, by nature, aim to protect victims in our society, not to blame farmers and hunters for crimes committed in cities.

[*English*]

For the other measure that the Leader of the NDP mentioned, we have been very clear. We are working with provinces and with police to attack problems of online child pornography, but we will ensure that Parliament fully studies this bill and that private lives are also protected in this regard.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, what is clear is Canadians cannot trust the government with protecting their privacy rights.

Let us try out this quote, "We're only seeing the tip of the iceberg...The greatest threat to privacy is coming from within, from our federal government". Who said that? It was Ann Cavoukian, the privacy commissioner of Ontario. According to the minister, she is on the side of child pornographers. He is wrong. She is on the side of average, law-abiding Canadians who play by the rules.

Why is he on the side of intrusion, snooping and treating Canadians like criminals?

• (1425)

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that member has never said anything accurate about the bill in the House or outside the House. In fact, the issue is this. Where does that member stand tonight? He has told his constituents that he will vote against the long gun registry. I trust he will in fact carry out his word to his constituents.

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is a minister who today hides behind guns. Yesterday he hid behind children. At 10 a.m. yesterday, the name of the bill he brought in was called "lawful access". By 11 a.m., he was being hammered in the media. Therefore, by 11:17 a.m., he changed the name of the bill to "protecting children from Internet predators". It is about using child victims as political cover so the minister can treat average Canadians like criminals.

Why this abuse of public trust and why this abuse of our child victims?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is rich coming from a party that never stands up for victims.

Canada's laws do not adequately protect children from online exploitation. Everyone understands that. I think there is widespread agreement by Canadians that there is a problem. We want to fix our laws while striking the right balance when it comes to privacy.

We will send this legislation directly to committee for a full and wide-ranging examination of the best way to do what is right for our children.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the people who come forward with reasoned amendments will not be called Adolf Hitler, will not be called terrorists, and will not be called friends of pedophilia by the minister.

My question is for the Prime Minister. It has to do with the double standard on the issue of sustainability. The Prime Minister very clearly singled out old age security as an issue of sustainability in his famous speech in Davos. I wonder how he now feels about the F-35 situation, where literally every single one of our allies is saying that the current plan for the plane is not sustainable according to their situations.

When is the Government of Canada going to finally come to grips with the sustainability—

**The Speaker:** The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Once again, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada, this government and the previous Liberal government for that matter, has been planning to replace the CF-18 when it reaches the useful end of its life in this decade. That is why we have been part of a long-term partnership to plan and to build the new aircraft. In that regard we are operating within a budget, and we will respect that budget.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week, the government has created a new registry: a registry of our private communications. This registry could contain the following information about each of us: who we call, when we call them, who we send emails to and when we send them. And all this without a warrant. Of course we want to protect our children and the other people of this country, but we must also protect a fundamental right: Canadians' privacy.

[English]

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in fact the legislation that we are bringing forward is legislation which the member's party brought forward. We have refined it in order to deal with some privacy issues.

I think everyone recognizes there is a problem with respect to the proliferation of child pornography online, and we intend to do something about it. I might emphasize there will be no private information shared with the police without a warrant.

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government said the anonymous long form census which never had a security breach was too intrusive, but now, without due process, it wants every Internet transaction recorded. It wants access to every BlackBerry and cellphone. However, it denies access to the secret machinations of Conservative MPs behind closed doors in parliamentary committees.

The Prime Minister implied a few moments ago that he would entertain amendments to Bill C-30. Do we have his guarantee that amendments will in fact be welcomed in the parliamentary committee?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister indicated that in fact would be the case, that we will entertain amendments. I think the amendments have to be focused on the fact that we have a problem in respect of the proliferation of pedophilia and child pornography online.

We want our laws fixed while striking the right balance when it comes to protecting privacy. It is surprising that the member, when his party was in charge of this very same legislation, felt it was adequate, and yet we had to improve it before we brought it to this House.

• (1430)

[Translation]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I remain skeptical. To date, this government has not proved to be open-minded and has not even considered letting the opposition introduce amendments.

This bill was quickly renamed to give it a title that will allow the minister of public insecurity to constantly give his petty little answers. I have serious doubts. Under this bill, personal information will be provided to the authorities without a warrant for any reason, when service providers already provide the police with the information they request in 94% of cases.

Will the Conservatives scrap this bill—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

[English]

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize that this legislation in fact brings Canada to the standard where European countries accept exactly the same kind of standard.

It is a legal protection that not only requires a warrant when intrusive information is sought, but also there is an accountability mechanism every time a police officer requests identifying information.

[Translation]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, shame on this government, which is making things up as it goes along. It is shameful. Canadians are not foolish enough to believe the minister of insecurity's doublespeak. This bill is useless and endangers the rights and freedoms that are especially important to Canadians. This bill is going to create an unbelievable surveillance machine. Service providers will have to collect and divulge information about all of their clients. Who is going to pay for the government's spy work? Canadians will have to pay for it when their service providers send them the bill.

Do the Conservatives know how much their Big Brother bill is going to cost Canadians?

[English]

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member, by trying to over-emphasize her point, discredits herself. In fact, the legislation does nothing of the account.

What the legislation in fact does is require a warrant every time there is any need for intrusive evidence, either in emails or web surfing, that is required for the purposes of a criminal charge or an investigation. There is an accountability mechanism. There is no free access to information by police.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES**

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this bill has erased any credibility the minister may have had in relation to this issue.

Ratings agencies Fitch and Moody's say that the Conservatives' planned budget cuts are "a risk to growth". Moody's key analyst on Canada says that "doing it [cutting] too rapidly has negative effects". This government wants to slow economic growth even further by cutting tens of thousands of jobs and services as Canadians lose their jobs.

Why do the Conservatives always choose ideology over families? Why do they have such a hard time with common sense? Why are they against common sense?



*Oral Questions*

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP is calling for massive tax hikes and irresponsible spending, but we are once again focusing on job creation and economic growth. What the Fitch ratings agency really said was, “Achieving fiscal consolidation and the balanced budget targets are important to maintain credibility”.

Speaking of credibility, the NDP certainly does not have any when it comes to jobs and economic growth.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we take no lessons on common sense and credibility from the current government because we know that budgets are about choices, and we see the kind of choices the Conservatives are about to make: more than \$30 billion for the flawed F-35s, and the price keeps climbing; \$19 billion for the prison agenda at a time when the crime rate is falling; \$3 billion in corporate tax cuts for this year alone that would pay the annual OAS for 462,000 Canadian seniors.

We believe families should come first. Are the Conservatives going to choose planes, prisons and tax gifts over families? Why do they not put Canadian families first for a change?

• (1435)

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what Canadian families really want are jobs. That is why we are focused on job creation.

Let us ask the NDP, if it really cares about jobs and economic growth, why is it pushing a \$10 billion tax hike on employers that would kill Canadian jobs? Why is it pushing a massive CPP tax hike that would kill jobs? Why is the NDP anti-trade? Why does the NDP not explain why it continues to be anti-trade, anti-job, anti-Canada, in fact?

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, let us stay on the topic of misplaced priorities. The government is beginning to panic regarding the F-35s. Lockheed Martin and the Pentagon have confirmed what everyone has known for some time, and what this government continues to ignore: the F-35s are going to cost more. Italy is the latest country to err on the side of caution.

We are running out of time. When will we see a plan B?

[English]

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Air Force plays an important role in protecting our sovereignty and defending our interests at home and abroad. Canada's CF-18s are nearing the end of their usable lives. We have set a budget for replacement aircraft and we have been clear that we will operate within that budget. We will ensure that our air force has the aircraft necessary to do the job we ask of it.

[Translation]

**Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, how can the defence ministers admit that there is a slew of

problems with the F-35 program and then turn around and tell our men and women in uniform that the F-35 is the safest aircraft for our troops?

Simply rhyming off Lockheed Martin's talking points and playing with the safety of our troops is completely unacceptable behaviour on the part of this government.

When will we see a plan B? When will we have an open, transparent competitive bidding process?

[English]

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again I repeat, the Royal Canadian Air Force plays an important role in protecting our sovereignty and defending our internal interests and external interests abroad. Canada's CF-18s are nearing the end of their life cycle. We will ensure that Canada's air force is properly equipped for the job we ask of it.

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as we have said before, it is the same line over and over, “Again I repeat”.

Italy is the latest country to come up with a plan B for its F-35s. It is reducing its order by 40 planes. Meanwhile, the guys selling us the plane confirmed the obvious: the price is going up.

At last, our defence minister is no longer prepared to say that Canada will get 65 planes on time and on budget.

Will the minister give Canadians a straight answer today? Is the government ordering the same number of planes, yes or no?

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has consistently cast aspersions on this program which is an effort to provide our men and women with the tools and assets they need to do the job we require of them at the best cost for Canadian taxpayers.

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we do little more than read the headlines in the news every day and repeat even what the American government is telling us. It is no secret there will be a time when the CF-18s will no longer be airworthy. It is no secret that the F-35s have been plagued with problems. It is no secret that the F-35s will not be ready on time and on budget.

The question is, does the minister have a secret plan B? Today we hear that the Conservatives are going shopping again, this time for armed drones. Is this plan B?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that premise is absolutely incorrect.

As part of the Canada first defence strategy we will ensure that the Canadian armed forces is equipped with the tools it needs. Any suggestion, as made by the member, that the Royal Canadian Air Force will be acquiring these systems is speculation at best.

**Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, for months now the Conservatives have ignored the warning signs, have ignored the opposition, and clearly are ignoring reality. No wonder they are in panic mode over their F-35 fiasco. Allies continue to bail out and retreat on their purchases, costs are skyrocketing and production continues to be delayed; all this for a plane that is still unproven and might not even meet Canada's needs.

Will the government get its head out of the clouds, accept reality and open up this purchase to fair competition?

• (1440)

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I want to assure him, and the rhetoric of the NDP, that we are always assessing the implications of decisions resulting from all of these situations.

As well, the Government of Canada is ensuring that Canada's air force is properly equipped for the job we ask of it.

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the same minister because I think we need to explore this issue a little more deeply.

The Prime Minister said that the government is going to stay within the \$9.5 billion budget. General Natynycz said that at least 65 planes are needed, and that is a minimum number. Now Lockheed has said that the price is going to be far higher than the original \$75 million. These are three things that just do not go together.

I am asking the minister very directly to tell us face to face, because he and I know each other well, what exactly is the government planning to do as we go forward? What is it going to do about this venture?

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, friendship has nothing to do with the answer I will give my hon. friend.

We are very much involved in the procurement of an asset that will ensure our men and women have the best opportunity of success. To the best ability we will ensure that Canadian taxpayers are well served. At the same time we will do what needs to be done, taking all these issues into account.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are trying to get a clear answer. Since I have yet to receive a clear answer, I will try once more.

According to their plan right now, how many planes are they going buy, at what cost and when? When will we get the planes? Everyone knows—and we agree—that we need to have the planes by 2020, but how many and at what price? My question is simple; it is not difficult.

[*English*]

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to be absolutely certain that the hon. member realizes that we are monitoring the situation ongoing. Moreover, we have a budget allocated and we will ensure that we work and supply the assets necessary within that budget.

**Hon. Bob Rae (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, then government has to make a decision on whether it will put up with fewer planes for the same price or it will look to an open competition to see whether we can get more planes that would be equally suitable at a lower price that we can afford. That is the question we have to answer. It is very simple. As a party, we have been raising this for 18 months trying to get a clear answer. It is not a matter of just monitoring. We do not need a robocall answer, but a real answer to these questions.

How many planes? At what price? And when are they going to be delivered? Those are three very simple questions.

**Hon. Julian Fantino (Associate Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I say with all respect to the member: Stay tuned, that answer will be forthcoming.

\* \* \*

## PENSIONS

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government still cannot give seniors and families a straight answer when it comes to old age security. First, it was not raising the retirement age; now it is. Then it was happening in 2020; not it is not.

A quarter of a million Canadians will have to work two extra years to pay for this year's \$3 billion Conservative corporate tax handout. Seniors and families are worried about their retirement. They deserve answers.

Is the government raising the OAS from age 65 to age 67, yes or no?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, one thing Canadians deserve is the truth and the truth is exactly what the Prime Minister and I have been saying for some time now.

As it stands, the current OAS system is not sustainable into the future. We do have to make changes so that future generations can still expect to get some OAS. In doing that, we will protect and preserve the benefits that current Canadian retirees are receiving, and those who are near retirement will receive. However, we must take action. It is the responsible thing to do for all Canadians.

*Oral Questions*

• (1445)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, OAS is sustainable in the long term. This is not about sustainability. It is about a Prime Minister choosing to give handouts to his CEO friends while slashing retirement security for seniors.

I have been travelling across the country talking to Canadians and they are telling me that they want answers from the government. However, all Conservatives give them is double-talk and manufactured crises. And you raising the OAS from age 65 to age 67 is despicable. Tell us, yes or no?

**The Speaker:** Order, please. I will just remind colleagues to address their comments through the Chair, not directly at other members.

The hon. Minister of Human Resources.

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we too have been criss-crossing the country. The difference is that we are listening to Canadians, not talking to them. Canadians are telling us that they recognize that the aging of the baby boomers is going to have a huge impact. They recognize all the good things that we have been doing to help seniors, including increasing the GIS, increasing the exemption and providing pension splitting.

Here is what else they told us: “We’re are heading towards trouble that cannot be staved off unless the OAS is reformed.” Who said that? Hilary Sinclair of the Canadian University Press. Hilary Sinclair gets it.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the old age security program is sustainable in the long term. Therefore, the minister should stop telling us that changes are absolutely necessary. It is not true. Rather, it is a choice that the Conservatives are making, and it is a very bad choice.

The government keeps repeating that it is going to make changes to old age security, but what changes? It may be that this will not happen until 2020, but Canadians are worried just the same. They want to plan for their retirement, but they still do not have any information.

Will Canadians aged 57 or less have to wait until they reach the age of 67 to retire, yes or no?

**Some hon. members:** Yes or no?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has acted to protect and help our seniors, and we will continue to do so by making changes to the OAS program.

Let us look at some examples. We are the ones who created the position of Minister of State for Seniors and established the National Seniors Council to represent seniors. We are the ones who increased the age credit, not once but twice. We are the ones who introduced the GIS exemption, and we are also the ones who increased it. We took these initiatives for the benefit of our seniors.

**Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, there is still no information being provided. These answers will definitely not help Canadians better plan for their

retirement. Unfortunately, it is not just a matter of planning, because not everyone can afford to plan for his or her retirement. The old age security program is particularly important for those who become unemployed before retirement age and have a hard time finding another job, for those who do physical work and whose bodies are tired, and for those who were not able to save enough for their retirement. These people deserve to know whether the government intends to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67. So, is the answer yes or no?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, everyone wants us to help our seniors. That is why we introduced the pooled registered pension plan. And does the NDP support this initiative? Of course not. We are the ones who introduced the tax free savings account. And again, does the NDP support it? Of course not. We are also the ones who made it easier to access the GIS. And does the NDP support that initiative? Of course not.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**AIR CANADA**

**Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, a work stoppage at Air Canada would be contrary to the best interests of hard-working Canadians, Canadian businesses and the already fragile economy. The travelling public is concerned about any possible disruption in service at Canada’s largest national airline.

The Minister of Labour informed the House yesterday that she had offered to extend mediation processes to both parties. Could the Minister of Labour please give the House an update on the status of the labour negotiations at Air Canada?

• (1450)

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Labour, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on jobs and growth, and so we are concerned that labour disruptions represent a threat to the Canadian economy.

I am pleased to inform the House today that I have received agreement from both Air Canada, the employer, and the union that they will submit to the extended mediation process.

I want to thank the parties for their commitment to the bargaining process. They have an area for free collective bargaining, which our government believes in. I am very grateful for the work they are going to put in, and we expect them to get a deal.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the seventh anniversary of the coming into force of the Kyoto protocol. One hundred and ninety-one countries signed and ratified the Kyoto protocol on climate change. Only one government has broken its word: this government. The Minister of the Environment exaggerated the penalties in order to justify withdrawing from the protocol, but he still has no plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

If he truly believes the science, when will the minister table a science-based plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that the Kyoto protocol is not working. Canada is standing tall.

[*English*]

We announced that we would legally withdraw from the protocol under article 27 and spare Canadians spending billions of wasted tax dollars in compliance fees visited on this country by the previous Liberal government.

We are working for a post-Kyoto climate change regime that would include all major emitters.

**Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, even the Prime Minister's new BFF is shocked by his disregard for Canada's international commitments.

No, not Er Shun or Ji Li, but China, who was joined by India, Brazil and South Africa in condemning the Conservative withdrawal from the Kyoto protocol. They said that they seriously questioned the government's credibility and sincerity on climate change and slammed Canada for casually setting aside our existing legal commitments.

Why will the government not stop working against Canada's national interest and start defending our reputation?

**Hon. Peter Kent (Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I just said, the entire world, or most of the world, recognized that the Kyoto protocol was not working, and a post-Kyoto climate change agreement needs to be created.

Canada is working with other countries. We began with the Durban platform in December and we will work through this year to create a new climate change regime that includes all major emitters, including China, India and Brazil.

\* \* \*

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, clearly, from any ministry we ask questions of, we do not get a straight answer, so let me try another one.

Across the country, especially in cities like Toronto, the government is making families wait longer and longer before being reunited. Parents and grandparents wait an average of seven years to come to Canada. One family in my riding has waited over 16 years. Instead of solving the problem, the minister has placed a moratorium on new applications.

Why are Conservatives making these Canadian citizens wait so long to be united with their loved ones?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, that is a good question that the hon. member should ask of the Liberals. I think there are two former immigration ministers over there who left us with a 110,000 person backlog for parental reunification.

We are finally cleaning up the mess the Liberals left to us. That is why, for example, this year we are increasing by some 60% the number of parents and grandparents who will be admitted to Canada. We are doing the same thing next year, and we brought in the super

visa to allow ten-year, multiple entry visas to facilitate long-term visits by loved ones with their relatives here in Canada.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the super visas are not known by many people, and not many people are being accepted under them.

Toronto is one of the most ethno-culturally diverse cities in the world. Strong families are a cornerstone of our city and a key Canadian value. That is what family reunification is all about.

Even for spouses and children it can take up to three years, a far cry from the immediate processing they were promised.

When will Conservatives stop failing Canadians and put families first?

● (1455)

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, of course family reunification is an important part of Canada's immigration program. That is why our government has actually increased the number of sponsored family members, parents, grandparents, spouses and kids, admitted to this country since—

**Hon. Jim Karygiannis:** Moratorium.

**The Speaker:** The member for Scarborough—Agincourt has to let the minister respond to the question.

**Hon. Jason Kenney:** I know the member is a bit sore and defensive about this, Mr. Speaker, because after all, the Liberals left behind a huge mess, nearly a million people waiting with their immigration files, including over 110,000 parents and grandparents.

We are cleaning up the problem. In fact, this year and next we are going from the average Liberal admission of parents and grandparents of 17,000 a year to 25,000 a year. That represents a 60% increase and faster reunification for family members.

\* \* \*

**PENSIONS**

**Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Pinocchio certainly lives in this House on that side.

Last Christmas the Conservatives refused to protect disability benefits for sick and dying Nortel workers. Today, they want to dip their hands into seniors' pockets.

The Prime Minister forgets the OAS is the only income many seniors, particularly women and the disabled, will have after they are no longer able to work.

In the interests of compassion, will the minister put down her lines just this once? If they can find billions of dollars for Cadillac jets and American-style jails, can they not find a couple of bucks, just a few, to keep sick and low income—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Human Resources.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have to take action right now to make sure that there are funds there for seniors and the OAS system, not just for today's seniors but for the seniors of the future.

Old age security is funded through general revenue. The numbers are very clear. With the shift in demographics, we will have fewer people in the workplace taking care of a much bigger number of retirees.

We have to make some changes to make sure that those who are most vulnerable do have access to the program in the future, and that is exactly why we will take action and that is exactly what we will do.

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister does not seem to understand the real consequences of these OAS changes for real people in Vancouver Quadra, who have told me, "My wife has worked for 27 years and has no pension. Moving the age from 65 to 67 will put more strain on seniors to work longer". Another said, "This is totally unacceptable. I have been in the work force for 44 years. I have paid taxes for all these years and now they want people like me to be penalized".

Will the government stop its mean-spirited assault on hard-working Canadians and get its hands off their old age security?

**Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear that people who have been in the workforce for 44 years is probably pretty close to retirement. They will not be affected by these changes. Those who are already retired will not be affected by any changes that we will bring in because we want to protect what they have.

