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Friday, April 27, 2012

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, April 27, 2012

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

•(1005)

[English]

PROTECTING CANADA'S SENIORS ACT

Hon. Diane Finley (for the Minister of Justice): moved that Bill C-36, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (elder abuse), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to speak to Bill C-36, the protecting Canada's seniors act.

As members are no doubt aware, the abuse of elderly Canadians is a problem that is generating outrage across this country. Given the reality of our aging population, it is unlikely that this problem will go away on its own.

The courts have also taken notice of this emerging trend. In *Regina v. Foubert* in 2009, for instance, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice dealt with the case of a personal support worker who pled guilty to assaulting four elderly war veterans suffering from Alzheimer's disease and dementia while they were in his care. In sentencing the offender to a period of incarceration to be followed by a probation order with onerous conditions, the sentencing judge noted the growing phenomenon of elder abuse in our society and the need for it to be addressed in a most serious way. In this regard, the judge added:

...there is little to distinguish individuals suffering from Alzheimer's disease or severe dementia from children. Both are among the most vulnerable members of our society. Just as one is forbidden to strike a baby, one is forbidden to strike a vulnerable, elderly person.

I do not believe there is a person in this chamber who would disagree with this statement.

Yet another example of judicial awareness of the issue of elder abuse in Canada is provided by the 2010 Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court decision in *Regina v. Manuel*. In this case, the offender had twice broken into the home of an elderly veteran and assaulted and robbed him. In sentencing the offender to six and half years imprisonment, the judge was clear in stating that the sentence being imposed was designed to address the public interest

in deterring criminals from breaking into private homes and especially the public duty to protect the elderly of our society.

This is an issue of serious concern to our government. During the last general election we made a commitment to address it through an amendment to the Criminal Code to add, "vulnerability due to age as an aggravating factor when sentencing those who commit crimes against elderly Canadians".

Once passed into law, this amendment will ensure that the approach now being taken in a piecemeal fashion by the courts in different parts of Canada will truly become a national standard.

Our commitment in this regard was reiterated and strengthened through the statement in the Speech from the Throne of June 3, 2011, that our government would protect the most vulnerable persons in our society and work to prevent crime by proposing, among other things, tougher sentences for those who abuse seniors. The proposed amendment set out in the bill before members today will do just that.

More specifically, the bill proposes to amend paragraphs 718.2(a) of the Criminal Code to provide that where an offence has had a significant impact on a victim due to that victim's age and other personal circumstances, including their health or financial situation, it shall be considered to be an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes. This means that judges all across Canada will be better able to justify the imposition of a serious penalty in cases where elderly persons are victimized. This amendment would convey the strong message that abuse of older Canadians will not be tolerated.

The proposed amendment is not intended to be a simple stand-alone response to elder abuse but rather complements other efforts being made by this government to address this serious issue.

The proposed amendment would also complement provincial initiatives focusing on health, social services and adult guardianship. Such initiatives address elder abuse through general legislation, policy or specific requirements such as mandatory reporting of suspected abuse.

As the case and recommendations to which I have referred indicate, "elder abuse" is an expression commonly used to refer to the victimization of older individuals.

A useful working definition was developed in 2002 by the World Health Organization that characterized elder abuse as "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person".

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Today, it is generally understood that the abuse of elderly persons includes physical and psychological abuse, financial exploitation and neglect.

One of the challenges of addressing elder abuse is that there is no consensus on a definition of who is an elderly person either within Canada or abroad. This has resulted in wide variation in defining older, senior or elderly persons.

For instance, chronological age is specifically referred to in at least 17 statutes in Canada. Thirteen of these statutes refer to the age of 65 but other references vary from 50 to 75, depending on the circumstances. The majority of these statutes deal with issues relating to retirement and pensions.

However, the impact of a crime on an elderly person is not always tied to the chronological age of the victim. Not every 65-year-old person is equally vulnerable. Much depends on the personality and life experience of such a person, as well as factors such as physical and mental health, whether a support system in the form of a loving family and friends exist, and whether the person's finances are secure and sufficient for his or her future well-being.

In short, as opposed to children of tender age for whom a general assumption of vulnerability is far more justified and appropriate based on chronological age alone, there is no one size fits all age at which the chronologically older person could be said to be vulnerable in terms that are easily recognized by the criminal law. This is an important point because the impact of a crime on an older person is more typically associated with the combined unique characteristics of that person that when viewed together reflect the overall impact of the offence.

Therefore, in order to properly achieve the goals behind this amendment, the bill deliberately does not set a chronological age as a triggering factor for invoking the aggravating factor. Rather, it focuses on the impact of the crime on an elderly victim in light of the combination of age and personal circumstances that render that person particularly vulnerable to the offence in question.

I must add that the Criminal Code currently contains dispositions that address some but not all forms of elder abuse. In this regard, and as I will outline, the amendment before us today goes beyond these more limited approaches to this issue.