If we do not take action now, there may not even be an OAS system for the future. We have to ensure we take steps that are responsible and gradual so people who still have time to plan can take that time to plan and adjust their plans so they, too, can have a fruitful retirement.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I love talking about jobs and job creation, but this government is continuing its fight against the environment and against jobs since the eco-energy retrofit program is ending earlier than planned. Roughly 1,000 businesses that specialize in energy efficiency might have to close their doors if the program is not renewed. Thousands of households will not be entitled to these subsidies. No work done, therefore no jobs and no energy savings.

Will the government renew this program that is beneficial to the environment and employment?

[English]

**Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the NDP voted against this program which it now wants to extend after it has been completed. The eco-energy program has been very successful in creating jobs across the country, while allowing Canadians to make their homes more efficient.

To ensure that participants can participate, we have extended the deadline for retrofit evaluations. We have to balance the cost, after 250,000 people have subscribed, with the cost to taxpayers.

\* \* \*

**TRANSPORT**

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while greater Victoria is still waiting for Transport Canada's decision on whether to allow a mega yacht marina in the harbour, the developer is already moving ahead. This is despite serious aviation safety issues with float planes landing in what is already a very busy marine channel. Over the past decade there have been numerous near misses between aircraft and marine vessels and this giant private marina for mega yachts would only make things worse.

Will the Conservatives, for once, put aside their ties to big business and commit to putting aviation safety and the safety of harbour users ahead of the interests of this developer and the mega yachts of the super rich?

• (1500)

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was in B.C. two weeks and met a lot of stakeholders concerned with this issue and many other issues. At Transport Canada, security and safety is very important and we are analyzing it for the moment.

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**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Jay Aspin (Nipissing—Timiskaming, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has been working hard to ensure the health and safety of the people of Attawapiskat. We have called on the chief and the council to work with us and a third party manager to ensure funds flow quickly for essential services and to prepare lots for the modular homes.

Could the minister update the House on the status of these efforts and the important role the third party manager is playing in securing safe, warm shelter and delivering essential services for the people of the community?

**Hon. John Duncan (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that yesterday Chief Spence advised me that she would be providing the third party manager with the information he needed to flow funds to the community. This will allow the third party manager to confirm the payment of teachers' salaries. As well, this will allow construction crews to continue their important work preparing the sites for the 22 modular homes purchased with federal funds. This is a positive development in working together in the best interests of the community.

*Oral Questions***DEFENCE CONSTRUCTION CANADA**

**Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, serious allegations have been made regarding gross improprieties of Defence Construction Canada. These allegations include financial irregularities, glaring technical incompetence and a soft landing pad for retiring forces personnel.

Will the government support my motion to study this matter at committee and will the minister commit to attend the meeting and explain what actions her department is taking?

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the member well knows, I cannot dictate to the committee what it will do or what it will examine. He will have to make his case to the committee.

However, he has made his case to me and, as Minister of Public Works and Government Services, I have already informed him that my department will be investigating this. We are waiting to receive the full report from the union so we are able to do that.

He should also know that this organization is audited by the defence department, public works and also has its own audit measures within Defence Construction Canada. As well, the Auditor General will be looking at this. If there are any documented allegations, we will forward them to him for sure.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the repairs to the Quebec Bridge have been on hold for almost seven years. No maintenance has been done to it since the federal government brought legal action against the owner, Canadian National. The minister refuses to tell us where this case stands before the courts. Meanwhile, the infrastructure continues to deteriorate.

What does the government intend to do to prevent this bridge from crumbling? Will the Conservatives tell us how much this case has cost taxpayers so far?

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting when an hon. member gives the answer to his own question, as we have just seen. The hon. member knows full well that the case is before the courts and that Canadian National owns the bridge. We will continue to do our work.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, after 17 years, the long gun registry faces an important milestone. In a few hours, the House will vote at third reading on the long gun registry.

While this will come as no surprise, Conservative members of the House stand committed to stopping the treatment of law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters like criminals. After all, we

promised that to our constituents. However, it was not just the Conservatives who promised this. Many NDP candidates in rural and northern Canada made the same promise.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please update the House on the importance of tonight's vote?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his work on the file. I am pleased to say that in a few short hours the long gun registry will move one step closer to being scrapped once and for all.

I encourage all members to stand up for their constituents. I would especially encourage the member for Western Arctic who said recently during election debate, "vote for me, vote for the Conservatives, it's the same. We will both vote to end the long gun registry".

Our Conservative government will keep its promise. We hope that he does as well.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

[Translation]

**TRANSPORT**

**Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this government is prepared to allow the construction of an airport in Neuville, against the unanimous will of the residents. When the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities was passing through the area recently, he did not even take the time to meet with the residents, despite our repeated requests. This only shows, once again, his unwillingness to work with the municipalities.

Does that look like openness? At least he promised to make a decision eventually.

Can the minister tell us when he plans to make a decision and if he will, finally, consult the people of Neuville?

**Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague said, eventually.

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**FIREARMS REGISTRY**

**Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today is a dark day, the day the gun registry is being destroyed. Yet the Conservative members seem to think that a celebration is in order. This is an insult to the memory of the victims and to the groups that are fighting for better gun control, an insult to the memory of the women murdered at École Polytechnique and Dawson College. Quebecers who remember these terrible tragedies do not feel like celebrating.

I am calling on the government to show them dignity and respect by not attending tonight's ridiculous party.

*Routine Proceedings*

[English]

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the victims of crime, especially victims of gun crime. We have taken many steps in our legislation, some with the support of the opposition, in order to focus on laws that actually target criminals.

I call on the member to continue to support real legislation that does not simply make people feel safe, but in fact keeps them safe.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Denis Coderre (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Saint Boniface was responding to my NDP colleague, she said he was anti-Canada. I find that completely unacceptable coming from any party. There is no anti-Canada here. It is time for some decorum and consideration. Everyone is working here. They would do well to calm down a bit. I find this to be unacceptable and I ask that the hon. member apologize. The NDP is not anti-Canada.

[English]

**Mrs. Shelly Glover (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say very clearly that it was very disturbing to many Canadians when the NDP members attended Washington, D.C. to try to stop jobs from being created in Canada. They are undermining the Canadian economy. I stand by my remark—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Public Safety.

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is in response, I understand, to a point of order raised yesterday by a Liberal member who indicated that I had accused someone of being a child pornographer. In fact I made no such statement.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saannich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order regarding the hon. parliamentary secretary's remarks about being anti-Canadian. If that attack is going to be made on—

**The Speaker:** I have not heard anything to this point that indicates it is a point of order. It seems that it is a continuation of debate over what was said or positions that were taken. If members want to follow up on it, they can do so at a future question period, but not through points of order.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**TREATIES**

**Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32 (2), I have the honour today to table, in both official languages, the following treaties entitled: Convention on Cluster Munitions, done at Dublin on May 30, 2008; Mutual Recognition Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United

Mexican States for Conformity Assessment of Telecommunications Equipment, done in Honolulu on November 12, 2011; Protocol amending the Agreement between Canada and Barbados for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income on Capital, done at Bridgetown on January 22, 1980, which was also done at Bridgetown on November 8, 2011; and Protocol amending the Convention between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Singapore for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, done in Singapore on March 6, 1976, and also done at Singapore on November 29, 2011.

An explanatory memorandum is included with each treaty.

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● (1510)

[Translation]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Merv Tweed (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the first report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in relation to the study on the national public transit strategy.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons, the committee requests the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

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**ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT**

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-396, An Act to amend the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act (Northern Ontario).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking for seconding this bill. It would protect all 10 of the current northern Ontario ridings during the changes in the electoral boundaries in Ontario. The bill recognizes that population is only one of many factors to consider in the size of a riding. There is also geography, linguistic and historical consideration.

Northern Ontario is larger in size than every province except two in Canada. Many ridings in northern Ontario are already bigger than some European countries. We do not need to make it any harder for constituents to get to their MP's office or to weaken their voice and the voice of the north.

[Translation]

It is also important to remember the linguistic principle when we talk about fair representation in the House of Commons. There is a large francophone population in northern Ontario and they must not be ignored when electoral boundaries are set.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

The last thing northern Ontario needs is fewer MPs in Ottawa. I call on all northern MPs on both sides of the House to support the bill.

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

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a number of petitions signed by over 300 people from the Waterloo region, as well as from Vancouver, British Columbia.

The petitioners draw the attention of Parliament to the fact that suicide kills, on average, 10 Canadians each and every day, which means there are almost 4,000 preventable deaths each year.

Suicide is not just a mental health issue, but also is a public health issue. Actions to prevent suicide by communities, governments, organizations and individuals across Canada would be enhanced by coordination and information sharing.

Therefore, the petitioners are calling on Parliament to meet the public health challenges posed by suicide by adopting legislation that would recognize suicide as a public health issue, provide guidelines for suicide prevention, promote collaboration and knowledge exchange across sectors, and promote evidence-based solutions to prevent suicide and its aftermath and to define best practices for the prevention of suicide.

**The Speaker:** I see a lot of members standing to present petitions today. In order to accommodate everybody, I will just remind the House that the practice is to provide a brief summary of the petition and not to read the petition or to go on at great lengths.

The member for Davenport.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

**Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will take your advice to heart.

The petition I am presenting today is from constituents in my riding of Davenport who have grave concerns over the government's lawful access legislation and the fact that contained in this legislation are requirements for telecommunications companies to collect and store personal information about their users and that that information could be handed over to law enforcement without a warrant.

• (1515)

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have said many times in this House that the CBC gives a national voice to issues, people and regions that would not otherwise have one.

Therefore, I rise today to present a petition from concerned residents of Guelph who are calling on the Canadian government to acknowledge the importance of our country's national public broadcaster, the CBC, and to keep the recommendation of the

House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to increase the CBC's parliamentary grant to \$40 for every citizen.

## WINE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Greg Kerr (West Nova, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by a number of residents from Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, I realize you want me to be brief, but I must say it is very exciting that they are writing in support of our colleague's Bill C-311, which would provide personal exemption for the purchase and shipment of wine across provincial borders. The petitioners are very enthused about this initiative.

## WOODLAND CARIBOU

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a pleasure to present a petition prepared and circulated by grade 1 and grade 2 students in Garneau School in my riding.

Very briefly, the petitioners point out that we need to help the caribou by not chopping down all the trees. We must protect the caribou habitat in the boreal forest. If we chop down the trees, the wolves will get the caribou. We need the wolves and the caribou.

The petitioners ask the Minister of the Environment to protect the woodland caribou in Canada, as required under the Species at Risk Act, by adopting a strong boreal woodland caribou recovery strategy that includes adequate habitat protection measures to ensure the caribou's long-term survival.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I present a petition on the environment and health. The environment can have profound impacts on our health, for example, asthma, birth defects, cancer, fertility problems, nervous system disorders, et cetera.

The goal of environmental health is to maintain and improve the health of people by monitoring a healthy environment and to reduce the burden of human illness and disability by understanding how the environment influences the development and progression of human disease, particularly among vulnerable populations, children, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

The petitioners call upon the government to appoint a royal commission on the environment and health.

## ABORTION

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from folks in my riding of Chatham-Kent—Essex. They are calling on the House of Commons and Parliament assembled to speedily enact legislation that restricts abortion to the greatest extent possible.

## REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by hundreds of residents from all over the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.



*Government Orders*

The petitioners are calling on the government to establish a high commission in the Republic of the Fiji Islands. They point out that there are 100,000 Canadians of Fijian descent and the lack of effective consular services in Fiji provides inordinate delay and inefficient service for tourist, visa, business and immigration issues for Canadian and Fijian citizens.

The petitioners point out that the United States, Australia, New Zealand, China and India all have embassies or high commissions in Fiji. They are calling on the Canadian government to provide this important service for this very vibrant and well-travelled group of Canadians.

## POVERTY

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present three petitions today. The first petition deals with the issue of eliminating poverty in Canada. Last night I was privileged to participate in an event held by Dignity for All. I was joined by members from all sides of the House and senators. All parties were represented. We discussed ways to eliminate poverty in Canada.

That is the will of these petitioners, all of whom are from my riding and primarily from Salt Spring Island.

## BOTTLED WATER

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I present today is also from residents in the area of my riding.

The petitioners are calling for an end to the provision of bottled water in federal institutions. It is something the Parliament of Canada and the Government of Canada can do to set a good example.

## NATIONAL PARKS

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition is primarily from residents of Jasper, Alberta.

I know the decision has been made by the hon. Minister of the Environment to allow a privatized operation within Jasper National Park. These petitioners call for that project to be refused. I continue to call on the Minister of the Environment to review the situation and reverse that wrong decision.

## ABORTION

**Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions to present today. Each of them calls on the House to enact legislation that restricts abortion to the greatest extent possible. These individuals have a strong personal conviction for the protection of the unborn.

The petitions come from Grace Canadian Reformed Church in Kerwood, the Providence United Reformed Church in Strathroy, the Association for Reformed Political Action, and also the students and teachers at Providence Reformed Collegiate.

• (1520)

## SEARCH AND RESCUE

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today is February 15, and sadly, the 30th anniversary of the sinking of the *Ocean Ranger*. There will be commemorations this evening throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to mark that tragic occasion.

This petition I present to the House requests that the marine rescue sub-centre be maintained. It is slated to close fairly soon pursuant to a decision made by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The centre is responsible for 900,000 square kilometres of ocean and 28,956 kilometres of coastline. It is a very important centre, and is one of the busiest in Canada.

There have been tragedies such as the *Ocean Ranger*, the Cougar 491, the *Ryan's Commander* and the *Melina and Keith II*. These are just a few of the accidents. These stories tell us what a grave situation many people face making a living in the north Atlantic, whether it be in the oil and gas industry or fishing.

The petition comes from the residents of Dover and Hare Bay in my riding.

\* \* \*

## 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.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## ENDING THE LONG-GUN REGISTRY ACT

The House resumed from February 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-19, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act, be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party's dream has really come true.

Let us look at how long we have been having this debate. The debate first started when a Progressive Conservative senator suggested to Kim Campbell that the House look at registering long guns. This idea was well received back in 1991 by the Progressive Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party. I am not too sure about the Bloc.

*Government Orders*

It has always been a mission of the Reform Party to bring in a bill to kill the long gun registry. Today the Conservatives will see that mission realized. I am not going to guess at the decision prior to the actual vote, but I know about that glass bubble in the Conservative administration. The government has indicated how its members are to vote on this bill and no one would dare vote against what it has indicated. Given that the Conservatives have a majority, the Reform Party's dream of getting rid of the long gun registry will be realized today.

We have been hearing all sorts of arguments but the one that really amazed me was regard to the costs. Governing is about priorities. The government has gone out of its way to give the impression that the gun registry costs billions of dollars. It has been trying to give the impression to Canadians that hundreds of millions of dollars are spent every year on the gun registry. That just is not true. Independent offices have made it very clear that the annual cost of the gun registry is close to \$4 million.

We talk about priorities in this place. The government will kill the registry in the same year that it introduced a bill to increase the number of members of Parliament from 308 to 338. To have more politicians in this chamber will cost six times the annual cost of the registry. Imagine that when we talk about priorities. How many Canadians want more politicians? That speaks well in terms of the government's priorities. I can appreciate members might not like to hear the truth, but that is the truth.

It does not matter what the facts really are, the registry is dead. If 85% or more of the police officers in Canada told us today that the registry saves 100 lives a day and they could prove it, it would not matter. The Conservatives will not be confused by the facts. They want to get rid of the gun registry.

What has more credibility is the RCMP. The RCMP is an independent agency. Many Canadians have a deep amount of respect for the RCMP and the fine work its members do. The RCMP conducted a survey in regard to the firearms registry and issued a report. I will read from the report:

A survey of CFRO users showed that 81% of trained police officers supported the statement, "In my experience, CFRO query results have proven beneficial during major operations." So beneficial, in fact, that RCMP dispatchers, RCMP Operational Communications Centres, Quebec Police agencies, Halifax Regional Police, Halton Regional Police, Canadian Military Police, OPP, Peel Regional Police, Toronto Police Service, West Vancouver Police Department and the Tsuu Tina Police Service have re-designed their Records Management Systems to auto-query CFRO whenever a police officer queries CPIC. Additionally, 513 RCMP detachments and federal units, 579 Canadian municipal police agencies and 88 OPP locations query CFRO yearly.

Those are the facts from the RCMP, but it does not matter to the government.

● (1525)

The other day I posed a question to a Conservative member. I asked if he believed it was possible that the gun registry might have saved one life. The Conservatives will not even concede that. They will not concede that there has been an ounce of benefit from the gun registry for its \$4 million in annual costs, a figure that came from the Auditor General of Canada, or one-sixth the cost of the 30-plus members of Parliament the Conservatives have told Canadians they must have. They say, "Prove it".

Let us go back to that RCMP report. It states:

After an individual was observed driving directly into some parked vehicles, he was taken into an ambulance to be checked out. He subsequently pulled out a handgun, pointed it at the attendants and threatened to kill them if they touched him. He then exited the ambulance and fled on foot. The local police soon apprehended him and found that he was in possession of a Glock pistol and loaded spare magazines. Canadian Firearms Registration Online (CFRO) checks indicated that he was a licensed owner of 31 registered firearms. NWEST was asked to assist by preparing the public safety warrant, laying charges and seizing 33 firearms (two of which were not registered), along with thousands of rounds of ammunition.

These are the types of reports I find credible because the RCMP has recognized the value of this and incorporated it into its report. I have heard from many people, such as emergency first responders and so forth. I have heard the arguments.

I was first elected in Manitoba back in 1988, just three years prior to Senator Nurgitz coming up with the idea. From about 1993 to this day, I have heard a lot about the gun registry. There were some problems in its early years with the costs of administering it.

However, the gun registry was never an attack on farmers or law-abiding citizens. If that were the only issue the Conservatives were truly concerned about, then all they would have to do is to amend it, and they would have wide support to do that. That was not the agenda of the Reform Party. Its commitment was clearly to get rid of the gun registry.

The Conservatives refuse to listen to common sense and facts. Instead, they fabricate and propagate myths and mislead the public about what the facts really are.

There was never any intention to turn a farmer into a criminal. Name one individual who was put in jail because of this legislation, Mr. Speaker. Give us one. You will find under the firearms registry that that is not the case, because law-abiding citizens were never a target.

It was an issue of the government's priority. Was \$4 million a priority?

I have had a number of police officers who have told me that the long gun registry is nothing more than one of many tools they use to ensure public safety.

Do members not think that police officers approached the house of the person I mentioned a bit differently knowing that he had 33 registered guns? I know they approach every house as if there were a gun there, but if I were a beat officer and I knew that inside that house there were 33 registered guns and that the person there had just threatened to kill some people, I would approach that house quite differently. I would suspect they had a number of police officers going there.

The registry does make a difference. The facts show that.

● (1530)

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I just cannot believe what I heard from my friend from Winnipeg North.

*Government Orders*

The Liberals actually held my seat back in 1993 when they dreamed up the gun registry. In 1997 they lost by just a hundred votes, mainly because the people in my riding, the farmers that the member said were not criminals but sure were treated like criminals, and the hunters, the outdoorsmen, the rural Canadians, said “Enough of the Liberals”. As a result, the Liberal member, Jon Gerrard, lost that seat by just a hundred votes. The Liberals' support in my riding has continued to decline to a point where, in the last election, they only had 3% of the vote in my riding. Why? It is because they are completely disconnected from what rural Canada is all about.

This member has just proven it here again. He gives the example of just one person who ran out of an ambulance carrying a Glock. Well, that Glock would still be registered under the current system. Handguns are still restricted firearms or are prohibited, and they will be registered, as are all licensed firearm owners. When police actually reference whether or not a person—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Order, please. I will have to stop the hon. member there. I am sure other members will want to ask questions.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that not all 33 of those registered items were in fact known to the police. They were only known to the police because of the registry.

The point is that if someone fabricates something or takes an issue such as this and says that the government is making people criminals because they are not registering their long guns, it will have an impact on public opinion.

I would invite any member to come into any riding in the province of Manitoba and justify increasing the number of politicians in the House of Commons. I will debate members anywhere on that particular issue. In fact, I would even debate this issue. However, they will have to be able to provide the facts and the truth behind the facts, and not be selective.

**Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would be very interested in hearing my colleague's take on the information provided to the House last week by the member for Yukon. He stated that the RCMP had told the committee investigating this bill that over 4,400 stolen firearms were re-registered through the registry.

Does the member think that might have been an avenue where the gun registry could actually seek find and catch criminals, and whether stolen firearms could be returned to their lawful owners? What kind of impact could that potentially have on Canadians' safety?

• (1535)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the member brings up a great point. If we look at the registry as a whole, we have had endless examples of how the registry has made society a safer place.

However, I give the government credit for its communication network, which has been highly successful over the years. The Conservatives have used misinformation, trying to give Canadians the impression that the registry costs hundreds of millions of dollars every year. Canadians have a difficult time agreeing with the gun registry when those are said to be the expenditures.

It is the misinformation that has killed the long gun registry. If we were to take a group of people in a town hall meeting and cite the examples like the member just raised, I believe that at the end of the day we would find a vast majority of law enforcement officers and Canadians as a whole saying that the government is wrong, that it is not taking measures that would make our society a better and safer place to live.

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the government's response to an order paper question asking for data on the kinds of homicides and injuries that happen in Canada due to guns, and on the number of women who have been victims, and aboriginal people, and the number of suicides, et cetera, I was really surprised to hear that the government does not track that information. I does not track the impact of gun injuries and homicides.

My question to the member is, what does he think of the Conservatives saying there is no evidence that the gun registry save lives, when in fact there are no data tracking that at all?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, my greatest frustration is probably when government of the day, no matter what, says there is absolutely zero benefit from the gun registry, when we in fact know there have been benefits. We know that for a fact. However, the government time and time again refuses to acknowledge that. It is unfortunate because that is the fact, it is real and it is wrong for them to give Canadians a different impression.

**Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to begin the final day of third reading debate on Bill C-19, the ending the long-gun registry act.

As I said last week, this is a very proud day for long gun owners and, indeed, people who are fiscally prudent and taxpayers in our country from coast to coast to coast. We are one step closer to fulfilling our longstanding commitment to ending the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry once and for all.

I am pleased to tell Yukon citizens, trappers, hunters, athletes, sport shooters, collectors and first nations who rely on long guns to protect their heritage, culture and traditional way of life that the long gun registry, as promised by our government, is finally coming to its rightful end.

Long guns have been a staple tool in Yukon since its beginning, before it was designated as its own territory. This is indeed true of Canada itself.

Throughout this process of debate we have heard all of the reasons our government is opposed to this misdirected legislation. We have heard how wasteful and costly the long gun registry is. The costs have surpassed \$2 billion. Can one imagine how many police officers that money would have hired, how many crime prevention programs could have been funded, how much rehabilitative treatment could have been developed and how much victim support could have been provided? When we stop to think about it in those terms, it is an absolutely grotesque and astounding waste of money.

### *Government Orders*

Throughout this entire debate, whether in second reading or committee stage, we have also heard that it is ineffective. Frankly, for the last 17 years, not one person has convinced me that the long gun registry has ever stopped a single crime or saved a single life.

What would stop crime is smart prevention, effective policing and sentences that deter crime. That is the approach to criminal justice this Conservative government is taking and will continue to take into the future.

The single biggest impediment to police work today is paperwork. Crimes by and large are not solved from behind a computer desk. There is as much value today in good old fashioned, on the street, door to door efforts as there ever was. This holds infinitely true when we discuss crime prevention. Crimes are not prevented from behind a desk.

Supporters of the long gun registry continue to claim that it will help the police. Ask any officer if they would like a partner or a computer and a database and the overwhelmingly answer would be a partner. However, the \$2 billion blown by the Liberal government went to a database that did nothing, and the police are now buried in databases wrought with errors.

What do I know about this? I was a member of the RCMP's Troop 4 in depot division the year the Liberal government shut it down. It was the second last troop to graduate before a complete closure of the depot for the first time in 125 years of the RCMP's existence. Troop 4 was told well past the mid-point of training that the depot would be closing and there would be no jobs to go to. For the first time in 125 years, facilitators met with our entire troop to say that while we could remain there until graduation, there would be no jobs.

How can the Liberal member now stand in this House and say that the registry keeps Canadians and the police safe with a legacy like that?

It keeps police behind desks. It keeps police buried in data so that they are not on our streets to prevent crimes. The wasted \$2 billion could have been \$2 billion spent on a partner that every officer would love to have. That would have been \$2 billion well spent.

After all the fearmongering and hyperbole the opposition has continued to use at every single juncture of debate, I thought it would be a useful exercise to again review with everyone what I like to call the seven myths of the opposition, by which they have repeatedly misled Canadians.

Myth number one: The long gun registry will help keep suicide rates down. At committee we clearly heard evidence from peer reviewed studies by Dr. Caillin Langmann, Ph.D, Division of Emergency Medicine, Department of Medicine at McMaster University. He stated:

—the discontinuation of the registration of non-restricted firearms is not likely to result in an increase in the aggregate suicide rate by long gun.

I treat suicide and violence on a daily basis.... [T]he money that has been spent on the long-gun registry is unfortunately wasted; however, we can prevent further waste by taking the money we currently spend on the long-gun registry and spending it on...women's shelters; police training in spousal abuse; and psychiatric care, which is sorely lacking in this country. We are not winning the battle against suicide.

● (1540)

Myth number two: The long gun registry will keep women safer. The committee clearly heard about peer-reviewed research which demonstrated that the discontinuation of non-restricted firearms will not result in an increase in homicide or spousal homicide rates through the utilization of long guns. This only makes sense because the people who register their long guns are not committing these crimes. These are men and women who are impeded by the red tape and the stigma associated with being long gun owners. They do their civic duty despite the unnecessary and wasteful burden imposed upon them. They register their firearms because their government tells them it is the law.

Meanwhile, criminals do not do any of this. They enjoy the freedom to operate outside of the law and have all the rights and protections of the law. The opposition attempts to position this debate in long guns as men against women, and offender and victim. The committee heard directly from women, women who hunt, women who trap, women who have represented our great nation in international shooting competitions. The opposition would like Canadians to believe that it is only men who own guns. This is simply not the case.

Madame Hélène Larente, volunteer coordinator of the Quebec women's hunting program, said this in committee:

As a hunter, I don't think it's fair that we are being treated like criminals... The registry does not protect women any more than it does society as a whole.

Myth number three: Guns will now be as easy to get as checking out books at a library. The opposition is ignoring the facts. It is deliberately misleading those who do not own long guns and who are not familiar with the process. I can tell Canadians, as any long gun owner can, that the requirements for licensing are not changing. They include Canadian firearms safety courses and, for some, additional firearm, hunter ethic and safety development courses and, of course, pre-screening security background checks.

Myth number four: Police support the registry and elimination of the registry will put police in danger. This is what the committee heard from law enforcement personnel:

I can tell you that the registration of long guns did not make my job as a conservation officer safer.

That testimony was from Donald Weltz, an Ontario conservation officer.

The committee heard about a survey conducted between March 2009 and June of 2010 of 2,631 police officers from all across Canada, 2,410 of whom voted to scrap the registry. In April 2011, a further survey of Edmonton city police concluded that 81% voted in favour of scrapping the registry. The committee heard that the Auditor General found that the RCMP could not rely on the registry because of a large number of errors and omissions. Numerous individual police officers stated that they do not trust the information contained in the registry and would not rely on it to ensure their safety.

*Government Orders*

Myth number five: The data should be saved and turned over to provinces that wish to create their own registry. The registry is the data. Our commitment to the Canadian people was clear. Anything less would be disingenuous. The data was collected under federal law for a federal purpose. It will not be turned over to another jurisdiction. The committee heard evidence that the RCMP had reported error rates between 43% and 90% in firearms applications and registry information. It also heard that the manual search conducted discovered 4,438 stolen firearms had been successfully re-registered. With these errors, it would be irresponsible to the extreme to allow this unreliable, ineffective and grossly expensive system to be handed over to anyone.

Myth number six: Registering a long gun is no different than registering a car. What did the committee hear on this assumption? Solomon Friedman accurately stated that, unlike registering a car, failure to comply or errors in the application process have criminal implications. People will not be going to jail or receiving criminal records if they fail to register their cars.

Myth number seven: Registering a firearm is simple, so what is the harm? Again, the harm is that any mistake has criminal implications. The mistakes in the registry are staggering.

We should further consider additional testimony from Mr. Friedman:

I have two law degrees. I clerked at the Supreme Court of Canada, and I practise criminal law for a living. Even I at times find the provisions of the Firearms Act and the gun control portions of the Criminal Code convoluted, complex, and confusing.

• (1545)

If this is the case, how can we expect average Canadians to navigate this quagmire without error? How can we have criminal consequences as a result? How can we expect our law enforcement officers to interpret and apply complex and convoluted legislation with discretion and consistency if a criminal lawyer, well versed and studied on the subject matter, finds it difficult?

Linda Thom, who is a Canadian Olympic gold medal shooter, said:

I'm accorded fewer legal rights than a criminal. Measures enacted by Bill C-68 allow police to enter my home at any time without a search warrant because I own registered firearms, yet the same police must have a search warrant to enter the home of a criminal. I'm not arguing that criminals should not have this right, they should. I'm arguing that this right should be restored to me and all Canadian firearms owners.

Finally, I would like to highlight the conclusion of Gary Mauser, PhD, professor emeritus at the Institute for Canadian Urban Research Studies, Simon Fraser University. He concluded:

First, responsible gun owners are less likely to be accused of homicide than other Canadians. Second, the police have not been able to demonstrate the value of the long-gun registry. Third, the long-gun registry has not been effective in reducing homicide. Fourth, the data in the long-gun registry are of such poor quality that they should be destroyed.

That is exactly what will happen. Our government has made a clear commitment. Promise made, promise kept.

However, I would also like to focus today on some of the other insincerities offered by the opposition. First and most flagrantly is the NDP, Her Majesty's loyal opposition. This party, sadly, has caved to the big labour special interests. Numerous members of that party from rural Canada told their voters last spring that when they went to

Ottawa, they would put the views of people ahead of cheap partisan politics.

Boy, were those people misled. For example, the member for Western Arctic stated recently, and repeatedly, that he would vote to end the long gun registry. He campaigned on this, knowing full well, and in his own words to the *Slave River Journal* as recently as June 2010, that 95% of the emails he received from the Northwest Territories constituents supported eliminating the long gun registry. The member has now stated in this House that he will vote against ending the long gun registry.

It appears that he is willing to disappoint his constituents, turn his back on them by failing to defend their traditional, cultural, historic and present-day way of life. Why would he do this when he stated in the same article that he believed he would be able to vote as he saw fit? He said:

The NDP has a policy of not whipping the vote on private member's bills, so people are allowed to vote as they see fit.

Alas, the answer. The member for Western Arctic is not prepared to face the wrath of NDP bosses and suffer the consequences.

However, not all members of the NDP are willing to break their commitments. I am referring to the members from Thunder Bay—Superior North and Thunder Bay—Rainy River, who both had the courage to stand up and vote with the Conservative government to end the long gun registry.

Unfortunately, we know how that story went. The heavy-handed union bosses in the backrooms of the NDP spoke and spoke quickly. Immediately these MPs were stripped of the ability to speak up for their constituents. These sorts of intimidation tactics are reprehensible, but frankly not surprising from the disunited NDP.

Let us also look at the Liberal Party members. They have not been as cagey about their position as their New Democratic colleagues. The Liberals were clear prior to the last election that all Liberals would support continuing the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

Now, thanks to ignoring the will of their constituents, the once-great big red machine has been relegated to the back corner of this place.

Members should not think for a moment that I have any problem with the Liberal tactics. Without these ham-fisted actions by the opposition, our caucus might not have been blessed with the great talents, such as the member for Nipissing—Timiskaming, among others.

Despite the two different approaches of ignoring the will of their constituents, the NDP and the Liberals have something in common. They both support criminalizing law-abiding Canadians through the long gun registry, but oppose punishing real criminals through tough and appropriate sanctions.

*Government Orders*

This is something that I simply fail to understand. It is the firm belief of the opposition that individuals should have the force of the Criminal Code, the most powerful tool at the disposal of the state, thrust upon them should they fail to fill out some paperwork to register their rifles and shotguns. At the same time, the members opposite grimace and grumble every time our government dares to suggest that those who are trafficking drugs to our children should get serious jail time or that those who sexually abuse children should never have the benefit of having their criminal record erased.

• (1550)

The position not only lacks serious elements of common sense, it is morally bankrupt. All reasonable people agree that individuals must be licensed to possess firearms. We are not changing that. What we are doing is simply taking steps to eliminate a needlessly bureaucratic process that has done nothing to protect public safety.

Anyone who believes that putting a piece of paper next to a firearm makes it safer is not being honest with himself or herself. Let us be clear: Firearms in the wrong hands are dangerous. That is why we are ensuring appropriate licensing still takes place. Firearms in the hands of law-abiding Canadians, however, are merely tools. They are no different from any other piece of property. This again returns to my confusion as to the priorities of the opposition regarding criminal justice.

When I go back to the Yukon I hear the same refrain from all sorts of people. They ask why law-abiding gun owners are treated like criminals, yet criminals are getting off easy. The only answer I have for them is to look back at the history and the legacy of Liberal governments throughout the years.

Our government is looking to take action to correct both of these historic wrongs. We will end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry once and for all. We will ensure we develop a correctional system that actually corrects criminal behaviour. That is what we were elected to do, and that is what we will do.

It boggles my mind that any reasonable individual could oppose the bill. There are two fundamental halves. First, as I have touched on, is keeping Canadians safe through effective gun control. Our government does not believe in measures that simply make people feel safe. We are concerned with actually making people safe.

Effective gun control exists through proper licensing and ensuring only qualified individuals have possession of firearms. As I have said before, a gun in the hands of a law-abiding Canadian is just another piece of property. A gun in the hands of a criminal or the mentally ill only leads to tragedy. The long gun registry does nothing to prevent the latter. That is done through screening and licensing, which we have recently increased investment in. That is how people are truly kept safe.

The second half of the bill, which is equally important, is protecting the privacy of all Canadians. For many years the long gun registry made ordinary Canadians feel like criminals for no other reason than the fact that they happened to own a firearm. They were required to register in a cumbersome and paperwork-heavy process. They were required to submit into a database a list of legally owned private property. All for merely having the audacity of being a long gun owner.

Diana Cabrera from the Canadian Shooting Sports Association testified before committee. She said:

There is no question that the long-gun registry has deterred individuals from entering the shooting sports. Firearm owners are subjected to spectacular press coverage in which reporters tirelessly describe small and very ordinary collections of firearms as an "arsenal".

Some may say that being in a database hardly constitutes being a criminal. There are all kinds of databases. The problem lies with the attitude. Firearms owners are taught that they need be ashamed of their hobby, that somehow, because they own a gun, they are more likely to become a criminal. This needs to stop. That is completely untrue.

On law and order matters, police and the firearms community tend to march in lockstep. However, the long gun registry has thrust a wedge between these two groups. In many cases, firearms owners rightfully feel that they are being targeted by police officers for simply owning a hunting rifle. While the police are merely doing their job and enforcing the law as it stands, a culture of division has been spawned by the policies of the previous Liberal government. Eliminating the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry is an important first step in correcting this needless division of Canadians.

The fact of the matter is that once we eliminate the long gun registry, there will be no change in public safety. Effective gun control will still exist. What will change is that, once and for all, gun owners will be able to feel good about owning their guns.

I see my time is coming to an end. I would just like to conclude that we have seen a number of steps taken that are simply divisive politics. We saw, as an example, on two separate occasions, billboards designed by the NDP to provoke fear in urban communities. They had silhouettes of dangerous-looking firearms and they implied that these scary guns would be everywhere should the registry be scrapped. Plain and simple, they were wrong. Those firearms displayed are restricted and are still subject to gun control measures.

I call on all members, especially those members who campaigned on this promise, to stand with our government and vote to end the long gun registry. Let us put an end to this Liberal-led attack on our Canadian culture, tradition, history and day-to-day life of north to south, rural to urban, coast to coast to magnificent coast.

• (1555)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like the hon. member, I too was a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, which considered the issue of abolishing the long gun registry. My remarks or my question will not make him change his mind. On this side of the House, we are aware that the Conservatives are so convinced that they are right, and their position on the registry is so ideological, that we would be wasting our breath trying to get them to listen to reason.

*Government Orders*

However, there is one thing I would like to say to the House. The Conservatives often go out of their way to say that the NDP members who voted for the registry must respect the mandate they received from their constituents. But I am wondering if the hon. member is aware that these members were re-elected on May 2, 2011, after changing their minds because they were convinced that the hon. Jack Layton's position was well founded. He said that we were going to improve the registry so that hunters did not feel singled out, and that is what we did. Unfortunately, the Conservatives did not listen to anything we had to say.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if there was a specific question in that, but I will address one thing about us taking a ideological approach to this. In fact, we are taking a fact-based approach to this. There is not much ideological about this. Everything we heard at committee was fact-based. That is hardly ideological. That comes from our constituents.

While a few members may have survived out of a popularity on a number of fronts within the opposition benches, I can clearly state there are a number of brand new members in the House today courtesy of decisions made when other members, who no longer here, turned their backs on the wishes of their constituents. I refuse to do that for the residents of my riding in the Yukon Territory. They have made it loud and clear and I will stand up for their values.

• (1600)

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague brought up some points that I think are valid. In the case of criminality comparisons, drivers licences with gun licences and the criminality involved, he has a point. There is some confusion I have, though, about this. This comes from a constituent of mine who agrees with him, that being in a database for gun ownership makes him feel like a criminal.

Here is the catch. He owns two handguns. The government has decided that it will maintain a handgun registry.

My question is very simple. My constituent points out that the handgun registry is ineffective and wasteful. Why would the government continue that, given how wasteful and ineffective it may prove to be?

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, I can simply state that we made a commitment. We did not go any further than the commitment to end the long gun registry, and that is what we will do.

However, if my hon. colleague would like to initiate a private member's bill to scrap the wasteful and ineffective handgun registry, I might consider seconding that motion for him.

**Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the point that struck me as most important is that this wasteful and ineffective registry is not only a burden upon hunters, farmers and people who make their living using these tools of the trade, but it is a burden upon some of the Canadians who are among the most law-abiding citizens we have. He and I both replaced representatives of a party that now sits in the corner of the House. The person I replaced was one of those who had probably extended the life of this registry by at least a year.

Would the hon. member agree that by continuing to place this burden upon very law-abiding Canadians and by voting against real measures to make Canadians safe, those proposed by this government, members opposite, those who continue to support a long gun registry, are not listening to Canadians and are showing that they are the ones who are out of touch with our country?

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, I would wholeheartedly agree. I guess we are going to get to the third reading vote tonight and end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

In a great democratic process, there is nothing at all that is going to prevent the opposition members, four years from now, from running a good, solid campaign on bringing the long gun registry back. Let us see how far they get with that campaign approach. I would encourage them to do that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi (Saint-Jean, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I was listening to the speech by the hon. member for Yukon and I found it to be quite pretentious. He used the expression “once and for all”. To my knowledge, laws are made to be changed. If they are can be changed in one way, then they can also be changed in another way. I find it rather pompous to say that the bill that will probably pass this evening will be done “once and for all”.

I would like to respond to another thing from the speech by the hon. member for Yukon. If I understood correctly, in his myth number six, he compares firearms to cars. I would like him to explain how he can compare a firearm to a car. A car is used for moving people around and a firearm is used for killing, most of the time.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize to my hon. colleague sitting next to me if he found anything I said pretentious because I certainly did not mean to come across that way at all. I am passionate about this, as are all the people in my riding. I cannot necessarily hide my excitement about some of the things that will occur, but I did not mean to come across as pretentious. I apologize if I came across that way.

I should clear something up on myth number six. I was not comparing firearms and vehicles. The opposition has said that licensing a gun is no different that licensing a car. I said that this was a myth. There is a big difference between the consequences of not registering a vehicle and the consequences of not registering a firearm. One has a provincial summary consequence, while the other has criminal implications. Those are far too severe, far too strict, specifically for a paperwork error that we have seen a number of times with this registry.

That was the comparison I was making and I hope that clarifies it.

*Government Orders*

•(1605)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my friend the hon. member for Yukon whether he finds any contradiction in the fact that the Minister of Public Safety has attacked the long gun registry as an invasion of privacy, but has now proposed in Bill C-30 to put forward a registry with private information?

Will the hon. member for Yukon also oppose Bill C-30, as I intend to do?

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, personally I do not see the comparison between holding information in a database that is already going through the Internet in a manner that allows the proliferation of child pornography in our country in the same fashion as the database with the long gun registry.

As a long gun owner, I need to physically fill out paperwork and go through screening. That information is supplied to a registry that has been fraught with errors, a registry that sent back to me registration information for firearms I did not even own. That in and of itself risked putting me in a criminal position.

They are very different systems.