For example, and as most members will recall, this government introduced the Standing Up for Victims of White Collar Crime Act, which came into force on November 1, 2011. One of the elements of this legislation was the addition, as an aggravating factor for the offence of fraud, of the fact that the offence has had a significant impact on the victim given his or her personal circumstances, including age, health and financial situation. This aggravating factor was in response to large scale economic crimes that have had devastating consequences for vulnerable victims, particularly seniors who have a reduced ability to replace the moneys stolen from them.

The Criminal Code also lists other aggravating factors that address some of the circumstances often present in cases that may be characterized as elder abuse.

For instance, the Criminal Code provides in subparagraph 718.2(a)(i) that where an offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate

based, for instance, on age, mental or physical disability, it shall be considered to be an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes. This aggravating factor addresses cases where crimes were motivated by hate toward an identifiable group, such as seniors.

By way of comparison, the proposed aggravating factor in the bill before us today would recognize that the impact of crime on a victim may be exacerbated by reasons of a combination of the person's age or other personal circumstances, such as the individual's health.

Other aggravating factors currently in the Criminal Code that would also apply in some elder abuse cases include the fact that the offender abused a position of trust or authority in relation to the victim, which is cited in subparagraph 718.2(a)(iii), or abused the offender's spouse or common-law partner, subparagraph 718.2(a)(ii).

These aggravating factors apply not only where the abuse was committed by a family member, but also where the abuse was committed, for example, by a caregiver in a nursing home who was in a position of trust and authority over vulnerable seniors.

In addition to the aggravating factors I have mentioned, the Criminal Code provides a range of specific offences that equally apply to protect Canadians, regardless of whether the victim is male or female, able-bodied or disabled, young or old.

For example, the offence of assault applies equally to all Canadians to protect against physical abuse. Mental cruelty is captured by offences such as intimidation or uttering threats and financial abuse is captured by theft or robbery.

In some instances, an offence is applied to a specific relationship that may be relevant to elder abuse cases. One such example is the offence of the failure of an individual to provide the necessities of life to a person under his or her charge if that person is unable by reason of age, illness or mental disorder to withdraw himself or herself from that charge and is unable to provide himself or herself with the necessities of life. This is section 215. This offence is commonly charged in elder abuse cases.

● (1010)

All Criminal Code provisions that I have just referred to can be used depending on the circumstances. The proposed amendment in the bill is of a more general and all encompassing nature that will ensure that no case of elder abuse falls through the cracks simply because it does not fit exactly within the language of these more specific provisions.

The bill is needed now. According to Statistics Canada, in 2010 an estimated 4.8 million Canadians were 65 years of age or older. This number is expected to double in the next 25 years to reach 10.4 million seniors by 2036. By 2051, about one in four Canadians is expected to be over the age of 65. These statistics clearly show that our population is aging and that the number of elders who may be at risk of such abuse will increase as more baby boomers become dependent upon others, such as family members, for their care.

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According to a January 2011 report by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, in 2009 about 70% of reported crimes against Canadians aged 65 or older were committed by a member of the victim's family or by a friend or acquaintance, and 29% by a stranger. In terms of crime committed by family members, assault was the most common violent offence committed, accounting for more than half, 53%, of all violent offences against seniors. Other forms of family violence against seniors included: uttering threats, which represented 21% of such crimes; major assaults, which represented 13% of family violence against seniors; and criminal harassment, which represented 4% of such crimes.

It is important to understand that those numbers may be well underestimated as to the true extent of family violence against seniors, as many cases of elder abuse might not have been reported to the authorities. For instance, according to the 2009 general social survey, about seven in ten violent victimizations were not reported to the police because victims did not believe that the incident was important enough, or because the victim may still care for the abuser, or because the victim feels ashamed of being unable to stop the abuse on his or her own. Another reason is that older persons are more likely to suffer from chronic illness and cognitive impairment, which may limit their ability to report violence to police.

These facts speak for themselves. Older Canadians are at risk and can expect to continue to be at risk for the foreseeable future. That is clearly not right. Older members of our society, those who have contributed to building our great country, should not have to live in fear for their personal or financial security. After all, they have given to Canada and they have a right to be treated with respect and to live in a safe environment. Bill C-36 is a significant contribution to this important objective. I urge all members to support the expeditious passage of the bill.

• (1015)

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question was actually about a step before the bill.

Many seniors find the justice system intimidating and incomprehensible. They are in no position to take their abusers to court. Because seniors do not understand the system, they cannot make informed decisions. They cannot decide whether they want to take the person to court. That creates a paternalistic environment with someone else making their decisions for them.

Does the government plan to do something to help these people by ensuring that they understand their rights and are capable of making their own decisions about whether to take the person to court?

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for her question.

This government has invested significant funds in helping victims of crime. Two authorities are responsible for intervening when such crimes occur. The province, through its minister of social services, should help the victims, and the federal government also takes steps to protect victims of crime. I think that these authorities are well placed to guide seniors in their decision-making process.

I should also mention that if an incident is reported to the police, it is no longer up to the victim to decide whether to take the matter to court.

[English]

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here we are debating yet another bill to expand the provisions of the Criminal Code. It seems as though the answer from the Conservative side to all that ails society is to expand the provisions of the Criminal Code to focus on the offender, to focus on retribution. I believe we all share the goals of protecting our seniors. I heard my colleague say that this focuses on showing respect to seniors and preventing abuse, including financial exploitation.

My question is on the inconsistency between what we are attempting to do here today through amendments to the Criminal Code, and what we saw here just a few weeks ago when, in a classic case of financial exploitation, the government raised the age of eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement for our most vulnerable seniors. Does the hon. member not see the patent inconsistency in the government's position with respect to the treatment of seniors in this regard?

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, there is clearly no inconsistency. Obviously, a lot of the amendments to the Criminal Code have been made with a view to protecting Canada's most vulnerable citizens, the seniors. The measures taken to change the Old Age Security Act, given the demographic changes, were to protect seniors in the future. We know that by 2030 there will only be two people working to fund those benefits going to each senior.

Again, measures have been taken to make sure that the system continues for seniors in the future, so there is no inconsistency in protecting Canada's most vulnerable.

• (1020)

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member. When we look at what the Conservative government has done for seniors since we came to office in 2006, such as implementing the tax-free savings accounts, which many seniors across the country have engaged in, as well as 6 million other Canadians, income splitting for seniors, extending the GIS for the lowest income seniors and taking many seniors off the tax rolls altogether, is this not just another piece that we are doing as a government to try to support our seniors?

We have made several initiatives in several different areas to support our seniors, not only with respect to the criminal justice system or extending the powers of law enforcement to support seniors in the Criminal Code, but also financially. We also implemented a national seniors day showing our strong support for seniors.

This is just another piece of the puzzle, is it not?

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has certainly fallen upon two golden common threads in his comments.

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One is that throughout all legislation obviously this government has sought to protect seniors, whether it be financially or against crime. The measures to protect them financially, take them off the rolls of the taxman, permit income splitting and the guaranteed supplement for revenue have been put in place by the government.

The other common golden thread is that with each one of these measures taken by this government, the opposition, particularly the NDP, has voted against protecting them in that fashion.

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud that we voted against those measures. The Conservatives did not get the job done for Canadian seniors.

If we pause and think about it for a moment, over the last five to six years there have been repeated conversations in the House about 300,000 seniors living in poverty. Most of those who collected GIS were women. They were getting approximately \$15,000 a year when the poverty line was \$22,000 a year. Instead of giving them a \$200 a month increase that would have helped alleviate that, as was suggested in the last election by the NDP and in the House repeatedly, the government gave them \$50. The HST increase in Ontario alone ate up most of that \$50.

Therefore, the government should not try to tell members on this side how much it has done for seniors. It has taken \$6,000 out of their lifetime income for each of those two years that it has moved forward on changing the age of eligibility from 65 to 67. It is really frustrating on this side of the House because we hear these claims of what it is doing, but it is not getting done.

Mr. Robert Goguen: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to the change in the OAS, which will take effect in a whopping 23 years. What has really been taken away from the seniors, other than the possibility of future seniors being able to benefit from the program? We know that demographically it will not be sustainable if we do not take the measures to protect them now and in the future.

Obviously, the opposition has a different way of looking at things. Everyone lives with the costs of living, whether it be transportation of goods or paying heating. Imposing the carbon tax that the opposition proposes would be a large taxation on the funds of seniors who perhaps have limited funds. We have a different view of making their quality of life work.

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Speaker, when the government gave its reasons for the changes to OAS, \$36 billion a year is what it cost, escalating to \$109 billion, there is no argument there. We agree with the government on that, but the assumptions the Conservatives are using do not take into account an average of 2% growth in the GDP, as projected by their own Minister of Finance over the next number of years. That would pay for it.

Mr. Robert Goguen: That is very interesting, Mr. Speaker. According to the hon. member, this system is sustainable. The question I would ask him is, in the following 20 years, how many people will have dialysis? How many people will have cancer treatments? How many people will have medical treatments which will go well into the future because Canadians continue to live longer and health care goes up?

These two things run in tandem. We have no way of predicting exactly how much medical treatment will be needed. We know it will

increase. We know the demography of the Canadian population is becoming significantly older. With age comes medicare. With age come health costs. We are taking steps to protect seniors in the future.

• (1025)

[Translation]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by seeking the unanimous consent of the House to share my time with the hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to share her time?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise here in the House today to speak to Bill C-36 as the seniors critic for the official opposition.

It is no secret that Canada is facing an aging population, which, I would like to point out, is not a problem in itself. Our society is enriched by its seniors, who still contribute a great deal to society by volunteering, sharing precious time with their families, helping their friends and neighbours, and investing directly in their communities and their surroundings. Our aging population is clearly not a problem in itself.