In my mind, the lawful access legislation is a good body of legislation that would shut down the heinous and sick crimes of pedophilia and child pornography that exist in our country. I will be voting in support of that. The privacy laws for Canadians in that legislation, as the minister made very clear, are going to be protected. I have read the bill and I am confident that the strict provisions for warrant applications would absolutely ensure the privacy of Canadians and also consumer and corporate competitiveness, which is an excellent step.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Charmaine Borg (Terrebonne—Blainville, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to add my voice to those of many Quebeckers, Canadians, police officers and victims who strongly condemn abolishing the long gun registry and its data. This irresponsible choice shows once again the take-it-or-leave-it Conservative rhetoric that has prevailed in the House of Commons since the last election.

Under the Liberal government, the initial implementation phase of this registry cost Canadians a lot more than expected, while also being plagued by significant delays and registration costs. The lack of leadership and the poor estimate of the actual costs were indeed disturbing. However, the current cost of maintaining the registry is \$4 million annually, while the total budget for the Canadian firearms program is \$76.5 million. Let us do some quick calculations. The registry accounts for 5.23% of the program's annual budget. Hon. members will agree that this is a relatively small amount and that the significant investments that had to be made to create the registry are now behind us. Therefore, destroying these records would waste the public funds already invested.

With their taxes, Quebeckers have paid close to one-quarter of the cost of the registry, and they want a registry. Quebec was even

prepared to take over this registry, but the Conservative government flatly refused. Destroying the data would waste the large investment made by Quebeckers and Canadians.

Since the destruction of those records is part of the Conservative plan, I find it unacceptable that the provinces, which have invested a lot of money, were not consulted before making this decision. The Conservative government refuses yet again to listen to the provinces, just as it did with Bill C-10. That shows a total lack of respect.

I also want to point out that the speeches made by the Conservatives in recent months are very inconsistent. The Conservatives partly justify abolishing the long gun registry by suggesting that citizens should be treated like adults and that the government should not interfere in their private lives. The government also says that it is wrong to treat law-abiding hunters as if they were criminals.

I find it very ironic that, under the lawful access legislation, all Canadians using the Internet will be treated like criminals, without any regard for their right to privacy. After all, one of the main goals of the Conservatives with Bill C-19 is to destroy data in order to protect privacy. These two positions are rather controversial and inconsistent.

I want to point out that those same hunters whose privacy the government wants to protect also have computers at home. They will probably use the Internet. I am having a very hard time understanding the government's position. I do not understand why we are legally required to disclose details about our private lives by registering our animals, our children and our cars, but registering a firearm that could be used to kill someone, whether intentionally or accidentally, is an invasion of privacy. That makes no sense.

Simply put, the government is against data that interfere with their rhetoric. They are underestimating the intelligence of Canadians.

As of September 30, 2011, the registry was being accessed 17,000 times a day. A survey showed that nearly all general duty police officers use the system, and that in 74% of cases, the information they obtain assists their operations. The registry enables police officers to better prepare their intervention strategies, which is crucial to protecting those who bear the weighty responsibility of keeping us safe.

That is why William Blair, Toronto police chief and president of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, and Daniel Parkinson, president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, expressed concern about the safety of police officers and Canadians should the data be destroyed.

In Quebec, Yves Francoeur, president of the *Fraternité des policiers et policières de Montréal*, said, "To keep people safe, we need a registry, no matter what the cost".

Marc Parent, chief of the Montreal city police, said, "This is a tool we use every day. The need is there".

The RCMP and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police have also spoken in favour of maintaining the registry.



*Government Orders*

•(1610)

The government is bragging about making the work of police officers easier, but Bill C-19 does not make any sense to police officers across the country.

There is absolutely no question that the registry gives police officers essential strategic planning tools that they use for their interventions. However, I am very concerned about victims and future victims of criminal acts committed with guns. I am thinking in particular of the victims at the Polytechnique in 1989 and at Dawson College in 2006, of police officer Valérie Gignac, and of the RCMP officers in Mayerthorpe in 2005, who were all killed by guns. In 2010, the RCMP said that in the previous 10 years, 10 out of 13 police officers were killed by long guns.

Victims' groups have condemned Bill C-19. It is grotesque, insensitive and cruel to all these victims to abolish a registry whose records can save lives. This government says it protects victims, but its position on Bill C-19 shows the exact opposite. Rather than presenting Canadians with a take-it-or-leave-it choice so as to divide them, the NDP wants to unite them. Our party seeks a compromise between the public safety issues that could result from the abolition and destruction of this registry and aboriginal treaty rights. We believe it is possible to find a solution for all Canadians.

In 2010, we proposed the following: decriminalizing the failure to register a firearm for first-time offenders and issuing a ticket instead; indicating in the legislation that long gun owners would not have to pay registration costs; prohibiting the disclosure of information about firearms owners, except for the purpose of protecting the public or when ordered by a court or by law; and creating a legal guarantee to protect aboriginal treaty rights.

Our point of view has not changed. We support a constructive dialogue between the stakeholders, so that no one is left out and we all work together. Recent governments have divided us enough. The time has come to take measures that will foster reconciliation between all Canadians. There are solutions that will improve public safety while also respecting aboriginal people and everyone who lives in rural areas.

It is time the Conservative government listened to Canadians and acted like a responsible government towards them and towards all those who risk their lives to maintain the peace.

•(1615)

**Mr. Chris Alexander (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our hon. colleague described this bill as grotesque, inconsistent and ideological. If that is the case, could she explain to us why two members of her caucus voted in favour of the bill in the last vote? Why did the hon. member for Western Arctic, who is also part of her caucus, state very clearly his intention to vote in favour of the bill?

**Ms. Charmaine Borg:** Mr. Speaker, I said in my speech that it is clear that this government is trying to be divisive. We proposed a solution in 2010 in order to unite Canadians and to have a discourse that could allay our public safety fears, while protecting the rights and interests of aboriginal people and those living in remote regions. We want to unite people and we made a proposal, but it was rejected.

The Conservatives should be asking themselves why they reject our proposals that aim to unite Canadians.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, would my colleague comment on what she thinks is going on in the mind of the government because of its conflicting ideologies? First, the Conservatives are saying that they want to abolish the gun registry for privacy reasons. Now they are proposing an online snooping bill. Could she help me understand where their thinking comes from?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Charmaine Borg:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her question. I am confused as well. The government says it wants to abolish the firearms registry because it does not want to treat hunters and those own firearms for recreation as criminals. However, it is prepared to treat law-abiding Internet users as criminals. I am confused and I think the Canadian public is confused too.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am confused when the member talks about united Canadians. The long gun registry has criminalized the innocent, farmers, hunters and sports shooters. However, when we bring forward bills for justice that will actually take on serious criminals, whether they be drug dealers or pedophiles, you vote against those.

Therefore, I am confused about the phrase “united Canadians” when you are trying to protect the criminals and wanting to criminalize the innocent.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Charmaine Borg:** Mr. Speaker, I am really sick of hearing the government say that. To them everything is black and white: either you are with criminals or against criminals. We are for victims and this bill protects victims, but you want to go against the registry. I do not understand. Is the government with or against victims?

[*English*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** I remind hon. members to direct their comments through the Chair and not to other hon. members.

Questions and comments, the hon. Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification.

**Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to clarify that the Internet bill before the House does not snoop into the private lives of people. It is there to prevent particularly pedophiles and those who are suspect to police. There is quite a difference between the two and I would like her to clarify that.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Charmaine Borg:** Mr. Speaker, indeed, I will clarify. This bill will provide access to our geographic location without a warrant. To me, that treats law-abiding citizens like criminals, plain and simple.

*Government Orders*

•(1620)

**Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, every time I rise in this House to support or oppose a bill, it is usually with great joy. Today, however, it is with great sadness that I am obliged to rise here today to tell the Conservative government that of course I oppose this bill.

I would like to begin by thanking the groups and individuals in my riding who took the time to write to me, asking me to stand up to the Conservative government and oppose this bill.

I would like to take a few moments to read some excerpts from the emails I received from my constituents, whose emails show that they oppose this bill and explain how afraid they are that this bill will pass.

A group from Montreal, the Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes, wrote the following: “Rifles and shotguns in the wrong hands are just as deadly as handguns. Strict controls are essential for all firearms. Registration holds firearms owners accountable for their firearms. It reduces the chance that their weapons will be diverted into the hands of individuals without permits, and helps curb illegal trafficking. Gun control works. Health and safety experts have shown that stronger gun laws have reduced gun-related death rates.”

Approximately 400 of my constituents wrote to me about this bill. Of those 400 people, there were perhaps seven who supported the government and 393 who supported the opposition. Many people wrote letters asking me to continue to fight the elimination of the firearms registry.

Here is an excerpt from a letter demonstrating the fear of which I spoke. “This sends a clear message to street gangs that they can buy a shotgun as easily as they can buy a package of cigarettes at the corner store. Then, they saw off the barrel and the butt to get a concealable weapon that is classified as restricted. Although the government is saying that it wants to maintain the prohibited weapons registry, it is leaving the door wide open for wrongdoers to make their own prohibited weapons without any constraints. It is complete nonsense to tell the public that the fact that a permit will still be required to purchase a restricted weapon will help to ensure their safety.”

Another individual wrote, “As soon as long guns no longer need to be registered in the name of a specific person, as is now required by this registry, anyone will be able to buy a firearm and then transform it into a restricted weapon. The police will no longer be able to find out who purchased and sold these weapons.”

Yet another individual wrote, “Abolishing the registry will give wrongdoers a new way to easily obtain very deadly, restricted weapons. We can thus expect an increase in crime and an increase in the cost of the justice and prison systems, which will exceed the cost of maintaining the current system.”

Finally, another one of my constituents wrote:

[*English*]

“It is for the general protection of the public and the public in general through the normal taxation provisions shall pay the cost of the supervision of the shooting range when it is required. The regular police forces will provide the service at very little cost. This will not

deal with illegal arms trafficking, but it will help in many other cases of shootings and will narrow the field of inquiry in cases where an unregistered gun might have been used”.

[*Translation*]

This shows that my constituents are afraid. They are very afraid of what will happen in our country this evening, in a few hours. In my riding in particular, there is a high rate of crime. In Lachine, many murders are committed using firearms, sometimes long guns. I am sad to see that the government is not addressing victims' needs for protection.

Every time we ask questions in this regard, the government always responds that it is in favour of safety. The Conservatives all have that word tattooed on their foreheads. Whether they are talking about planes or prisons, safety is always mentioned. The government has introduced a bill that violates people's privacy on the Internet in the name of safety. In this case, they are proposing a bill that will make the people in my riding less safe.

Currently, the long gun registry is used about 17,000 times a day, yet the government says that it is useless. I do not understand its logic. Many suicides involve long guns. The registry can be a big help in dealing with such cases. When I was in university, I was part of an organization in my riding that people could call if they were contemplating suicide. We helped people. We started by asking callers if they knew when they were going to commit suicide. Then we asked them if they know how they were going to do it. About half the time—if I remember correctly, because I do not have the statistics here—people said that they were going to use a gun, often a long gun.

After finding out the how, the where and the when, if the caller planned to use a firearm, we checked the registry to find out if he or she owned a firearm. Knowing the caller possessed a firearm was very helpful to the intervention. As soon as we knew the how, where and when, we intervened. I know for a fact that police officers were very glad to know if the person whose home they were entering owned a firearm. Their lives could be in danger. The information helped officers plan their response.

I apologize. I am emotional because I have dealt with this in my life.

One of the government's arguments is that the quality of the information in the registry is poor. I was a teacher, and when a student handed in a bad test, I did not tell him or her to toss it, but to redo it. That makes perfect sense to me. The current registry may not be top quality, but it can be improved. The NDP proposed a number of changes to improve the registry so that all Canadians can benefit from the safety it affords. We wanted to make sure that the people for whom the registry is a problem were included in the process. Among other things, we proposed decriminalizing the failure to register a firearm for a first offence and issuing a ticket instead. That makes perfect sense.

When the registry was created in 1995, it was not perfect. We realize that now. It is our duty to improve it, not destroy it. We have also proposed that the bill indicate that long gun owners would not have to pay registration costs.

*Government Orders*

•(1625)

I hear the Conservatives saying that it is too costly for farmers and for those who use long guns in their leisure activities. So we have suggested a solution.

We also propose that disclosing information about the owners of firearms be prohibited, except for the purpose of protecting the public, or when ordered by a court or by law. We also propose creating a legal guarantee to protect aboriginal treaty rights. Those who represent aboriginal constituencies and are using this argument should have considered our amendments.

I have a lot more to say. I know I will not convince any government members to vote against their party today, but I will ask them two things, which will help me sleep better tonight. As we know, Quebec has asked the government to transfer the data. I hope the government will consider that. We know it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars if the Quebec government decides to seek an injunction against the federal government. I therefore ask the government to at least save that money, since we are talking about budget cuts.

Furthermore, the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound told us yesterday that he plans to celebrate tonight. I really hope he changes his mind and foregoes the celebration.

•(1630)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we move on to questions and comments, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Foreign Investment; the hon. member for Mount Royal, Justice.

[*English*]

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the NDP member on her very interesting speech. I have a question on the position of women in this debate. The victims at École Polytechnique were young women. It is mostly men who own guns, but it is primarily women who are the victims of violent crimes involving guns. Policies such as the change to the old age security program will affect primarily elderly women, women who do not have a lot of means.

Does the hon. member think there is a pattern, namely that women are not seen as equally important in the eyes of Conservative members, and that this is part of the challenge?

**Ms. Isabelle Morin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her excellent question. I actually did want to speak about the case of women in my speech, but I got carried away and did not have time to do so. This will give me an opportunity to remind the Conservatives that one in three women who die at the hands of their husbands are shot, and 88% of them are shot with legally owned rifles and shotguns. Since the introduction of the registry, spousal homicides are down 50%. This bill really does hurt women.

To echo what the hon. member was saying, I am extremely disappointed to see how this government tends to treat women. Through the introduction of several bills, I hope that this will improve in the future.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I had to get up in response to the last question. I am a woman and a mother. My children grew up in a rural area. In that rural area, one day the farmer next door used his long gun rifle to protect our children from a cougar that was stalking them. Many years later, farmers, hunters and sports shooters still feel so angry, degraded and criminalized over legislation that has done nothing.

I would ask the member to look at what the legislation has done. This is not an issue about women. This is an issue about criminalizing law-abiding people and farmers, who in my case protected my children from cougars.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Isabelle Morin:** Mr. Speaker, it seems that the member opposite did not hear the statistics I just mentioned. I will repeat them: one in three women who die at the hands of their husbands are shot, and 98% of them are shot with legally owned rifles and shotguns.

The member opposite is saying that her neighbours have weapons to defend their children from cougars. We are not asking her neighbours to give up their weapons. We are asking them to register those weapons. I do not see how this contradicts what I was saying at all.

•(1635)

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in listening to this debate, there seems to be an awful lot of contradictions.

On the one hand, I hear the government advocate for financial prudence and responsibility, yet it is willing to take \$1 billion worth of data and throw it in the garbage.

I have heard the government talk a lot about respect for provincial jurisdictions, yet it takes an action that would prohibit the provinces from building their own database for long guns if they choose to do so.

I have heard the government talk about the gun registry being useless because criminals would not register their guns, yet it advocates for the Firearms Act provision for the certificate process that requires people to get a licence to get a gun. I do not understand why the government thinks criminals would do that, yet it seems to hold on to that part of the process.

Does my hon. friend have any comments on whether she sees any contradictions in the position of the government on this bill?

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Ms. Isabelle Morin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question. There have been many contradictions in what we have been hearing for a long time. On one hand, the government is spending money on commemorations and all sorts of other things and, on the other, one of the main arguments it is presenting here is that we need to save money.

As I said earlier in my speech, if the provinces were to get an injunction against this government, it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Today, I would like to prevent that from happening.

[English]

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my please to rise to speak to Bill C-19, getting rid of the wasteful and useless long gun registry. I am proud to split my time with the member for Portage—Lisgar, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety. I thank her the yeoman's effort she has put in toward getting rid of the long gun registry. In the last Parliament, her private member's bill to end the long gun registry nearly passed, but lost by two votes. In my time in Parliament since 2004, that was the closest, until today, that we ever came to getting rid of the long gun registry.

I have to thank the Minister of Public Safety for bringing forward this bill and for listening to firearms' owners right across the country and to ranchers, farmers, hunters and sports people who enjoy the outdoors and target shooting. He listened and was able to put that all together in a comprehensive bill that would ensure we would get rid of the registry and the data and, more important, it would take away the incredible onus on responsible Canadians having to register their long guns.

We cannot talk on this bill without thanking the MP for Yorkton—Melville who has been fighting this since 1995 in the House of Commons. He has been an incredible spokesperson on behalf of wildlife organizations and firearms owners across the country, always getting the details, the data and the real statistics on how useless the long gun registry has been and how it has made law-abiding citizens into criminals.

I have listened to the debate. My friend from Winnipeg North stood and made a number of accusations. I want to address some of those in my speech today.

I have been fighting Bill C-68 since 1995. When I was with the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, I presented to the Senate committee on Bill C-68 when it was travelling across Manitoba. I told the majority Liberal senators at that time that this was going to be a discriminatory bill against rural Canadians. Individuals involved in the agriculture industry use firearms, long guns in particular, as a tool in controlling predators, or varmints that they did not want around the yard, like rabid skunks and raccoons, and for putting animals down humanely if they are ill or injured. For the times that we do our own butchering on the farm, we need to have those long guns. Many of us in the agriculture industry are also outdoors people. We love hunting and fishing and when we go out hunting, we need to have our firearms.

Because of the way Bill C-68 was brought in, it automatically labelled people who owned firearms and did not register them as a criminals. The member for Winnipeg North said that nobody was ever arrested based upon the fact that they never registered their firearms. However, we know the bill was specific. If they did not register, they were criminals. Luckily, the western provinces instructed their police forces, mainly the RCMP at that time, not to enforce the firearms registry for those who did not register their long guns. For the most part, that was upheld.

I know of two cases in Alberta alone where firearms owners were arrested and their guns confiscated because they failed to re-register their firearms. Also a friend of mine, Bruce Montague, who was in Kenora, is a gunsmith, a gun collector and goes out to gun shows. He was arrested after a gun show in northwestern Ontario and went to jail. He kept fighting it because he knew it was wrong that he should be treated as a criminal for legally owning firearms even though he never registered them. I agree with him. They were there as part of his collection and his craft. They were never meant for criminal use. Yet he was treated as a criminal, fined under the legislation and put in jail. That is just wrong in too many ways.

We hear all these exclamations that because of the gun registry, we have seen a reduction in gun-related crimes. We know for a fact that gun-related crimes, gun-related accidents and suicides that happen with firearms and long guns in particular, have been on the decline since the 1970s.

● (1640)

We know for a fact that the massive reduction in accidental shootings dates from the previous Conservative government, when Kim Campbell, the Minister of Justice, brought in the first bill to introduce the firearms acquisition certificates and required safe storage and handling and that firearms owners take firearms safety courses. These shootings could have been by kids playing with guns that had not been locked up or stored properly, or as a result of people not having been properly trained and shootings happening accidentally on hunting excursions. Since then there has been a real difference in the number of accidents, the number of suicides and the number of crimes committed with long guns. That is because firearms owners have been getting the proper training. They have been storing and locking up and handling their handguns properly. That is an educational measure that has nothing to do with the long gun registry itself.

We will be continuing with the licensing requirement for gun owners. That has not changed in the last 20 to 25 years. That will stay in place. To be a licensed firearms owner, a person must have taken a firearm safety course. I took my hunting safety course back in 1977 when I was 13 or 14 years old. It was because of that training that I properly handle my firearms and properly store them under lock and key.

I never registered any of my firearms. I refused to do so as my act of civil disobedience. Thanks to the Province of Manitoba, I was never treated as a criminal per se, but as I have explained times in and outside this House, I have refused to register my long guns.

*Government Orders*

Let us really be clear about the statistics. There have been a lot of numbers thrown around. In 2003 in Vancouver, one of the hotbeds of gun crime, over 97% of the firearms collected on the streets that entire year were not registered. Criminals do not register their firearms. We have stated that over and over again. We know that criminals use handguns. Handguns, under the current legislation, will still be registered and have been since 1925. That will not change.

Targeting law-abiding citizens like long gun owners is a waste of tax dollars, a waste of police time, and a waste of public service time administering a registry that does nothing to prevent any gun crimes.

Since the 1970s, the number of murders committed with guns, that is, the murder rate by long guns or any firearm for that matter, has been 1.9 murders per year per 100,000 people. If we compare that with the population of registered firearms owners, that number goes down to 0.38 murders per 100,000 people.