However, we need to ensure that the government and its programs adapt to the situation so that everyone can continue to live with dignity until they reach the end of their lives, without any problems. This is possible.

We have known about our aging population for some time now, since those who are 60 today were not born yesterday. We began taking measures a long time ago to prepare for this situation.

One question that keeps coming up right now about our aging population has to do with all kinds of abuse that our seniors are suffering. Since we have an aging population, it is especially important that we seriously ask ourselves how we can help our seniors. We must ensure that elder abuse diminishes and, ideally, that it disappears altogether.

Today, Bill C-36 is a good start and could become part of the solution to the problem of elder abuse.

I would like to begin by briefly talking about elder abuse. Clearly, all forms of abuse are unacceptable in our society, but there are certain distinctive characteristics of elder abuse.

The most prevalent kind of abuse that seniors tend to suffer is financial exploitation. Next, in order of prevalence, comes psychological abuse and, finally, physical abuse ranks third.

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Another distinctive characteristic of elder abuse is that it is often people close to them who commit the abuse: members of their family, even their immediate family, neighbours, friends and caregivers.

Another thing about elder abuse is that it is largely under-reported. In fact, according to the Réseau québécois pour contrer les abus envers les aînés, nearly 80% of abuses are never reported. That is a huge percentage. Why? Because seniors are especially vulnerable. They are afraid of being isolated and uprooted from their lives. They are afraid that if they report a family member, that family member will reject them and they will end up even more isolated. They are afraid that if they report the person who cares for them, they will stop getting their regular care and will be sent to a nursing home. For abused seniors, reporting that abuse has specific and very significant consequences. As a result, seniors unfortunately often put up with abuse and keep mum in order to protect themselves from something that they believe could be worse.

Seniors need to know that someone will be there for them, that if they report abuse, they will get all the help they need to get through the situation.

Bill C-36 recognizes the seriousness of elder abuse. The Criminal Code currently recognizes a number of aggravating factors in cases of child abuse or abuse of persons with disabilities, but there is nothing in the legislation to make elder abuse an aggravating factor. The vulnerability of seniors in cases of abuse has not been recognized. Bill C-36 recognizes this factor.

The NDP is pleased to support this bill at second reading because we believe it is an important and necessary measure.

• (1030)

However, that is not all. A very interesting committee, the Parliamentary Committee on Palliative and Compassionate Care, studied the issue of elder abuse and made some recommendations to Parliament with a view to addressing this problem.

Bill C-36 tackles the criminal aspect of elder abuse. We must consider whether we want to punish people who carry out the abuse and whether we also want to prevent abuse. They do not necessarily go hand in hand. Giving a longer sentence to someone who commits elder abuse may not really reduce the number of cases of abuse or increase reporting of elder abuse. These two things do not necessarily go hand in hand. Yes, we have to punish the perpetrators, but we also have to prevent and reduce abuse and ensure that we make it easier for seniors to report it.

There were some very interesting things in the committee's report. First, it is important to launch an extensive awareness campaign. We have to make people aware of elder abuse and show them that this abuse is serious. People must know that society has a role to play in helping seniors report abuse.

Second—and I am still talking about targeted, effective measures—the report talks about prevention programs. Not only do people have to be made aware of the problem, but we have to go one step further and prevent elder abuse. For example, the committee mentions training people who care for the elderly and providing family members with information so that they can recognize the

signs, determine whether an elderly relative is being abused or not, and support that person in reporting the abuse.

Third, there has to be an intervention service. It is all well and good to prevent abuse or detect it and help an elderly person report it, but once that happens, what then? Seniors need to know that they have access to people and a system that can help them through their ordeal. They do not have to be afraid of losing their freedom, their loved ones or their independence if they accuse an abuser. Intervention services should include offering seniors who have been mistreated psychosocial and other care. That is another very important aspect of what should be done to fight elder abuse.

Fourth, the report talks about a legal response, which Bill C-36 addresses. Yes, there is a “legal response” element to tackling elder abuse. However, there are three other elements that are just as important.

The NDP will support Bill C-36, but we must be clear about the fact that it is not enough. If we focus only on legal measures, we will be missing a very important point. We must not forget that we need to prevent crime, and not merely punish criminals. Unfortunately, punishing criminals is the Conservative way. We saw this with the mandatory minimum sentences proposed in Bill C-10. However, prevention and intervention are measures that can truly help people who suffer abuse, and we do not talk about that enough here in the House.

Here are some suggestions of concrete measures that could be taken in response to the suggestions made by the Parliamentary Committee on Palliative and Compassionate Care. Factors that cause seniors to be more vulnerable include poverty and dependence on family members or caregivers. This means that a senior who has limited resources is much more dependent on others and will therefore be much less likely to report any financial or other abuse. A senior who does not have a spot in an affordable, appropriate seniors' home and must therefore live with a friend, neighbour or family member will be unlikely to report that person, because the senior would have nowhere to go if he or she were forced to leave.

• (1035)

Thus, creating a national affordable, suitable housing strategy for seniors would be another way of tackling elder abuse. I could mention several other ways of doing so. In closing, I think my message is clear: some legal measures are needed, but that is not the only way to tackle the problem of elder abuse.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I agree with much of what the member said in her speech.

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She talked about taking measures not only to change the Criminal Code, but also to educate and try to prevent elder abuse before it takes place. That is exactly what this government has been doing.

Ads to prevent elder abuse appear regularly on many television channels in Canada. The ad campaign is, "Elder Abuse — It's Time to Face the Reality". I think many Canadians, including many seniors, have seen those ads.

The department responsible for seniors in Canada has many resources in place. Its website provides information on how to deal with fraud, lottery fraud, telephone fraud. There is information on credit card fraud. There is information on how to deal with suspected physical abuse of seniors.

Our government has taken many of the steps which the member opposite spoke about in her speech, in terms of advertising, educating and providing resources for seniors.

Does the member support those measures that have already been taken by the Government of Canada?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for bringing this important information to our attention. Indeed, I support all the prevention measures to help address elder abuse. The measures that the hon. member listed are very important. However, the fact remains that there is still widespread abuse of seniors. We cannot say that the government's measures go far enough. They have to go farther. I am sure my colleague agrees with me on that. The prevention measures in place are indeed excellent, but unfortunately, they are not adequate and the numbers on every kind of abuse prove it.

I might have another solution that could help seniors. The committee finds that basic funding for non-governmental organizations is an effective way to build the necessary infrastructure for reducing elder abuse. I do not know whether this is the case in my colleague's riding, but in my riding I am faced every day with community organizations that contribute tangibly to prevention and helping seniors, that do not have enough funding to do their work. And I am talking about organizations that operate with a lot of help from volunteers and donations from the community. A little more help from the government would be welcome.

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we all recall the current government bragging recently with great fanfare about having increased the guaranteed income supplement. However, on closer inspection, that increase amounted to roughly \$1.25 per person, or a little less than a coffee and a doughnut.

Failing to prevent a real decline in the financial vulnerability of seniors is consistent with what my colleague was saying when she said that the more that not-for-profit organizations that provide financial assistance to seniors are stretched in the social fabric, the less they will be able to help seniors, no matter how many tough laws we adopt.

If we do not provide basic help, if seniors become too fragile, then crime bills are not going to solve their problems. I would like to know if that is what my colleague was getting at.

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe: Mr. Speaker, I have no trouble giving credit where credit is due, but when things are not done properly, they need to be criticized. First of all, not all seniors in need are eligible for the guaranteed income supplement, and secondly, it is not enough to keep seniors who receive it above the poverty line.

The objective is therefore not achieved. Many seniors who depend on federal government allowances live below the poverty line. Moreover, what is given with one hand is taken back twice over with the other. While it is true that this measure is an attempt to combat elder abuse, it is also true that old age security is being attacked. That is something that will keep many seniors in poverty and hit middle-class seniors and those who are most vulnerable financially. It is just one more example of what this government is doing to promote elder abuse.

● (1040)

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak today about Bill C-36, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (elder abuse), with a view to ensuring that sentences factor in the vulnerability of seniors.

It is easy for us to support this measure, particularly as we put forward a similar measure during the last election campaign. Basically, the bill provides that sentencing for a crime against a senior shall take into consideration the significant impact that the offence has on the victim because of the victim's age, health and financial situation. Such factors are considered aggravating circumstances that require a stiffer sentence.

The Criminal Code already provides similar measures for the abuse of vulnerable people. For example, abuse of a person under 18 years of age constitutes an aggravating factor in sentencing.

Many extreme cases of negligence and abuse of Canadian seniors have been given a great deal of media coverage in recent years. One recent case occurred in February 2011, when the Toronto police found a 68-year-old woman unconscious, frozen and starving in a makeshift bedroom located in her son's unheated garage. Cases like that, which are very tragic, occur everywhere in Canada.

According to two major Canada-wide studies carried out in the late 1980s and late 1990s, 4% of seniors living at home are victims of one form or another of elder abuse at the hands of a family member, with financial and property abuse being the most common forms. The second study, benefiting from a stricter methodology, suggests that 7% of seniors are being abused. Researchers say that these figures are only the tip of the iceberg.

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In 2003, just under 4,000 incidents of violence against people over the age of 65 were reported. Of those, 29% were committed by family members. Even though not all incidents are reported, studies suggest that between 4% and 10% of Canadian seniors have experienced one or more forms of abuse or negligence at the hands of a person they trusted.

This is unacceptable and should not happen in a country like ours. Police statistics on crime in Quebec show that, between 2003 and 2007, while the number of property crimes fell, the number of crimes against seniors rose, particularly fraud and theft. Elderly people are more often victims of threats, robbery and criminal harassment.

Although I am happy to support this government bill, I would like to stress that it is only a first step in the fight against elder abuse. My honourable colleague said as much a moment ago.