The most law-abiding people in this country are licensed firearms owners, so why are we making them look like criminals? Professor Gary Mauser looked at all murders since 1997. Less than 2% of them were committed by firearms owners, and out of those licensed firearms owners, only 1.2% of the murders were done with registered firearms. It comes down to the fact that it is not guns that kill people, but people who kill people, and we have to target them.

Just to summarize, the NDP and the Liberals have stated over and over again that they want the gun registry. If they ever have a chance to come back into power, they will bring back the gun registry.

I criticize the member for Western Arctic and the member for Churchill, who campaigned saying, "Vote for me. I will vote to get rid of the long gun registry". Yet they reversed themselves at second reading and voted, along with their colleagues, to kill our bill to end the long gun registry once and for all.

•(1645)

I thank the members for Thunder Bay—Superior North and Thunder Bay—Rainy River for standing up against their party leadership and voting for their constituents, helping to ensure that we get rid of this long gun registry once and for all. They have been sanctioned and silenced, and their constituents do not have a voice in this House of Commons because of that NDP leadership. However, they deserve to be given all the accolades in the world for allowing the grassroots to speak to them and for carrying their voice back here into the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are deeply divided on this issue and my question is not going to bring us any closer together.

I feel like asking the member across the floor if we can put our time together, the time for my question and his answer, and have a moment of silence for the victims of the École Polytechnique, because of whom this registry was created, and as a show of support to the parents who did everything they could so their children's deaths would not be in vain.

[*English*]

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, the victims who have died because of firearms definitely deserve all of our respect, and their families our sympathy and condolences.

I know that moments of silence are organized in consultation between House leaders, the whips, and the Chair. I do not know if it is appropriate for us to take that moment of silence right now. However, I think we should all be cognizant of the fact that when firearms are used illegally and with violence, it is something that all of us in this chamber completely denounce as abhorrent. We definitely want to make sure that those who have suffered at the hands of other people, not by firearms but by those who have decided to use firearms as a weapon to victimize, kill and murder others, know this.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Province of Quebec, as a government, has decided that it would like to have a gun registry. As the member knows, it is fairly expensive to create a gun registry. The province is looking to Ottawa to assist it in having that data bank, as opposed to having to re-create it, thereby saving millions of dollars and perhaps using those millions of dollars to invest in things such as community policing.

Does the member see the common sense in allowing the Province of Quebec to use the data that Ottawa has already invested in, as opposed to it re-creating the registry? It would be a matter of zipping it up in a file and giving it to the Quebec government so that it could actually save money and spend it instead on other crime-fighting initiatives.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, we were quite clear in our promise to Canadians, to firearms owners, that all of the data in the registry would be destroyed. There is no way, in my mind, that we should be passing the data on to any province, sharing it with any provincial jurisdiction so they could use it for whatever they desired. They have it within their own mandates to create those registries if they want. They have the power over personal property, and firearms are personal property.

The only reason we registered them here federally is that we tied them into the Criminal Code. Given that it was considered criminal not to register, I think every piece of data that we put together, every disc, every hard drive, every piece of paper, needs to be destroyed and never passed on to any other jurisdiction in this country.

•(1650)

**Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I compliment the member for his excellent speech on this subject, a matter in which he has been engaged for many years and which he knows very well.

We talked about the wasteful, ineffective long gun registry. I want to ask about errors in the registry, which has been an issue for both his constituents and mine. We have spent, I understand, \$590 million on a computer program to set up this registry. I have heard other members quote \$700 million, a tremendous amount of money, just on the computer systems.

*Government Orders*

I wonder if it costs more to set up a program that makes errors, because as diligent as they are, they can make an error in their address, their house address or their phone number. If it is an improperly registered weapon, they can then be banned from carrying, transporting, buying or selling it. He also mentioned a member who failed to be re-registered, because the registry had actually not notified people when their registration was due. That might also have been a problem for his constituents, as it was for mine.

Would the member comment on that?

**Mr. James Bezan:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I have had the same number of complaints. People were not properly notified and then found out that their firearms were not registered. Then they were hassled by the registry itself, with phone calls, and treated quite rudely because they had not re-registered in time.

When we talk about the errors that were made, I know of people who were able to register glue guns, soldering guns, and those types of things, just to show how foolish the registry really was. For the older firearms that did not have registration numbers on them, the registry would even send out a little sticker. Those stickers did not stay on a rifle very well and would fall off and get lost. It makes one wonder how they could possibly use something so silly to permanently mark a firearm.

**Ms. Candice Hooppner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to be the final Conservative member of Parliament to speak in favour of ending the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

I am also very pleased to work on behalf of law-abiding firearms owners in this country who use firearms for legitimate purposes. They are not criminals. They have never been criminals. They contribute so much to our country. They love this land. I am honoured to stand here on their behalf and to work hard for these good Canadians.

We have been discussing this important issue for 17 years and I am pleased to report that the end is finally in sight. In a very short time we will vote for the very last time on the future of this wasteful and ineffective measure, and it has been wasteful and ineffective on all counts.

CBC has reported it cost over \$2 billion to implement the long gun registry. Every individual, every party, every group, no matter what side of the debate they are on, acknowledges that \$2 billion is far too much money. It has been a waste of money. Members should think of what we could have done with \$2 billion in terms of helping young people, helping individuals and young people who might be involved in gang activity, putting more police on the street, helping victims of violence. All of us could suggest a positive contribution in terms of helping our country to reduce violence with \$2 billion. However, setting up a long gun registry which targets law-abiding Canadians and makes them criminals has been a complete waste.

Throughout this entire time and even while studying the file before I became a member of Parliament, there has never been one example, there has not been one instance, there has been absolutely no proof that the long gun registry has done anything to reduce

violence or to stop a single gun crime. That is why the long gun registry must go. That is why it will go.

I would like to thank the member for Yorkton—Melville. He truly is the elder statesman on this issue. Even before ordinary Canadians had caught on to the systemic problem that is the long gun registry, he was fighting to have it abolished.

One of the issues that gets people in my riding very upset, and rightly so, is the long gun registry. All of us have heard loud and clear from our constituents on this issue. When the majority of us on this side of the House go back to our ridings, we are asked questions all the time. I just did a series of town hall meetings throughout my riding. The questions that came up all the time were: when are we going to get rid of the long gun registry and when is it going to end. Finally we can say that the end is near. The final vote will happen in the House tonight.

Frankly, the Liberal introduction of this nonsensical policy is the reason that many of us are here today.

In the last Parliament I introduced a private member's bill to end the long gun registry that only targets law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters. At that time we came within a hair's breadth of ending the long gun registry with Bill C-391. We were all disappointed to see it defeated.

Unfortunately, some individuals on the other side of the House broke faith with their constituents. They told their constituents they would vote to end the long gun registry but they did not. Instead, they voted in the interests of their party bosses.

However, every cloud has a silver lining. We decided that we might have lost a battle but we were determined that we would not lose the war. We made an effort to get out and talk to Canadians. We knew that we needed a majority government. We needed a mandate from Canadians in order to end the wasteful long gun registry, and that is exactly what we received.

Listening to Michael Ignatieff's demands that all Liberals vote to keep on criminalizing law-abiding gun owners meant that we exchanged Liberal Larry Bagnell for the Conservative member for Yukon. It meant that we exchanged Liberal Anthony Rota for the Conservative member for Nipissing—Timiskaming. It meant that we exchanged Liberal Mark Holland for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, the Conservative MP for Ajax—Pickering. They were great trades.

It was not only the Liberals who lost. Listening to the big union bosses in the backroom of the NDP did not work out so well for some of those members either.

The good people of Sault Ste. Marie made what some would call an MP upgrade from Tony Martin to the Conservative member for Sault Ste. Marie.

*Government Orders*

•(1655)

I would encourage members on the other side to remember this: It was not only the Conservatives who campaigned to end the long gun registry during the most recent election. Many NDP candidates from rural and remote parts of Canada made the same promise.

For example, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, who has his eye on the big chair in the front row, said:

I have always said that when there was a clear opportunity to vote to scrap the long-gun registry I would do just that.

Someone who wants to be leader of the opposition needs to be honest and straightforward with Canadians, so I encourage the member to stand by his words when he votes tonight. The member will have a clear opportunity in a few short minutes.

Also, just a few short months ago in the most recent election, the member for Western Arctic stood in a church in downtown Yellowknife and in an all candidates debate told everyone, “Vote for me. Vote for the Conservatives. It’s the same. We will both vote to end the long gun registry”.

I hope the member stands by his words tonight. He is right. The Conservatives will vote to end the long gun registry. As some of his colleagues on the other side found out last year, Canadians do have a long memory when it comes to broken promises. Canadians will not forget the promises that unfortunately were broken by their MPs.

Let us look at the facts. Whether it has been in coffee shops, in hockey arenas, over kitchen tables, or in the House of Commons, the debate on this issue has been going on for years and every side has been heard. Myths have been perpetuated, such as that the police use the long gun registry 17,000 times a day. That is beyond ridiculous. That myth has been corrected. We have heard time and time again in testimony that front-line officers do not use the registry. They cannot count on the data. It is a useless system. They know they cannot depend on it. They would rather see resources go to help them do their job.

Another myth is that the long gun registry is gun control and it stops crime and domestic violence. That myth is very disturbing to me. The long gun registry has nothing to do with gun control because it has no way of actually stopping individuals from acquiring firearms. Because of that, it cannot stop or intervene in domestic violence.

We need to speak honestly about gun crime, how people get guns, and why they should not have guns. We need to make sure we have laws that actually keep guns out of the hands of people who are dangerous. It is a myth which throughout the debate we have been able to straighten out.

We have discussed every angle of the long gun registry. Thankfully, everyone has had a chance to be heard. Canadians know where they stand on this issue. We believe it is behind us, their government. We believe this because every single Conservative candidate from downtown Vancouver to northern Manitoba, to the suburbs of Toronto, to the Maritimes stood and told Canadians that he or she believed the time had come to end the useless long gun registry. Because of that, Canadians gave us the strong mandate to

keep our promises. That is exactly what we said we would do and that is exactly what we will do.

I encourage all members today to think about the wishes of their constituents. I encourage them to think about rural Canadians and those who live in remote parts of this country, Canadians who use their firearms every day as tools to do their work, whether that be on their farms or to hunt for food. As my colleagues have pointed out, these are law-abiding Canadians who are less likely to commit a crime with a gun than the rest of us who do not own firearms.

I encourage members to think about all of these people and the facts, and vote in support of ending the long gun registry once and for all. I look forward to this bill going to the other place and being passed into law as soon as possible.

It has been an honour and a privilege to stand up for the people of Portage—Lisgar, for law-abiding long gun owners in this country, and for the Conservative colleagues with whom I work.

•(1700)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Éleine Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like most of my colleagues, I am very disappointed to have to ask a question on this issue, which is so crucial not only to Quebecers, but also to many Canadians.

A little earlier, my hon. colleague from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine gave a speech advocating maintaining the registry, with improvements of course. In that speech, she mentioned the importance of the firearms registry to professionals who work in suicide prevention. Representatives from Arc-en-ciel de Saint-Raymond-de-Portneuf, an organization in my riding of Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, told me they share the same concerns.

I would like to hear what my colleague across the floor has to say to that organization, and to police forces, police chiefs and other front-line workers. How can she justify scrapping the gun registry when so many front-line workers, like those working in suicide prevention, believe that the registry is crucial to their work and that it helps them?

That said, I hope we can avoid the usual propaganda.

[*English*]

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Mr. Speaker, that is an important question. All of us are very concerned with suicide rates in Canada. We want to do everything we can to reduce suicide. However, we heard at committee that organizations that work to prevent suicide have absolutely no access to the registry at all.

Where we can receive input and where we can strengthen our gun control program in Canada is in the licensing process. If individuals are at risk, whether it is from mental illness, depression or other factors that come into play that cause people to take such desperate actions, we want to make sure they do not have access to firearms or other things they could use to commit suicide.

*Government Orders*

I do want to correct something for my hon. colleague. Only the police have access to the registry. We heard testimony that the social agencies do not have access. Paramedics do not have access to the registry. Emergency physicians do not have access to the registry. I just wanted to clarify that for my hon. colleague.

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, seeing as the number of women killed by their intimate partners in any given year is seven times greater if there is a gun in the house, is there something the member would like to say to the families of the victims who have died at the hands of long guns?

• (1705)

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Mr. Speaker, all of us are concerned with violence of any kind. Specifically when women are killed by the men they trust the most, all of us, whether we are mothers or daughters, are extremely concerned.

What we differ on is how we actually make some effective changes. When it comes to how women are killed in Canada, the majority of times it is with knives. Women are also beaten or strangled. About 9% of women are killed with guns, including hand guns. Any way that women or men are hurt or murdered in this country is wrong.

In terms of guns, what we need to do is look at our licensing process. Maybe there are ways to strengthen it.

We also need to help families. We need to help men and women who are struggling with issues in their families. We need to have safe places for women to go. This is a huge issue that has everything to do with helping families, but counting guns does nothing to stop family violence.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague very much for all the hard work she has done in this Parliament and the past Parliament on this issue.

I would also like to thank my colleague from Yorkton—Melville, and my predecessor, Dale Johnson, the former member of Parliament for Wetaskiwin who for years campaigned and fought long and hard on this issue.

I want to thank all the constituents in my riding of Wetaskiwin who supported me on this particular issue. There is not one issue on which I get more questions. The question I am asked is when will we see the end of the wasteful, ineffective long gun registry.

I would like to give my hon. colleague every opportunity to thank all the organizations, police forces and so on, across this country, the common sense law-abiding citizens whose sensibilities have been offended for so long by this registry. If there is anybody she would like to thank, I would like to give her the opportunity to do so.

**Ms. Candice Hoepfner:** Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the opportunity.

There are individuals and hunting groups throughout Canada. I was actually in Saskatchewan on the weekend speaking to anglers and hunters. Police officers have come forward. Police chiefs like Rick Hanson of the Calgary Police Service, one of the biggest cities in Canada, stood with us and stood against the long gun registry. I certainly want to thank those people. There have been many individuals and groups that have been working for a very long time

on this issue. Many of them gave up hope. They did not know if we would actually see an end to this registry.

I am thankful, as is my colleague, to our constituents and the many groups and individuals who worked so hard and stood with us, especially those front-line police officers who came to committee. We really needed them and we appreciate what they did.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we resume debate with the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, I need to let him know that I will need to interrupt him at 5:15 p.m. as this is the end of the government orders.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will get right to it, if we can avoid the petulant heckling for a minute. The member has now gone away.

We have the opportunity to talk about making law that works for Canadians and the fulfilling of a mandate. That is what politics is about.

I have a long-standing record of voting for previous iterations of bills that were introduced by the Conservative Party to abolish the long gun registry. What changed here is fundamentally important—

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I want to point out to the member that it is not the practice, and it is contrary to the Standing Orders, to identify somebody's absence or presence here in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** As the member probably knows, avoid any references to the absence or presence of members.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, I think the danger presented here right now is that of a government that has become drunk on its own majority power. It is refusing to listen to the reason that has been presented to it time and time again.

I will give the government three sources. The opposition moved amendments throughout this process that would ensure the protection of law-abiding Canadians and gun owners, even through the passage of the bill. Police forces in this country have lobbied long and hard, as have victim groups, for the government to listen to reason. I actually had a moment of belief, of hope over experience with the government, that it would find its way to a path of reasonableness and allow the amendments that were necessary in the bill. These are amendments and ideas that the government used to believe in a short time ago.

If the Conservatives will not listen to police groups, victim groups or opposition parties, perhaps they will listen to their own legislation, their own government. In 2006, there was an amendment that was key in the previous bill. It said:

... that this measure would help ensure that guns did not get into the hands of individuals who should not have them, such as convicted criminals, and assist investigators in identifying the owners of stolen firearms or in conducting criminal investigations.



*Government Orders*

What was this amendment about? It was about the licensing and verification of a gun when it gets transferred from one owner to a new owner. This was an element that the parliamentary secretary for public safety had in her bill short months ago. Why did the government take that out when, by its own reasoning, there is a need to verify when a gun is transferred from one person to another?

As any gun owner would tell us, one used to have to verify whether the person one was giving the gun to was lawfully entitled to own a gun, that the person was not in a criminal gang, had no previous criminal record and no record of mental history. That is why one would have had to phone the chief firearms inspector. That was in the bill. That was the bill I voted for. That is the bill my constituents wanted me to vote for.

However, this is a fundamental change without reason from the government. There has not been a single ounce of evidence as to why the government would make such a fundamental switch. This is something that protects gun owners and the public. When a gun is transferred from one owner to another, there must be some verification process that goes on to make sure that the person who newly owns the gun is legally entitled to own it. That was all it did. Yet there is not a Conservative member who said here in the House, at committee or publicly, why this important condition was stripped out.

The Conservatives have also said that they had a mandate to destroy the records. Of course they did not. A mandate comes from a set of promises made during an election. There was no promise to do such a thing.

The list in world history of governments that have knowingly destroyed records is a very short list. Governments that have gone forward and destroyed public records encapsulate the worst of western democratic and non-democratic societies. I do not know why the government wants to put itself on that list.

In fact, in order to destroy these records the Conservatives have to change Canadian law to do it. The law of Canada says that the destruction of public records is against the virtues and values of this country. That is a good virtue. It is a good value.

When we moved amendments at committee to restore things that had existed in Bill C-391, the bill that had been presented and supported assiduously by this member, the government refused every single amendment, yet did not offer a reason. It did not offer examples or cause.

I will quote from the bill that was moved by the parliamentary secretary who just spoke. In paragraph 23(1)(c):

In the case of a transfer to an individual, the transferor verifies the validity of the transferee's Firearms Licence with the Canada Firearms Centre, and obtains a reference number for the inquiry.

That was in Bill C-391. It was an important condition because it protected the gun owner and it protected society. That is why it was there. How do we know that? The Conservative government said that was why it was there. Why take that provision out? Why take the protection out? It makes no sense.

On classification, under the bill we looked through the records as to what guns would be reclassified: a .50 calibre sniper rifle that can kill at two and a half kilometres. It is not the hunting weapon that my

constituents use. They do not hunt with .50 calibre weapons. They do not shoot their target from two and a half kilometres.

• (1710)

The gun that is now going to be put into public use, again with a transfer from one individual to another without any certification at all, is a weapon that has recorded the longest shot kill in human history. Another weapon has been classified by the manufacturer as an urban assault weapon that can be modified into a 30-clip engagement weapon. These are not things that farmers and hunters use. These are not the things that my constituents have been asking for.

New Democrats pleaded with the government. We moved amendments that were based on the government's own legislation. We said this was the time to get it right. We knew this was going to happen. Conservatives have a majority, I congratulate them, but they need to get it right. They should not put gun owners and citizens at risk because they are not willing to listen to the experts and abide by their own legislation that was good enough to vote on eight months ago. Now, suddenly, there is a change of heart without reason and I worry.

I am concerned that in its efforts, speed and expediency to pass this bill in its present form without any changes, not a period or comma, the government will cause harm. It will cause harm to the law-abiding citizens of this country, police officers who serve us so proudly and gun owners right across this land. It is a shame.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** It being 5:15 p.m., pursuant to order made Tuesday, February 7, 2012, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

[*English*]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Call in the members.