Disadvantaged seniors are the most likely to be victims of abuse. The fight against seniors' poverty must be one of our top priorities.

I would like to mention some statistics. Of the 10 provinces, the number of seniors on a low income is highest in British Columbia and Quebec. In 2003, between 122,000 and 567,000 seniors lived in poverty.

It is unacceptable in a country like ours that there are still seniors who are unable to live in dignity because of their financial situation.

It is clear to me that a detailed plan is required to combat elder abuse. This is why, in the last election campaign, the NDP proposed measures in collaboration with Quebec to stop elder abuse and allocate the necessary resources to a strategy that would include the following three measures: a telephone help line for seniors suffering abuse, the establishment of specialized counsellor positions in the area of elder abuse, and the amendment of the Criminal Code so that people convicted of elder abuse are sentenced appropriately.

Moreover, unlike the Conservatives who believe that a tough on crime approach is the best way to fight crime, we believe that we need to tackle the root of the problem by combating exclusion and poverty.

I would like to draw the hon. members' attention to the extraordinary work done by the organizations in my community in the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles to combat poverty and exclusion among seniors.

We propose an increase in transfers to the provinces for home care and long-term care in order to guarantee a basic level of home care and to address the shortage of quality long-term care facilities.

•(1045)

We are also proposing measures to bring down drug prices and improve access to housing. However, above all, we believe that it is important to increase pensions and strengthen retirement security.

While it is important to increase old age security benefits, it is even more important to ensure that people who are entitled to government annuities have access to their due. For instance, we know that 135,000 Canadians and 45,000 Quebecers are entitled to the guaranteed income supplement, but they do not receive it because the government is not doing everything it can to reach them. Of the seniors who are deprived of the GIS, 80% are women.

It was to put an end to this injustice affecting our most vulnerable seniors that I introduced Bill C-409 in March. My bill is intended to promote the automatic registration of people who are 65 years old for the guaranteed income supplement. It is unacceptable that the federal government has unfairly deprived, and continues to deprive, many seniors who are among the most vulnerable in our society of significant revenue to which they are entitled under the guaranteed income supplement. I hope that this bill will receive the support of my colleagues, regardless of their party affiliation.

As legislators, we must look at the big picture when we want to tackle a problem or an issue. This is why I would like to once again emphasize that it is only by tackling the issue of seniors' poverty that we will be able to improve their quality of life. I am thinking of the seniors in my riding who have to go to food banks in order to feed themselves, and of veterans across the country who are in the same situation.

I hope that this government will be able to connect the dots and I encourage it to consult some of the NDP's policies in order to find possible and necessary solutions. If it really wants to help seniors, I call on the government to reverse its decision to increase the retirement age from 65 to 67, a decision that Canadians across the country have spoken out against. According to a poll conducted a few weeks ago, 75% of the residents of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles are opposed to the increase in the retirement age. It is a policy that is not socially acceptable.

Because the government refuses to tackle seniors' poverty, I urge the government to consult the NDP's election platform and to consult us in order to come up with solutions that truly deal not just with elder abuse but the poverty of our seniors. Seniors must be able to live with dignity and we must look after them.

Therefore, I invite my colleagues opposite to be open to these proposals, because we must look after all our seniors, who have contributed so much to Canadian society, including all our veterans who went to war for Canada. I will now answer my colleagues' questions.

[*English*]

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I applaud my colleague for her interest in this issue and for her comments. In the last couple of years, the government has spent a lot of money on TV ads alerting people to the issue of elder abuse and advising them to be aware of the fact this unfortunately goes on. Raising awareness is one thing, but many of the organizations in Canada that reach out and monitor many of our elderly could have used the money that was spent on those TV ads. It would be far more effective to put money into these non-profit organizations, and elsewhere, that would reach out in the local communities to help people.

In her experience, has the member seen a decrease in the number of organizations that are there to help many of the elderly?

Government Orders

• (1050)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his comments. In my riding, community groups such as the Artisans de l'aide and others that work with this vulnerable population are having trouble keeping their doors open.

We have to invest in prevention, before the crime is committed. That is something that this government does not understand when discussing poverty. This government does not understand and spends \$700 a night on a hotel room.

We have to look after our seniors by looking at the big picture. The NDP has been pointing this out all through the debate. We have to tackle poverty and other factors that make seniors vulnerable to abuse in order to truly tackle the problem.

[*English*]

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this has been identified as one of the major concerns of seniors in my riding in the Northwest Territories. The seniors associations there have stressed many different aspects of and solutions to this.

This bill would simply clarify some of the things that already exist in law, to allow extenuating circumstances to be used in sentencing people for particular crimes. However, does this really get at the root of what we are dealing with? On a scale of 10, how would this fit in with respect to productivity on this issue?

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I would not be able to say where it fits in on a scale of one to ten, but I know that seniors living in poverty are more vulnerable to abuse, which is often carried out by family members, by people who they trust, who they live with and who are very close to them.

I do question some of the policies that the government has brought forward, notably raising the age of retirement from 65 to 67, which will prolong poverty for those seniors who are of that age. The government is unwilling to take measures to increase the guaranteed income supplement to acceptable levels to raise every senior in Canada out of poverty.

We know this is a realistic goal. We have done the calculations and looked at the situation. We know this is realistic in terms of what we can afford as a country. I would invite my colleagues across the aisle to consider this.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, this bill is oversold. I certainly support it. However, it is called “Protecting Canada’s Seniors Act” and it adds one very small consideration at sentencing.

Does the member not agree with me that we need a fuller effort that actually draws attention to, for instance, the rights of seniors once they are in long-term care facilities, in care where they are unable to protect themselves from some senior abuse which is institutional?

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with my colleague.

It is telling that on the very same day the government proposed this bill, I tabled my private member's bill in the House that would

automatically enrol every senior who qualified for the guaranteed income supplement into this program.

We see very different approaches from the government side and from the NDP. Although we support the bill, we believe that things like the guaranteed income supplement, or things that really attack poverty among seniors are the solutions that we need to attack this problem at its roots.

We can talk about long-term care or we can talk about the price of prescription medicine. There are so many things we need to do to help seniors. We invite the government to look at those things.

• (1055)

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this issue. It is interesting that we are dealing with legislation called “Protecting Canada’s Seniors Act” that is effectively a one-paragraph bill. The title is almost longer than the bill itself. It is especially interesting that we are dealing with this after we dealt yesterday with an opposition day motion on the issue of the OAS and moving the age from 65 to 67.

We can tie all of these issues together, and I do not think any of them are particularly helpful when we talk about the future of our seniors. A lot of the issues are tied into the vulnerability of seniors, poverty and lack of independence. Therefore, rather than have a comprehensive review of how many different areas we could improve on, we have one paragraph that criminalizes people.

Many of the people I have talked to say that it is usually their family members who unfortunately are the ones who abuse the elderly—the mother, the father or whomever. I cannot find any people who say that they will have their son, daughter or daughter-in-law charged, which is all the bill would allow to happen. A frail, elderly person would run away from that.

I do not think the bill will do a whole lot, but, again, the government will stand and tell us all the wonderful things it will do to protect seniors. No one I know would put his or her son, daughter, family member or caregiver in jail.

To get to the seriousness of the issues, the world population is expected to exceed 9.2 billion people by 2050. This means that in less than two generations, the number of people on planet earth will grow by as much as 34%. Of that number, it is expected that people who are 55 years of age or older will constitute the largest segment of the human population. It is certainly a group of people to whom we need to pay attention.

Today, Canadians over the age of 55 make up about 27% of our entire national population and that number is expected to grow to 35% by 2031, which is only 19 years away. It might feel like a long way away, but it really is not.

These changing demographics mean that we must prepare and make certain that the seniors today and in the future have the protection they need, and the bill does very little in that way.

Statements by Members

Seniors are a gift that we all need to treasure. We all hope to be a senior some day. Having a robust and growing seniors population is positive thing for our society and we need to be investing in all of the health and wellness opportunities. Yes, seniors are living longer, but that is because there is a lot more initiatives for them to be involved in and there is much more focus on living better and living longer.

If we look around, seniors for the most part are volunteering. They are community leaders, resources people and they are the keepers of our country's institutional knowledge, something that we need to treasure, count on and rely on for guidance. We all think we know everything, but when we get advice from those who were there before us, we often learn many things.

Seniors are an asset that can continue to help Canada advance and develop, but in return they deserve our respect, our appreciation and, most important, our protection.

Elder abuse is a reality in our world, not just in Canada, very sadly, but it is a reality with which we are all attempting to deal. Statistics Canada reports that in 2009 more than 154,000 Canadians over the age of 55 reported having been victims of not just of any crime, but of violent crime.

These people are our mothers, fathers, grandparents, neighbours and friends. They are victimized at a rate far greater than one would expect to see in the national population, and 154,000 represents 2% of the population in that age bracket.

Clearly we do not have the required legal and social safeguards in place and that is what has brought us to this point. Will Bill C-36 do the trick? Unfortunately, no.

While I applaud the government for at least acknowledging that this problem exists, I am very disappointed with what the minister has set out on the table as a solution.

● (1100)

The Speaker: I will stop the hon. member there. She will have 15 minutes left to conclude her remarks, but now we will move on to statements by members.

The hon. member for Simcoe—Grey.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

WORLD MENINGITIS DAY

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I proudly stand in support of World Meningitis Day.

Meningitis is a serious infection caused by inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. It kills children and adults all over the world. The disease has no boundaries based on wealth, colour, creed or country and is often mistaken for the flu.

Approximately 10% of individuals who contract this disease will die. Of those who survive, one in five suffer permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, neurological damage or limb amputation.

The Meningitis Research Foundation of Canada was established in 1998 to prevent death and disability from meningitis and other infections of the central nervous system. Through education, it provides support to patients affected by meningitis and to their families, increases public awareness and promotes better understanding of the disease to health care professionals.