• (1755)

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

*Government Orders**(Division No. 128)*

## YEAS

## Members

Ablonczy  
 Adler  
 Albas  
 Alexander  
 Allison  
 Ambrose  
 Anderson  
 Ashfield  
 Baird  
 Benoit  
 Bezan  
 Block  
 Braid  
 Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
 Brown (Barrie)  
 Butt  
 Calkins  
 Carmichael  
 Chisu  
 Clarke  
 Daniel  
 Dechert  
 Devolin  
 Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
 Fantio  
 Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
 Galipeau  
 Glover  
 Goldring  
 Gosal  
 Grewal  
 Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
 Hayes  
 Hillyer  
 Hoepfner  
 Hyer  
 Jean  
 Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
 Kerr  
 Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
 Lauzon  
 Leef  
 Lemieux  
 Lizon  
 Lukiwski  
 MacKay (Central Nova)  
 Mayes  
 McLeod  
 Menzies  
 Miller  
 Moore (Fundy Royal)  
 Norlock  
 Oda  
 Payne  
 Poilievre  
 Rafferty  
 Rajotte  
 Reid  
 Richards  
 Rickford  
 Saxton  
 Seeback  
 Shipley  
 Smith  
 Sorenson  
 Storseth  
 Sweet  
 Toet  
 Trost  
 Truppe  
 Uppal  
 Van Kesteren  
 Vellacott  
 Warawa  
 Watson  
 Sky Country  
 Weston (Saint John)  
 Williamson

Adams  
 Aglukkaq  
 Albrecht  
 Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
 Ambler  
 Anders  
 Armstrong  
 Aspin  
 Bateman  
 Bernier  
 Blaney  
 Boughen  
 Breitzkreuz  
 Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)  
 Bruinooge  
 Calandra  
 Cannan  
 Carrie  
 Chong  
 Clement  
 Davidson  
 Del Mastro  
 Dreesen  
 Dykstra  
 Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)  
 Flaherty  
 Gill  
 Goguen  
 Goodyear  
 Gourde  
 Harper  
 Hawn  
 Hiebert  
 Hoback  
 Holder  
 James  
 Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
 Komarnicki  
 Lake  
 Lebel  
 Leitch  
 Leung  
 Lobb  
 Lunney  
 MacKenzie  
 McColeman  
 Menegakis  
 Merrifield  
 Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
 Nicholson  
 O'Connor  
 Paradis  
 Penashue  
 Preston  
 Raitt  
 Rathgeber  
 Rempel  
 Richardson  
 Ritz  
 Schellenberger  
 Shea  
 Shory  
 Sopuck  
 Stanton  
 Strahl  
 Tilson  
 Toews  
 Trottier  
 Tweed  
 Valcourt  
 Van Loan  
 Wallace  
 Warkentin  
 Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to

Wilks  
 Wong

Woodworth  
 Young (Oakville)  
 Zimmer — 159

Yelich  
 Young (Vancouver South)

## NAYS

## Members

Allen (Welland)  
 Angus  
 Aubin  
 Bélanger  
 Bennett  
 Blanchette  
 Boivin  
 Boulerice  
 Brahmi  
 Brosseau  
 Caron  
 Cash  
 Chicoine  
 Choquette  
 Christopherson  
 Coderre  
 Côté  
 Crowder  
 Cuzner  
 Davies (Vancouver East)  
 Dionne Labelle  
 Doré Lefebvre  
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
 Dusseault  
 Eyking  
 Freeman  
 Garneau  
 Genest  
 Giguère  
 Goodale  
 Grogulé  
 Harris (St. John's East)  
 Hsu  
 Jacob  
 Karygiannis  
 Lamoureux  
 Larose  
 Laverdière  
 LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)  
 Liu  
 Mai  
 Martin  
 Mathysen  
 McCallum  
 McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
 Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
 Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)  
 Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
 Murray  
 Nash  
 Nunez-Melo  
 Papillon  
 Péclet  
 Plamondon  
 Rae  
 Raynault  
 Rousseau  
 Savoie  
 Sellah  
 Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)  
 Sims (Newton—North Delta)  
 Sitsabaiesan  
 Stewart  
 Sullivan  
 Tremblay  
 Turnel

Andrews  
 Atamanenko  
 Ayala  
 Bellavance  
 Benskin  
 Blanchette-Lamothe  
 Borg  
 Boutin-Sweet  
 Brison  
 Byrne  
 Casey  
 Charlton  
 Chisholm  
 Chow  
 Cleary  
 Comartin  
 Cotler  
 Cullen  
 Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
 Day  
 Donnelly  
 Dubé  
 Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
 Easter  
 Fortin  
 Fry  
 Garrison  
 Genest-Jourdain  
 Godin  
 Gravelle  
 Harris (Scarborough Southwest)  
 Hassainia  
 Hughes  
 Julian  
 Kellway  
 Lapointe  
 Latendresse  
 LeBlanc (Beauséjour)  
 Leslie  
 MacAulay  
 Marston  
 Masse  
 May  
 McGuinty  
 Michaud  
 Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)  
 Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)  
 Mourani  
 Nantel  
 Nicholls  
 Pacetti  
 Patry  
 Perreault  
 Quach  
 Ravnagat  
 Regan  
 Sandhu  
 Scarpaleggia  
 Sgro  
 St-Denis  
 Stoffer  
 Thibeault  
 Trudeau  
 Valeriote — 130

## PAIRED

Nil

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

(Bill read the third time and passed)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### PREVENTING PERSONS FROM CONCEALING THEIR IDENTITY DURING RIOTS AND UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLIES ACT

The House resumed from February 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-309, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (concealment of identity), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-309.

• (1805)

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

(Division No. 129)

#### YEAS

##### Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Aglukkaq
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Baird
Bateman	Bélangier
Bennett	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brisson
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Butt	Byrne
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Casey
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Coderre	Cotler
Cuzner	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dykstra
Easter	Eyking
Fantino	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Flaherty
Fry	Galipeau
Garneau	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Hoepfner
Holder	Hsu
James	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Karygiannis
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kennedy (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lamoureux	Lauzon

Lebel	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leef	Leitch
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mayes
McCallum	McColeman
McGuinty	McLeod
Menegakis	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Murray	Nicholson
Norlock	O'Connor
Oda	Pacetti
Paradis	Payne
Penashue	Poilievre
Preston	Rae
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Regan
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Savoie	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Seeback	Sgro
Shea	Shipleigh
Shory	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	St-Denis
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Toews	Trost
Trottier	Trudeau
Truppe	Tweed
Uppal	Valcourt
Valeriote	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 190

#### NAYS

##### Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Bellavance
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brosseau	Caron
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Chow
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Fortin
Freeman	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hassania	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Julian	Kellway
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie

#### Private Members' Business

*Private Members' Business*

Liu  
Marston  
Masse  
May  
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)  
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
Nantel  
Nicholls  
Papillon  
Péclet  
Plamondon  
Rafferty  
Raynault  
Sandhu  
Sims (Newton—North Delta)  
Stewart  
Sullivan  
Turmel— 97

Mai  
Martin  
Mathysen  
Michaud  
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)  
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)  
Mourani  
Nash  
Nunez-Melo  
Patry  
Perreault  
Quach  
Ravignat  
Rousseau  
Sellah  
Sitsabaiesan  
Stoffer  
Tremblay

Butt  
Calandra  
Cannon  
Caron  
Casey  
Charlton  
Chisholm  
Chong  
Chow  
Clarke  
Clement  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen  
Daniel  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
Day  
Del Mastro  
Dionne Labelle  
Doré Lefebvre  
Dubé  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Dusseault  
Easter  
Fantino  
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Freeman  
Galipeau  
Garrison  
Genest-Jourdain  
Gill  
Godin  
Goldring  
Goodyear  
Gourde  
Grewal  
Harper  
Harris (St. John's East)  
Hassainia  
Hayes  
Hillyer  
Hoepfner  
Hsu  
Hyer  
James  
Julian  
Karygiannis  
Kellway  
Kerr  
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)  
Lamoureux  
Larose  
Lauzon  
Lebel  
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)  
Leitch  
Leslie  
Liu  
Lobb  
Lunney  
MacKay (Central Nova)  
Mai  
Martin  
Mathysen  
Mayes  
McColeman  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Menegakis  
Merrifield  
Miller  
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)  
Moore (Fundy Royal)  
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)  
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)  
Murray  
Nash  
Nicholson  
Nunez-Melo  
Oda  
Papillon  
Patry  
Péclet  
Perreault  
Preston

Byrne  
Calkins  
Carmichael  
Carrie  
Cash  
Chicoine  
Chisu  
Choquette  
Christopherson  
Cleary  
Coderre  
Côté  
Crowder  
Cuzner  
Davidson  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Dechert  
Devolin  
Donnelly  
Dreeschen  
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Dykstra  
Eyking  
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)  
Flaherty  
Fry  
Gameau  
Genest  
Giguère  
Glover  
Goguen  
Goodale  
Gosal  
Gravelle  
Groguié  
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)  
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)  
Hawn  
Hiebert  
Hoback  
Holder  
Hughes  
Jacob  
Jean  
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)  
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)  
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)  
Komarnicki  
Lake  
Lapointe  
Latendresse  
Lavertière  
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)  
Leef  
Lemieux  
Leung  
Lizon  
Lukowski  
MacAulay  
MacKenzie  
Marston  
Masse  
May  
McCallum  
McGuinty  
McLeod  
Menzies  
Michaud  
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)  
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
Nantel  
Nicholls  
Norlock  
O'Connor  
Pacetti  
Paradis  
Payne  
Penashue  
Poilievre  
Quach

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**FEDERAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION ACT**

The House resumed from February 9 consideration of the motion that Bill C-300, An Act respecting a Federal Framework for Suicide Prevention, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division at second reading of Bill C-300 under private members' business.

● (1815)

[English]

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

*(Division No. 130)*

## YEAS

## Members

Ablonczy  
Adler  
Albas  
Alexander  
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Ambler  
Anders  
Andrews  
Armstrong  
Aspin  
Aubin  
Baird  
Bélanger  
Benoit  
Bernier  
Blanchette  
Blaney  
Boivin  
Boughen  
Boutin-Sweet  
Braid  
Brison  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)  
Brown (Barrie)

Adams  
Aglukkaq  
Albrecht  
Allen (Welling)  
Allison  
Ambrose  
Anderson  
Angus  
Ashfield  
Atamanenko  
Ayala  
Bateman  
Bennett  
Benskin  
Bezan  
Blanchette-Lamothe  
Block  
Borg  
Boulerice  
Brahmi  
Breitkreuz  
Brousseau  
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)  
Bruinooge

*Private Members' Business*

Rae  
Raitt  
Rathgeber  
Raynault  
Reid  
Richards  
Rickford  
Rousseau  
Savoie  
Scarpaleggia  
Seeback  
Sgro  
ShIPLEY  
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)  
Sims (Newton—North Delta)  
Sitsabaiesan  
Sopuck  
St-Denis  
Stewart  
Storseth  
Sullivan  
Thibeault  
Toet  
Tremblay  
Trottier  
Truppe  
Tweed  
Valcourt  
Van Kesteren  
Vellacott  
Warawa  
Watson  
Sky Country)  
Weston (Saint John)  
Williamson  
Woodworth  
Young (Oakville)  
Zimmer— 285

Rafferty  
Rajotte  
Ravignat  
Regan  
Rempel  
Richardson  
Ritz  
Sandhu  
Saxton  
Schellenberger  
Sellah  
Shea  
Shory  
Smith  
Sorenson  
Stanton  
Stoffer  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tilson  
Toews  
Trost  
Trudeau  
Turmel  
Uppal  
Valeriotte  
Van Loan  
Wallace  
Warkentin  
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to  
Wilks  
Wong  
Yelich  
Young (Vancouver South)

**NAYS**

Members

Bellavance  
Plamondon— 3

Fortin

**PAIRED**

Nil

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

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN FORCES SUPERANNUATION ACT**

The House resumed from February 10 consideration of the motion that Bill C-215, An Act to amend the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act (deletion of deduction from annuity), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-215 under private members' business.

● (1820)

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

*(Division No. 131)*

**YEAS**

Members

Allen (Welland)  
Angus

Andrews  
Atamanenko

Aubin  
Bélangier  
Bennett  
Blanchette  
Boivin  
Boulerice  
Brahmi  
Brosseau  
Caron  
Cash  
Chicoine  
Choquette  
Christopherson  
Coderre  
Côté  
Crowder  
Cuzner  
Davies (Vancouver East)  
Dionne Labelle  
Doré Lefebvre  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Dusseault  
Eyking  
Freeman  
Garneau  
Genest  
Giguère  
Goodale  
Groguhé  
Harris (St. John's East)  
Hsu  
Hyer  
Julian  
Kellway  
Lapointe  
Latendresse  
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)  
Leslie  
MacAulay  
Marston  
Masse  
Mayer  
McGuinty  
Michaud  
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)  
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)  
Mourani  
Nantel  
Nicholls  
Pacetti  
Patry  
Perreault  
Quach  
Rafferty  
Raynault  
Rousseau  
Savoie  
Sellah  
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)  
Sims (Newton—North Delta)  
Sitsabaiesan  
Stewart  
Sullivan  
Tremblay  
Turmel

Ayala  
Bellavance  
Benskin  
Blanchette-Lamothe  
Borg  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brison  
Byrne  
Casey  
Charlton  
Chisholm  
Chow  
Cleary  
Comartin  
Cotler  
Cullen  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
Day  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Easter  
Fortin  
Fry  
Garrison  
Genest-Jourdain  
Godin  
Gravelle  
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)  
Hassania  
Hughes  
Jacob  
Karygiannis  
Lamoureux  
Larose  
Laverdière  
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)  
Liu  
Mai  
Martin  
Mathysen  
McCallum  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)  
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
Murray  
Nash  
Nunez-Melo  
Papillon  
Péclet  
Plamondon  
Rae  
Ravignat  
Regan  
Sandhu  
Scarpaleggia  
Sgro  
St-Denis  
Stoffer  
Thibeault  
Trudeau  
Valeriotte— 132

**NAYS**

Members

Ablonczy  
Adler  
Albas  
Alexander  
Allison  
Ambrose  
Anderson  
Ashfield  
Baird  
Benoit  
Bezan  
Block  
Braid  
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)

Adams  
Aglukkaq  
Albrecht  
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)  
Ambler  
Anders  
Armstrong  
Aspin  
Bateman  
Bernier  
Blaney  
Boughen  
Breitkreuz  
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)

*Private Members' Business*

Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fantino	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Flaherty
Galipeau	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
James	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Norlock
Nicholson	Oda
O'Connor	Payne
Paradis	Poilievre
Penashue	Raitt
Preston	Rathgeber
Rajotte	Rempel
Reid	Richardson
Richards	Ritz
Rickford	Schellenberger
Saxton	Shea
Seeback	Shory
Shipley	Sopuck
Smith	Stanton
Sorenson	Strahl
Storseth	Tilson
Sweet	Toews
Toet	Trottier
Trost	Tweed
Truppe	Valcourt
Uppal	Van Loan
Van Kesteren	Wallace
Vellacott	Warkentin
Warawa	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Watson	
Sky Country)	Wilks
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Williamson	Yelich
Woodworth	Young (Vancouver South)
Young (Oakville)	
Zimmer— 157	

PAIRED

Nil

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

\* \* \*

### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

The House resumed from February 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-291, An Act to amend the Employment Insurance Act (waiting period and maximum special benefits), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-291 under private members' business.

• (1830)

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

(Division No. 132)

### YEAS

#### Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brisson
Brousseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Chow
Christopherson	Cleary
Coderre	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogulé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hassainia
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Julian	Karygiannis
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Patry	Péclet
Perreault	Plamondon
Quach	Rac
Rafferty	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Sandhu
Savoie	Scarpaleggia
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Stewart	Stoffer
Sullivan	Thibeault
Tremblay	Trudeau
Turmel	Valeriote— 132

*Private Members' Business*

## NAYS

## Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Aglukkaq
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fantino	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Flaherty
Galipeau	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
James	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	Oda
Paradis	Payne
Penashue	Poilievre
Preston	Raiitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Toews
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Tweed
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)

Zimmer — 157

## PAIRED

Nil

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

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The House resumed from February 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-304, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act (protecting freedom), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**The Speaker:** The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division at second reading of Bill C-304 under private members' business.

● (1840)

[English]

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

(Division No. 133)

## YEAS

## Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Aglukkaq
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Del Mastro
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Fantino	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Flaherty
Galipeau	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Hoepfner	Holder
James	Jean
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Mayes

*Private Members' Business*

McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Menzies
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
O'Connor	Oda
Paradis	Payne
Penashue	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Richardson
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Smith	
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Toews	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Tweed	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
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## Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brisson
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Chow
Christopherson	Cleary
Coderre	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hassainia
Hsu	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Julian	Karygiannis
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Masse	Mathysen

May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Patry	Péclet
Perreault	Plamondon
Quach	Rae
Rafferty	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Sandhu
Savoie	Scarpaleggia
Sellah	Sgro
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Stewart
Stoffer	Sullivan
Thibeault	Tremblay
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**PAIRED**

Nil

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** It being 6:42 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

\* \* \*

**NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR CHRONIC CEREBROSPINAL VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY (CCSVI) ACT**

The House resumed from December 8, 2011, consideration of the motion that Bill C-280, An Act to establish a National Strategy for Chronic Cerebrospinal Venous Insufficiency (CCSVI), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured to rise here today to speak to Bill C-280, An Act to establish a National Strategy for Chronic Cerebrospinal Venous Insufficiency (CCSVI).

[*English*]

It is with sadness that I speak to the bill. This type of private member's bill should not be necessary. It is a shame that the time of this chamber is being spent on something the government should have done over two years ago, had there been any leadership.

The government's handling of this file has been a total disgrace. The government has demonstrated a total failure to provide the federal leadership that would have been able to move this forward. There has been a total failure on the part of the government to listen to the provinces and territories. Most important, there has been a total failure on the part of the government to listen to the patients. It is what my colleague from Mount Royal calls "the mobilization of shame".



*Private Members' Business*

The briefing Monday night was one of the worst I have attended since I have been in this place, the Minister of Health taking the time of the president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to demonize a private member's bill that has the support of that very organization and of so many patients across the country.

There has been a pathetic attempt by the government to disguise its lack of action on this issue in a private member's motion to make it look as though it is doing something. However, all that motion does is ask to collect a bit of information that should have been collected.

I wish the Minister of Health had shown up Tuesday morning at the amazing breakfast, I think the fourth of such breakfasts, that was put on by the member for Etobicoke North, the author of this bill. If the minister had been there to hear Dr. Joseph Hewett, Dr. James McGuckin, and the amazing patient Linda Hume-Sastre, she would have understood how much we care about moving forward immediately on these actions.

My journey on CCSVI started almost two years ago, on March 29, 2010. I had been asked to attend a patient summit, which was to hear the voices of so many patients from all of the disease entities across the country to share some principles. Ironically, I was on the panel, "Is the Voice of Patients Being Heard?" After I stepped down off the stage it was time for lunch. A number of patients asked me if I would sit at their table. Around this table were patients and family members from British Columbia who were absolutely convinced that this new liberation procedure could help them. They described people who were on their way to life in a wheelchair, on their way to being bedridden, on their way out of this world. It was so poignant.

It was interesting yesterday morning when Dr. Hewett and Dr. McGuckin said that those of us who are trained as physicians sometimes have a great difficulty keeping an open mind and looking at things differently from the way we were trained in medical school or in the kinds of treatments that we would normally prescribe or try to get for our patients.

It was quite interesting. These patients and their families explained how this procedure seemed to be helping a lot of people. At that point, they were already trying to get that treatment outside of Canada. I think the theme we will hear this evening and from patients across this country is that they want to be treated here and they want to be treated now.

What is absolutely astounding is that I came back to this place and had a casual conversation with my colleague from Etobicoke North, who had already expressed quite an interest in neurological diseases, as we all know. She had attended a conference on CCSVI in February and had been looking into this potential treatment since November of the previous year.

● (1845)

From that time on the member for Etobicoke North has been a source of inspiration for all of us, but mainly the daily counsel for hundreds and hundreds of patients across the country. She keeps their spirits up. All of us here are impressed at how that one member of Parliament has had such an important influence on the lives of so many Canadians.

In May of that year, the member for Etobicoke North and I as the critic for health wrote to the Minister of Health asking her to support the MS Society's request for \$10 million for research into the potential cause of CCSVI. Clearly at that time there had been controversy surrounding it, but we thought that Canadians deserved the facts. We were not saying that it definitely did or did not work, but we were very concerned that the people making that decision perhaps were not listening to patients about things like fatigue and brain fog, and that people felt immediately better if they were able to tell their stories.

It was very important at that time for people to get on with actual clinical trials. That is what people wanted. They wanted trials in which they could take whatever risk there was with the procedure and have it documented afterward. We were already hearing stories of people who had gone out of the country to get the treatment after being refused treatment by their own physicians. The member for Etobicoke North asked for an emergency debate on this issue, which was declined, but there was a take note debate. The subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Health held four hearings. It heard from Dr. Zamboni himself, Dr. Sandy McDonald and a number of important experts in this area from around the world.

Four hundred people per year die from multiple sclerosis. It is extraordinary. As we heard yesterday morning, if this possible treatment is being caught up in some turf war similar to what Dr. McDonald talked about, it would be the same as having to get permission from the electrician to do plumbing work in one's house. This is viewed to be a plumbing problem, that is, a cardiovascular problem as opposed to a pure autoimmune disease, in the purview of neurologists. We are asking that all in medicine work together in these trials in the best interests of patients. That means the turf wars have to stop.

On August 20 in another letter to the Minister of Health, we asked that this issue be placed on the agenda for the health ministers meeting in September. We hoped that they would listen to one another and that the federal government would take some leadership on this. Provinces like Saskatchewan had very clearly taken the lead.

I ask all members of the House to go to the website of the member for Etobicoke North to read the speech that she delivered on December 8 and her reply to the response by the parliamentary secretary and the member for Simcoe—Grey. Members should read the letter from the Canadian Coalition for the Study of Venous Insufficiency and consider its words, "As such, we urge all members of Parliament to vote in favour of your bill". The coalition outlines the parts of the bill and why it supports it.

● (1850)

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to this as I chaired the subcommittee on this particular topic a couple of years ago.

*Private Members' Business*

I agree with the hon. member for Etobicoke North, as does the government, that Canadians with MS deserve to know whether the hope of the proposed new Zamboni or CCSVI procedure for MS rests on a solid scientific foundation, that it works and that it is safe. For that reason, I do not support this bill.

A key element of Bill C-280 is the legislative requirement that clinical tests on CCSVI be initiated. Regardless of the best advice being offered by scientists around the world, this House would begin legislating medical research. Supporting this bill could create a precedent as to how we establish our health research priorities. Setting health research priorities through legislation would not be an appropriate policy measure as it would jeopardize the independence of scientific decision making.

This bill would also require that the federal Minister of Health meet with her provincial and territorial counterparts to formulate a national strategy. The minister is already collaborating extensively with provinces, so why legislate that she has to do that? How would provinces react to such use of our legislative authority?

Another element of the bill would require that the Minister of Health ensure that those who have obtained the CCSVI treatment have access to proper health care. This is clearly an intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. Members of the House will know that the delivery of health care services is under provincial jurisdiction.

This bill is unnecessary. It would legislate a scientific and medical issue for which we already have a collaborative system in place. We in this House need to consider the implications of such legislation. Why would we legislate when extensive action is already underway? We need to use our legislative power prudently or risk diluting its value. Legislation should be used only when it is most appropriate and there are no other ways to achieve the desired policy objectives effectively. This is clearly not the case with this bill.

Let us take a moment to look at MS in Canada and the government's response to the proposed Zamboni procedure. An estimated 55,000 to 75,000 Canadians live with MS. We are all familiar with this number. Too many Canadians and their families are struggling with this frustrating disease. We in this House share their frustration. We also share their hope that effective treatments and, ultimately, a cure can be found. That is why the government is determined to support the investigation of CCSVI. However, this must be done carefully to ensure the safety of all Canadians.

As members of this House know, in June 2011 our government committed to supporting a clinical trial. On November 25, 2011, the Minister of Health along with Dr. Alain Beaudet, president of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, announced that CIHR was ready to accept proposals for a phase I and phase II clinical test on CCSVI. Based on the independent advice of the scientific expert working group, CIHR formally opened the request for proposals in November 2011. Hon. members would be pleased to know that this research is a collaborative initiative between CIHR and the MS Society of Canada. The MS Society has told us that it supports further investigation of CCSVI.

Thorough investigation is the appropriate response with any new medical procedure. While this is difficult for many patients to hear, particularly those with a disease like MS, we need to ensure that

procedures are safe before they are made available to Canadians. The principles of disciplined scientific investigation cannot be cast aside, despite the initial hope that has come with the procedure proposed by Dr. Zamboni. That would not be sound medical practice nor would it be fair to MS patients. A clinical trial is the first step. Clinical trials seek evidence on patient outcomes. The main objective of the forthcoming clinical trial will determine whether the angioplasty procedure on veins is safe and effective.

In the coming weeks, CIHR will establish an international peer review committee to review the research proposals it receives. CIHR will announce the successful research team in the coming months. It is critical to move at the appropriate pace on this important matter. An international scientific committee recently reviewed a proposal from Dr. Zamboni himself to conduct a large-scale clinical trial on CCSVI in Italy. The committee concluded that a clinical trial on the safety and efficacy of the proposed procedure should come first.

• (1855)

In other words, they concluded that a smaller scale trial is the way to go at this stage to ensure that the procedures are safe. This is exactly what we are doing right here in Canada.

Bill C-280 also calls for the establishment of an expert panel to advise the minister on the CCSVI treatment, identify criteria for clinical trial research proposals, and advise on the standards for diagnosing and treating CCSVI.

Why legislate this process, when a CIHR scientific expert working group has already been reviewing evidence on CCSVI from around the world for some time now? The working group, made up of scientific experts, reviewed studies of CCSVI published between 2009 and 2011. After doing so they recommended the launch of a request for applications for a clinical trial, and provided terms of reference to guide that research.

Bill C-280 also says that the expert advisory group should advise the government on CCSVI treatment standards. The scientific expert working group is already doing this. For example, in the fall of 2011, a group of experts identified the best procedures for standardizing imaging of veins in the neck and brain. These procedures will be incorporated into the design of the clinical trial. They will ensure consistent assessment of the presence of CCSVI in clinical trial participants.

The CIHR scientific expert working group is already advising the federal government on how best to proceed with regard to CCSVI and MS patients. Bill C-280 would require that the government track individuals who have received the CCSVI procedure. Here again the government has been out front on this issue.

In March 2011, the Minister of Health announced the creation of a Canadian MS monitoring system. This system will gather and share new knowledge on the use of MS treatments across Canada and their long-term outcomes. This information will be useful for Canadians living with MS, for the health care professionals who manage their care and for the researchers who are working toward a better understanding of this disease. The system is currently being developed by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, an independent organization that analyzes information on the health system and the health of Canadians. With information from the monitoring system, CIHI will produce results on the status of MS and its treatment in Canada.

The bill before the House also calls for a conference of provincial and territorial ministers to develop a national strategy. This is unnecessary. The government has been collaborating with the provinces and territories from the outset.

For example, members will have noted that the clinical trial announcement was made by the minister at the federal-provincial-territorial health ministers meeting in Halifax on November 25, 2011. CIHR is committed to working with the provinces and territories as it moves forward with the trial.

The deputy minister of health for Manitoba attends meetings at the scientific expert working group as a provincial-territorial representative.

To conclude, the government has already acted on the key elements of this bill. We have proceeded with prudence and caution to keep Canadians safe. We are relying on the best available scientific evidence. The initiatives implemented by the government have been supported by a wide range of stakeholders, including the MS Society of Canada. The MS Society has applauded the spirit of collaboration between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, and continues to support our work.

It is clear that the research evidence on CCSVI is mixed. In this respect, I would remind the House that well-intentioned medical therapies implemented without adequate research can and have led to unintended negative consequences for patients. That is why medical research has developed rigorous methodologies to test new theories. As legislators, we have a responsibility to allow that research to run its course. It is our duty as parliamentarians to ensure that these procedures are safe for Canadians.

The Government of Canada has put in place the steps to support ethical research, grounded in international standards of excellence. Like all Canadians, we are seeking to better understand the impact this procedure might have on the quality of life of MS patients. We have taken steps and opened dialogue in collaborations with provinces and territories, the medical community and representatives of MS patients.

This is the responsible and prudent approach that balances the need for action and patient safety. The government has a plan of action. Through federal leadership, funding and collaboration, it is moving that plan forward. Our government is acting to give MS patients the answers they need regarding CCSVI.

This bill would neither contribute to those answers nor improve the processes already underway to further our understanding of MS

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and CCSVI. Quite simply, most of what this bill asks for is already being done. What is more, in my mind, it raises real questions as to whether the bill would be an appropriate use of our legislative authority.

For all these reasons, while I understand and share the goodwill and intentions behind this bill, I cannot support it.

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-280. Before I talk about this bill, I would like to give an introduction so that people at home and my colleagues who do not have a medical background can better understand its implications. I will try to summarize it all so that people may have a better understanding of my opinion of this bill.

First of all, we cannot talk about a bill like this without briefly explaining what multiple sclerosis is. I will try to explain it in the simplest terms possible and using analogies, so people will really understand.

Multiple sclerosis is a disease in which the myelin covering the spinal cord, which is the nerve cells that transmit electrical signals in the body, is damaged and lesions, also known as plaques or scleroses, are formed. To give an analogy, it is as if the insulation covering electrical wires were to break down and lesions were to form in some areas. If there is no longer any insulation on an electrical wire, the electricity goes every which way and is lost. If the electricity is not properly conducted and dissipates throughout the body, it causes problems with everything that the nerve cells govern. It causes mobility, vision and various other problems. That is why people with multiple sclerosis experience so many symptoms.

To date, the exact cause of multiple sclerosis is not known. There are hypotheses such as CCSVI or auto-immune activity. We know that genetic susceptibility plays a role. Some think that it could be caused by an unidentified virus but, right now, no one knows the exact cause of multiple sclerosis.

Demyelination, which corresponds to the loss of insulation covering the electrical wires, is caused by inflammation. T lymphocytes, white blood cells that circulate in the blood, are no longer able to leave the brain, re-enter the blood and travel around the body. This causes inflammation that, little by little, attacks the myelin sheath that covers the nerves in the brain.

Chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) occurs when the blood is no longer able to circulate effectively through the veins of the chest, neck and spinal column, which also prevents blood from draining from the brain. We know that blood always flows from the arteries to the veins. It leaves the heart via the arteries, goes to the brain, and returns to the heart via the veins. If the veins are no longer able to effectively drain the blood, it accumulates in the brain. The cells that cause the inflammation remain in the brain.

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Knowing that, Dr. Zamboni began his research. He discovered a possible link between CCSVI and multiple sclerosis. He conducted statistical analyses and research, and studied X-rays, MRIs, ultrasounds and angiographies, which are all different X-ray techniques. He found that most MS sufferers—between 85% and 97%, depending on the diagnostic technique—had venous anomalies, so he came up with the idea of treating people with MS for CCSVI.

● (1905)

Early treatments began in several locations around the world. Venous angioplasty involves inserting a small balloon into the veins to prevent them from narrowing, to widen them. This is similar to cardiac procedures in which arteries are unblocked using a small balloon. This is a similar procedure. The treatment, which has been tested and is the subject of this bill, is a surgical procedure commonly used to treat other health problems. However, it is still surgery. As with any surgery, there may be risks that must be taken into account.

I should point out that MS is a very expensive disease. Current treatments are costly. There is no cure for MS, merely treatment of symptoms involving injections and medication, which is expensive.

I should also point out that this is a huge cost to the Canadian economy because MS affects young adults. The disease gets worse over time, but it shows up in early adulthood. If these adults did not have the disease, they could contribute to the Canadian economy by working and participating economically. Because of their disease, they cannot remain in the workforce. We have to understand that this disease is costly both to the economy and to individual MS patients. It is important to support research and treatments that can provide relief for people with MS because it is very costly to the Canadian economy.

As I explained, there is no treatment to cure the disease; we can only treat the symptoms. When we talk about a promising treatment, it obviously gives renewed hope to those who suffer from this disease, because it represents a chance for them to perhaps go back to work and lead a normal life. It is certainly very appealing to those people, because this is something they really wish for. The problem with clinical studies and such things is that we must take the time to do them properly. Such treatments can often seem promising at the beginning, but we do not know if, in the long run, they will actually produce the anticipated results. And when we are dealing with a debilitating disease such as this one, we must be careful not to give people false hope.

I will support this bill. However, we must take the time to conduct proper clinical studies, out of respect for those who suffer from the disease. As a government and as a country, we cannot afford to circumvent the proper procedure for a new treatment—which involves its assessment and validation—and administer that treatment without being convinced that it is truly effective and helpful compared to existing treatments. If we allow ourselves to speed up the process, we lose our credibility. It is really important to take the time to do things properly.

Incidentally, when we talk about a medical treatment, it must be understood that pressure is always exerted by lobbyists. In this context, it is critical to maintain our independence, to ensure that the

treatment is good, to avoid yielding to the pressure of lobbyists, and to rely on verified scientific evidence.

Therefore, it is really essential that the clinical trials be done quickly, and that standard practices be followed, so that at last we can determine whether or not CCSVI treatments are effective and can be beneficial to MS patients.

I am asking hon. members to support this bill, but it is important to take the time to do the clinical trials properly, so as not to approve a treatment which may not be as effective as it seems.

● (1910)

**Mr. Pierre Jacob (Brome—Missisquoi, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is with gravity that I am taking part in the second reading debate of Bill C-280, introduced by the hon. member for Etobicoke North.

MS patients must face many obstacles in their daily lives. These include physical obstacles that affect their mobility and financial obstacles that force them to make choices that can be difficult.

Multiple sclerosis is a disease whose causes are still not well understood. It attacks the central nervous system, particularly the brain, the optic nerves and the spinal cord. The symptoms of the disease vary and they affect between 55,000 and 75,000 Canadians. Incidentally, Canada is one of the countries most affected by this disease.

The wording of the bill stresses the fact that every year 400 Canadians die from MS. Moreover, the suicide rate among MS patients is seven times higher than in the general population. Therefore, we have a responsibility to help these people.

Multiple sclerosis, which has been considered an autoimmune disease, became the subject of a new medical theory put forth in 2009 by Italian doctor Paolo Zamboni. According to him, poor blood circulation in the neck veins has an impact on neurons, which triggers MS symptoms. In other words, multiple sclerosis was no longer treated as a disease but, rather as a symptom of a condition that this doctor called chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, or CCSVI.

This study has generated hope among many people living with MS, as well as comments from health care professionals. Many additional studies were conducted to establish a link between blood circulation in the neck veins and multiple sclerosis, through a medical procedure called angioplasty.

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However, the results remain inconclusive. Some patients saw their condition improve to the point where their MS symptoms diminished by 50% to 80%. However, in the case of other patients, that procedure did not change anything. Some private clinics all over the world, including in Bulgaria, Poland and the United States, now offer that medical service. In fact, a number of Canadians and Quebecers affected by MS have travelled to these countries to have the operation, in the hope of improving their health.

Despite the merits of this bill, I want to share some reservations with the House. Scientific studies accepted by the entire international medical community—in order to examine the effectiveness of this treatment and corroborate Dr. Zamboni's theory—might be the first step before the treatment is generalized.

This bill to establish a national strategy for CCSVI does make provisions for further research.

Nevertheless, I want to draw the attention of my colleagues to other measures that could accompany this strategy, namely: integration of the Canadian Institute for Health Information's Canadian multiple sclerosis monitoring system into this strategy, since the purpose of this system is to provide medical follow-up to people with this disease; consideration of the reduced mobility of people with MS in order to facilitate their daily lives and, therefore, the renovation of public buildings to make them wheelchair accessible; implementation of financial assistance for these people in order to help them adapt their homes to their needs as they change with the disease; revision of the employment insurance sickness benefits program, both for people with the disease and for caregivers; implementation of refundable tax credits for those same people; and, finally, implementation of an awareness campaign on the importance of sports for people with multiple sclerosis.

• (1915)

On that last point, the Université de Sherbrooke offers a program for persons with MS. This program began in 1992 and has changed and been incorporated into another program: the adapted physical education and sports program for persons with physical disabilities. The sports component adopted by the university to help improve the physical condition of people with MS is unique and serves as a model for professionals and students from European countries.

As the hon. member for Beauharnois—Salaberry said, society as a whole has to fight against multiple sclerosis. Our Canadian researchers have to advance the science and find a cure for this terrible disease. Our governments have to commit to supporting research and also to supporting people with MS in their quest for a healthy life. In closing, I support this bill, which represents progress in the fight against multiple sclerosis.

• (1920)

[*English*]

**Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate.

I know I am not supposed to say these sorts of things, but let me turn and acknowledge my good friend from Etobicoke North for introducing the bill. I greatly appreciate it. I thank the hon. member in my father's name.

My father died from MS. If he were still alive, he might not have been able to have this treatment because of the type of MS he had. He had what is colloquially known as rampaging MS, which means he never plateaued. He continually got worse along a continuum that looks like a curve going straight up to the sky. After being diagnosed, his last 10 years of his life was a misery. Along with that misery came acceptance. As he once told me, "Someone dealt me some cards and this is the hand I have to play, but no one dealt the hand for your mother. She has to play the same hand I have because she is my life partner".

That is what this is about. It is about saying to families like mine that there may be hope and that we should find out if there is. We are not sure; this is not an absolute. In life we hear the old adage about absolutes: death and taxes.

My father was happy to pay his taxes from the time he turned 14 and went to work in Ireland, and he was happy to pay them in this country when he showed up in 1962. However, he died too young because of a disease for which we had no cure. Along that continuum, the quality of his life depreciated because there were no other treatments.

If he were alive today, he would say to me, "This treatment will probably not help me, but it ought to be available to someone else who may be helped by it". He would say that because of what he and we knew his life was: a living hell.

This was a man who worked all his life from the time he was a boy. He went to the shipyards as a boy. He was 14 years old. He came to this country because he ran out of work in place where there was no longer any, and so he brought his family here, including me. When it came time for him to enjoy the last part of his life with my mother, his life partner, in retirement, he was robbed of that and so was she because of this disease.

There are colleagues, both in this Parliament and the last Parliament, whose family members are afflicted in the same way, maybe not to the same degree as my father was, but who indeed suffer from MS.

My friend from York South—Weston told me earlier about his brother, and I know there are other members on the other side who also have family members with MS. They should do this for them. They deserve that. They deserve no less than that.

We have an opportunity, not to wave a magic elixir, because there is none, but there is a clinical trial that has been requested and we should do it.

We literally have thousands of folks, Canadians who have left this country to have the procedure in other countries around the world. Now that they have come home, we can study them. We can see how they are doing. We can see where they were before, because they were being given the usual treatment regime: drugs. Drugs, between morphine and all the others he had to take to try to numb his pain, basically numbed my father into a semi-comatose state half the time. Do not let other have to suffer this. Do not let them have to go through what he did.

*Private Members' Business*

I do not wish anyone else the life I had in watching the one my father had to lead. It was agony for us to watch, let alone the agony my father endured as an individual, as stoic as he was. He had bruises from one end of his shin to the other because he kicked the coffee table so much to make that pain worse than the pain of MS.

Here we have an opportunity to say to people, "We want to give you a chance". That is all it is, a chance, no more than that. It is a glimmer of hope, no more than that.

● (1925)

The one thing my dad and all other MS sufferers over the decades never had was hope. They knew when they were diagnosed, that was it. The best the MS Society, and all the other folks who do the good work they do, could give them was drug therapy.

I watched my mother become an advocate like I have never seen before. Members should see what happens to a little Scottish woman when she decides that her life partner is going to get the best care she can possibly find. They would not want to get between her and it, if she thought her man should have it. There is no way in the world anyone could get between them. If anyone tried, that person would get run over. All four feet, eleven inches of her would knock a dozen people down and the next dozen as well.

My mom would tell my dad's physician that she wanted my dad to have the treatment that she had found on the Internet, treatment that was being done in Europe and South America, even though the physician said it would not work for my dad. She would tell the physician that he had not idea, because he was shooting in the dark.

That is what physicians do with MS patients. They will tell patients to try this or that because it might work, but they do not know for sure because they cannot measure it. The next time a patient has an attack, the physician does not know if the patient is any better off or if the attack is less serious than the previous one. They do not know because doctors cannot measure it.

MS is a symptomatic disease. There certainly are things that happen. People end up in wheelchairs and constantly have pneumonia. They eventually end up with congestive heart failure. If they are lucky like my dad they will manage to survive the first attack, even if they have no resuscitation order in place. My dad managed to get through that attack. How many others did not? How many others have died because we did not give them some hope? How many others are giving up?

Some of those with MS are young people. My dad used to say that he was lucky because he got MS late in life. He would see others, vibrant young folks in their twenties and thirties with it, whereas he was diagnosed when he was nearly 60 years old. He said he was the lucky one. I do not know how he ever had the courage to say he was the lucky one to have MS late in his life. I do not have the faintest idea how, but he did. I do not think anyone can be lucky, regardless of the age they get it at. It is not a lucky life to have.

However, what we can do for those folks who are suffering is to give them some hope. We should not let them give up, because that is what happens with this disease. It saps the energy out of them. It eventually saps the life out of them. It dulls any sense someone has about going forward. People with MS have no sense that they can go

forward, because they know what the end will be. The journey along the road to the end is literally a living hell.

We must give them some hope; that is all we are asking for. The bill asks no more than for us to say, let us do the proper science. It is not about voodoo. It is not about snake oil. It is about doing the proper science. It is about ensuring that the treatment is adequate and correct for those who need it, because not every sufferer will fall into the protocol. They know that. There are lots of them out there who think this treatment will not work for them and that they should not get it. Not all of them are saying they want it, just that they hope this is something that will help. There is no question about that. All one has to do is to talk to them.

I was in the grocery store the other day with my wife, and a couple came by whom I thought I recognized. Sure enough it was the couple I thought I knew. The wife had been to South America to have the treatment. The last time I had seen her she was using a walker. This time she was walking. Her husband was pushing the buggy with the groceries in it and she was walking beside him without any assistance.

That is why we should give these people hope. That is why we need to support the bill.

● (1930)

**Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to join this chorus of caring Canadians who believe that Canada is a place where medicine should be the best in the world, and that we should not be holding back.

I want to applaud all of the speakers so far today, as well as my friend from the riding just north of me for introducing this bill and being such a strong and passionate advocate.

All I really want to do is to talk about some of the true life stories that go unsaid.

During the election campaign, I talked to a constituent who probably was not going to vote, but I spent a good hour talking to him. He was desperate to get Botox injections in his legs so he could go back outdoors. His muscles were so frozen that he was like a stiff board lying on a bed, unable to move any part of his body but his index finger and his eyes. He was able to play video games on a computer a friend had set up for him, but that was all he could do: move a mouse very slightly with his finger and watch with his eyes. He could still speak and think, but he was trapped in his body. He wanted desperately to have another set of Botox injections, which the Ontario government was not going to pay for, so he could get in a wheelchair and be pushed outside to breathe fresh air again. That was not going to happen and it was absolutely tragic. I do not know if this treatment would help him, but he did not have that opportunity.

*Private Members' Business*

A friend of mine was diagnosed just a few months ago. She went through a series of very odd, unexplained dizzy spells and various strange events that were ultimately diagnosed as multiple sclerosis. She is in her late thirties or early forties and is absolutely terrified by what this prognosis means, by what is coming. When I talk to her, that is one of the things that I realize most about this disease, that everyone who gets it knows what is coming. Everyone who gets it is absolutely terrified by being that frozen figure trapped on a bed, able to move only a finger and an eye. That is what they all know will happen.

This treatment has provided, for the first time in centuries, some kind of measurable hope. The government members sit there and suggest that this should be held back from Canadians, from people who want this little bit of hope. These people are going to get it anyway. As a result, all that we are doing is creating an industry in the United States and other countries around the world that should be here.

• (1935)

I want to talk about my brother who was misdiagnosed about 10 or 12 years ago when he had eye trouble and went for an MRI. The doctors then did not tell him anything because his eye troubles kind of went away.

Two years later he went for another MRI because he was having trouble with his hands. The MRI technician asked him why he was back. He asked what the technician meant by that. The technician asked if the doctor had told him what he had. The MRI technician knew, but the previous doctor had not said anything to him. He had MS and the MRI technician knew he had MS.

I watched my fit, capable, active brother, Chris, deteriorate badly, mostly over the past four years. He has two young children, John and Delphine, and a wife, Sue. I then watched him have hope because he went for the treatment in Albany, New York a year and a half ago. Before the treatment, he was in a wheelchair full time, could no longer walk and was deteriorating. Since he has had the Zamboni treatment, he is now moving around in his home, albeit with a walker sometimes. He still gets tired. It is not getting better than that, but it is so much better than it was. He prays every day and thanks God for someone having discovered this treatment. His family do the same.

He is not what he used to be, but there are legions of stories of people who have had improvement from this treatment. The members opposite sit there and oppose it and suggest that somehow we need a few years of more study. In those few years, thousands of people will die of this disease and thousands more will succumb to further degradation of their limbs and their bodies. If that could be prevented, stopped or arrested we would be doing those people a service. To refuse that treatment to Canadians whose lives might be affected is despicable. I do not have another word for it. It is not what Canada's medical system is supposed to be. It is not what Canada's medical system should provide. We should be doing everything we can to provide what is clearly a safe and effective treatment.

I again thank the sponsor of the bill, who will now get to wrap this up.

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the government claims it has a moral and ethical obligation to work with the scientific and medical community and proceed only on the basis of the best medical and scientific evidence. The government has not pursued the best science or the leading experts and it has failed in its moral responsibility. The government has lagged every step of the way, despite the fact that 400 people die each year of MS in Canada and patients worsen, on average, by one disability score each year.

Twenty-one months have passed since our initial request for clinical trials. Since 2009, when treatment for CCSVI was first announced, 800 Canadians will have died from MS-related complications or suicide, while the government has ignored the science. Thirty-three months will have passed by the time the government implements a registry.

Sadly, I hear speeches loaded with highly questionable material from the government. Comments are scripted because no member of Parliament or government official ever attended one of nine CCSVI international conferences, never heard the data, never reviewed MRIs, never witnessed the procedure. As a scientist and health professor, I will have attended seven of the conferences by this weekend, presented at three, and spent close to 100 hours reviewing MRIs and watching the procedure. Those living with MS and their families understand that this debate was never based on science, as it should have been, but rather wilful blindness, politics and the government's self-preservation. I chased the science. Why did the government not?

The government makes the ridiculous claim that Canada is leading internationally, but this is absolutely not the case. The government has been lagging both the provinces and internationally. Sixty other countries are testing and treating CCSVI. The United States is currently conducting three FDA-approved phase II clinical trials, while the government just put out a request for a phase I/II trial.

The government made claims about the scientific evidence to support CCSVI, yet failed to acknowledge or present any of the international data regarding MS patients' improvements and quality of life following CCSVI treatment, nor the efficacy and safety of the procedure. For example, Dr. Petrov reports that 63% of his 461 patients show a functional improvement.

It has becoming increasingly apparent, from multiple countries around the world, that every patient is different, with different venous anatomy, a different course of MS, a different length of illness and some patients do experience improvement in symptoms. Dr. Mehta studied 150 consecutive patients who showed more than a 25% increase in quality of life scores a year after the procedure was measured by a doctor who did not know that the procedure had taken place.

The government claims that most of what I am asking for in Bill C-280 is already under way. This is absolutely not the case.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

First, follow-up care remains a problem today and has not been adequately addressed. Patients are still being denied appointments and tests are being cancelled. Driver's licences are even being threatened if patients dare ask to pull out of drug trials.

Second, phase I/II trials will not put Canada at the forefront of international research.

Third, funding for trials has not been provided.

Fourth, there is no expert advisory panel in place with people who have actually done diagnosis or treatment. Importantly, as all members of Parliament and Canadians know, the dates can and will have to be amended at committee.

We have a duty to speak for those who cannot. This means listening to those who are awaiting CCSVI treatment, those who have had treatment and learning as much as we can about the science. Thirteen Canadian CCSVI patient groups, representing over 14,000 people living with MS, have written to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Health and all MPs asking that they support Bill C-280.

Finally, I ask my colleagues to be a true, honest voice for suffering MS patients and their families and to vote for Bill C-280. Patients say, "You know what the right thing is. Do the right thing".

• (1940)

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for debate has expired. Accordingly, the question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour 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:** A recorded division on the motion stands deferred until Wednesday, February 29, 2012, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1945)

[*English*]

### FOREIGN INVESTMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I rise in continuation of a question raised in question period. I would like to canvas a number of the investments that have been made, particularly pertaining to the Prime Minister's recent trip to China. We have been told there have been substantial pieces of progress for the Canadian economy. I think a lot of Canadians have questions on their minds now that we see quite a substantial increase in the direct investment, and that is the ownership of Canadian resources by enterprises owned by the government of China, in fact with boards of directors controlled by the Communist Party of China.

I want to make it clear that I certainly support the idea that we have better ties with China. This is not a statement about our relationship with China and the importance of raising human rights in Tibet and the situation for dissidents in Chinese jails. Our opportunities for raising these issues are enhanced with having a respectful, strong relationship. This is about how Canadians should respond to ensure that foreign investment reviews are clear, that the information is transparent and available and that there are national security reviews that go along with this, particularly where strategic Canadian resources, such as oil sands and uranium, are being traded with the People's Republic of China's enterprises.

I would like to put this into context. The hon. Minister of Natural Resources has said there is not very much investment from China directly in the oil sands. Of the \$73.6 billion invested in the oil sands between 2007 and 2011, oil sands investment from China was approximately \$12 billion, or 16%. This is not a small percentage.

The involvement of Chinese companies, particularly PetroChina, the China National Offshore Oil Corporation and largely Sinopec have been strategic. In the case of Sinopec it has managed to buy a 9% share in Syncrude for a cost of just about \$5 billion. It managed to have a seat on the board of Syncrude and be in a position to veto any decision that Syncrude might otherwise make to process the bitumen crude in Canada, thus creating Canadian jobs in Canadian refineries. That strategic advantage for Sinopec does not seem to have been studied in the way that I think Canadians would have expected.

When I asked this question in relation to the oil sands last week, the Minister of Industry claimed that back in 2009 "we improved the transparency". This was in relation to my question about the national security aspects of this kind of investment. In fact, when we go back to the decisions in 2009, we find that the cabinet rejected the advice of the expert panel that had been put together in 2007. It was a competition policy review panel that had been mandated to review these arrangements.

According to the *Canada Gazette* of September 30, 2009:

The term national security should be explicitly defined and national security reviews should take place according to concrete, objective, and transparent criteria. This recommendation was not accepted...



*Adjournment Proceedings*

In addition to the oil sands investment, we now have the Prime Minister coming back with a deal for uranium. This deal for uranium has much more lax accounting procedures than was offered in previous deals with China, which is why in the past Canada has not continued to trade uranium in China. The strategic concern is not just for what China would do with the uranium, but for China's relationship with the civilian nuclear industry program in Pakistan and the potential for nuclear proliferation. These are strategic concerns.

I would like the government to tell Canadians exactly what national security review took place.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry.

**Mr. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I took note of the member's questions, both last week and again this week. Both questions are important in light of tonight's debates.

Last week, she asked the minister about foreign security provisions in the Investment Canada Act. The minister responded that the national security aspect was included in the law in 2009. Unsatisfied with the answer, the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands stood up in the House yesterday and asked the following. She said:

Mr. Speaker, last week I put a question to the Minister of Industry relating to the Chinese takeover of Canadian resources.

He said I was unfamiliar with the Investment Canada Act changes of 2009.

She went on to say:

In fact, the *Canada Gazette* of September 30, 2009 said:

Then the member quoted from the *Canada Gazette*, just as she did now:

The term national security should be explicitly defined and national security reviews should take place according to concrete, objective, and transparent criteria. This recommendation was not accepted—

Then the member said today, “closed quote”.

The trouble is, if you read the *Canada Gazette* it is not a closed quote. It actually goes on to say something else. The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands was wrong for two reasons. First, she was quoting from a summary of comments and responses to the gazetting of national security provisions in the summer of 2009. She was not quoting from the regulations themselves. Further, she cut the quote in half, as I just mentioned.

The full quote from those comments and replies is as follows. The *Canada Gazette* states:

4) The term national security should be explicitly defined and national security reviews should take place according to concrete, objective, and transparent criteria. This recommendation was not accepted since national security threats are dynamic in nature and, therefore, constantly evolve. Neither Part IV.1 of the ICA nor the Regulations define the term “national security” since future threats to national security cannot be predetermined and any such definition may limit the government's flexibility to respond to future threats.

That is the complete quote.

However, that does not mean that national security provisions do not exist. How do I know that? Because they are not hard to find. We just have to grab a BlackBerry or an iPad and go to [www.ic.gc.ca](http://www.ic.gc.ca). If the hon. member wants, after we are done here she can come over

and I can show it to her on my iPad. They have been there for more than two years. I would ask the member to go and read that section of the website and the associated regulations before getting up to ask her next incorrect question.

• (1950)

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Madam Speaker, obviously the hon. member would understand that when one says “close quote”, I am closing the quote around the part of the *Canada Gazette* that I was able to read in the 30 seconds that I had to pose a question in question period. I did not read the remainder of that quote. He is quite right, that is what it says.

The point is that these were expert recommendations following a substantial review involving experts in the Investment Canada Act, both how we would respond to competition and how we should respond to national security. The reality is, contrary to what the minister said, when he said that they improved transparency, there is no transparency.

Yes, I have reviewed the entire Investment Canada Act. I do not need to look at the member's BlackBerry but I appreciate his offer. The reality is that we have let down our defences. We are, in the words of former defence experts, “sitting ducks”.

The question remains. If they cannot define “national security”, do not have concrete objectives and do not subject sales of oil sands and uranium to a national security review, how on earth can they claim that they are protecting the national interests?

**Mr. Mike Lake:** Madam Speaker, the member knows that our government supports foreign investment that benefits Canada. We will continue to support an Investment Canada Act that encourages foreign investment into our country. Foreign investment contributes a significant amount to our economy, connects our firms to the world and creates high-paying jobs right here at home in almost every important economic sector.

Members also know that when the government believes that undertakings are not being respected, we will act to protect Canadian interests. We have done it in the past and we will continue to protect our interests in that fashion.

Moreover, while we continue to take steps to encourage foreign investment, we also took steps in 2009 to put national security provisions in the Investment Canada Act regulations. As I mentioned earlier, those regulations have been in place since 2009 and the member can read those regulations in full at [www.ic.gc.ca](http://www.ic.gc.ca).

JUSTICE

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, when I posed my question last November, regarding the evidence to support mandatory minimum penalties, including whether the mandatory minimums were compatible with the charter, the parliamentary secretary replied also in an irrelevant fashion on the issue of costs. He concluded in a kind of customary, demagogic disclaimer that, “We support the victims, while they support the criminals”.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

I trust that the answer this evening will address the question I raised and avoid demagoguery. I trust, also, that it will take into account what has changed since I put the question in November. Namely, that evidence-based testimony in different jurisdictions exists to the effect that mandatory minimums are excessive, unfair, ineffective, injurious constantly and do not have a deterrent effect. As well, I trust that it will take into account the Ontario Superior Court of Justice decision earlier this week that struck down a mandatory minimum sentence for violating the charter. I assume that the member opposite is well aware of the case.

I look forward to hearing how the government continues to justify insisting on such penalties in Bill C-10 in light of this ruling and in light of the preponderance of Canadian and international evidence on this matter.

I might add that yesterday evening, former Supreme Court Justice John Major himself supported the judgment. He lamented the prejudicial impact on judicial discretion by these mandatory minimums.

The Conservatives have advanced the notion that if one opposes mandatory minimum sentences, one is soft on crime. Admittedly, on its face, opposing mandatory minimums may appear counter-intuitive.

However, this is not about being soft on crime. It is about being smart and effective on crime. In particular, the evidence demonstrates that mandatory minimums are a failed policy. Stacking our Criminal Code with such mandatory minimums would do nothing to reduce crime or improve public safety. Indeed, it would lead only to an increase in crime and may violate the charter, as we saw earlier this week.

Moreover, mandatory minimums do not in fact advance the goal that they purport to reap; namely, that of crime prevention and of deterrence.

As I noted in this House in debate on this topic in 2006 and since:

● (1955)

[*Translation*]

Indeed, the vast preponderance of studies in every jurisdiction have concluded that mandatory minimums are neither a deterrent nor are they effective.

[*English*]

However, we need not look beyond our own borders for proof that mandatory minimums do not work. Indeed, our own Department of Justice published a study in December 1990 which states:

The evidence shows that long periods served in prison increase the chance that the offender will offend again. In the end, public safety is diminished rather than increased if we “throw away the key”.

Indeed, the U.S. Sentencing Commission released a comprehensive 645 page report in November concluding that federal mandatory minimum sentences are often “excessively severe”, are “not narrowly tailored” to apply only to those offenders who warrant such punishment, and are “not applied consistently”.

The truth is, as the Canadian Bar Association and others have shown, mandatory minimum sentences have a disproportionate impact on those minority groups that already suffer from poverty, deprivation and disadvantage.

We have a situation where, for example, 34% of aboriginal women are in prison. That is a shocking fact. Mandatory minimums would not alleviate or address this problem; rather, they would exacerbate them. They would unduly limit judicial and prosecutorial discretion, and if more offenders plead not guilty, given such mandatory minimums, we would be likely to further strain our scarce judicial resources, something from which no one would benefit.

Moreover, as we have seen, inequitable, inconsistent and excessive mandatory minimums invite a spectrum of constitutional challenges that would further clog the courts and further take us down from principles of justice and fairness, while fostering disrespect of and lack of confidence in the criminal justice system.

I close by saying that, at the end of the day—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to speak today about minimum sentences.

[*English*]

As mentioned last November, in response to a question from my hon. colleague from Mount Royal, this issue has been discussed on several occasions, not only in this House, but also before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

As a former minister of justice, he knows I cannot comment on a case still before the courts.

[*Translation*]

In May 2011, Canadians gave us a clear mandate. They want to live in healthy and safe communities. In our opinion, the government's main focus must be on victims of crime who, from a financial perspective, pay most of the price of crime.

● (2000)

[*English*]

The strong mandate this government received from Canadians in May 2011 included support for our commitment to table comprehensive legislation that would reintroduce several law and order bills, including those that proposed mandatory minimum penalties for child sexual offences and for serious drug crimes.

Bill C-10, the safe streets and communities act, includes reforms from nine previous bills. Bill C-10's proposed amendments would make communities safer by extending greater protection to the most vulnerable members of our society, enhancing the ability of our justice system to hold criminals accountable for their actions, and helping improve the safety and security of all Canadians.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

The government's approach is balanced. It addresses prevention, enforcement and rehabilitation, and respects the rights of the accused while also respecting victims' interests, as well as community safety. This approach reflects the reality that Canadians lose faith in the criminal justice system when they feel the punishment does not fit the crime.

It appears to me that the member opposite contradicts the position of his own party when he criticizes the proposed mandatory minimum penalties that this government proposes to better denounce serious crimes, a policy supported by premiers and attorneys general across Canada.

For instance, former Bill C-54, which has been reintroduced as part of Bill C-10, the safe streets and communities act, and which proposes mandatory minimum penalties for sexual offences committed against children, received the support of all parties at third reading.

I often hear the opposition referring to studies that unequivocally demonstrate the ineffectiveness and excessiveness of mandatory minimum penalties. With all due respect, this is hardly conclusive. There is research that suggests mandatory minimum penalties are not effective. However, other research indicates there is evidence that mandatory minimum penalties have had positive effects on serious offences, such as impaired driving.

Another argument the opposition continually relies on to criticize either the use of mandatory minimum penalties or the restrictions on the availability of conditional sentences is the impact such proposals would have on prison populations and the related cost implications.

The government has always been clear that the cost of protecting victims far outweighs the cost implications of such reforms. Although there is a cost to having proportionate sentences, there is also a significant cost to victims and Canadian society as a whole.

In 2008, crime in Canada cost an estimated \$99 billion, the majority of which, \$82.5 billion or 83%, was borne by the victims. Victim costs include the value of damaged or stolen property, pain and suffering, loss of income, and health services.

This government has a clear and strong mandate to ensure that Canadians are better protected from dangerous criminals by ensuring that they are not permitted to serve their sentence in the comfort of their homes.

Mandatory minimum penalties will ensure clarity and consistency in sentencing, while at the same time ensuring that perpetrators of serious crimes do not reoffend during the period of incarceration.

It is time for all members to recognize the significant impact that serious and violent crimes have on Canadian communities and victims.

**Hon. Irwin Cotler:** Madam Speaker, my question was prompted by the fact that all of the available evidence, including that from the Department of Justice itself, shows that mandatory minimums are excessive, disproportionate, ineffective, costly and do nothing but increase prison populations. The question still stands. This week an Ontario Superior Court judge confirmed that mandatory minimums are a failed policy. Indeed the judge said in this case that they would be "fundamentally unfair, outrageous, abhorrent and intolerable".

Moreover, the Minister of Justice has an obligation under the Department of Justice Act to ensure that legislation comports with the charter. I have heard nothing from the parliamentary secretary this evening that rebuts any of the preponderance of evidence, that says anything about the unconstitutionality of the legislation, or that addresses the question of costs, in that mandatory minimums will exceed the costs.

At the end of the day the question remains unanswered, and I can understand why. The preponderance of evidence is simply against the position of the government.

**Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, I would like to respond to some of the opposition's criticism to the government's efforts to ensure that serious crimes are adequately punished.

Our government intends to ensure that serious crimes, including violent crimes, result in sentences that appropriately reflect the seriousness of the offence and the degree of responsibility of the offender.

• (2005)

[*Translation*]

To that end, our Bill C-10 would reform the Criminal Code in order to achieve the following: provide new mandatory minimum penalties for seven existing offences related to child exploitation; impose mandatory minimum sentences for serious drug offences that are related to organized crime or that target youth.

Generally speaking, minimum sentences would apply when there are aggravating factors, especially when the production of the drug in question presents a danger to public health or safety.

[*English*]

Bill C-10 proposes mandatory minimum sentences for sexual offences against children and serious drug offences.

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

(The House adjourned at 8:05 p.m.)





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