World Meningitis Day allows us to raise awareness to support all Canadians who are affected by meningitis and to work toward sparing the heartache of losing one more loved one to this devastating disease.

* * *

COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here in Ottawa at the Debra Dynes Family House, over 800 people rely on the community access program to connect with the world. Children complete their school work and people get information about their communities and search for jobs.

Thanks to access to technology, young people from Debra Dynes Family House are now graduating as nurses, doctors, engineers and police officers. Crime is down, adults learn computer skills and parents have support for their families.

This year's Conservative budget kills the community access program. The government is pulling the plug on opportunity.

Nearly 54% of low-income Canadians do not have access to the Internet.

I call on the government to reverse this decision, invest in families and give opportunities to our young people.

* * *

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend many residents in my riding of Richmond Hill laced up and took part in the annual MS Walk to end multiple sclerosis.

The local MS chapter of York South had an impressive 436 people participate at its walk, held at Elgin West Community Centre in Richmond Hill.

A total of 58 MS Walk events will be taking place in communities throughout Ontario this spring.

I am proud to say that the York South chapter's Richmond Hill-Aurora-Thornhill MS Walk raised a total of \$81,126. These funds will go a long way to providing innovative services and programs to help those affected by MS in our community and to support groundbreaking research dedicated to finding a cure.

I wish to congratulate all of the local volunteers, participants and supporters in the York South chapter on this very successful MS walk event.

*Statements by Members***NATIONAL PAIN STRATEGY**

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this past Tuesday, April 24, the Canadian Pain Society and the Canadian Pain Coalition hosted the first ever Canadian pain summit in Ottawa, where more than 200 delegates, including consumers, caregivers, health professionals, scientists and educators came together to discuss the national pain strategy for Canada.

[*Translation*]

Initially developed by the Canadian Pain Society in 2010, the national pain strategy for Canada would ensure that health professionals are better trained in pain management, are aware of the existence of evidence-based treatment and see to it that all Canadians have equal access to the care they need.

[*English*]

The need for a national pain strategy is urgent, as one in five Canadians lives with chronic pain every day, and pain accounts for up to 78% of emergency room visits.

It is time for the federal government to show leadership and implement a national pain strategy to address the gaps that exist in pain management and to minimize its burden on Canadians living with pain, on their families and on society.

* * *

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Mrs. Shelly Glover (Saint Boniface, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I want to acknowledge some exceptional volunteers from my riding of Saint Boniface.

During the Easter break week, I attended three volunteer appreciation banquets at local community centres. Many incredible teams contribute to the success of these organizations, and community centres could not survive without dedicated volunteers.

Each club had countless people to thank, but awards were given out at each event to highlight those who have gone above and beyond.

I would personally like to congratulate special award recipients Morris Deveson, Neil Denyer and Terry Moon, from the St. Vital Curling Club; Ken Hiebert, Brian Pedden, James Sansom, Richard Balog, Alain Laurencelle and Ken Murdoch, from the Heather Curling Club; and Joyce Webinger, Sam Tascona, Eugene Fillion and Gail Adolphe, from Notre Dame Recreation Centre.

I ask the House to join me in congratulating these recipients and thank them for their hard work.

* * *

• (1105)

CLIMATE CHANGE IN CANADA'S ARCTIC

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week I was one of 3,000 at the International Polar Year conference in Montreal. I joined many elected representatives from other northern countries.

Northern Canadians attended the conference in great numbers. Northerners are concerned about how their environment is being

impacted by climate change and want to hear the latest scientific findings. Loss of sea ice, melting permafrost and southern species replacing northern ones are just some of the negative impacts climate change has wrought on the north already.

The government chooses to deny the reality of climate change. Canadian environmental policy is being drafted to suit the needs of foreign-backed resource exploitation. Canada's position on climate change places it completely out of step with the rest of the world, for which it is being criticized right now. Recently Norway's former prime minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, said Canada has been moving backward on this issue and that Canada's position on climate change is anti-scientific and naive.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs says the north is fundamental to our identity. It is too bad that the government's denial of climate change is destroying that fundamental identity.

* * *

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour Mr. Walter Burchnell, a Second World War Royal Canadian Air Force veteran who served as a pilot in Burma. Mr. Burchnell was recently awarded the Minister of Veterans Affairs commendation medal for his years of selfless devotion to Canadian veterans.

After retiring from the Canadian armed forces in 1969, Mr. Burchnell devoted his time to the Royal Canadian Legion, where he has served in various roles, such as a branch president, and on various committees. He has even helped construct a new community cenotaph. Beyond that, Mr. Burchnell serves families of veterans on a more personal level, helping them apply for services and benefits, and even assisting in funeral and memorial planning.

Walter was also instrumental in initiating charitable casinos, which generated considerable revenue for his Legion branch and subsequent local charities it supports.

Mr. Burchnell has dedicated his life to our great country, and for that we are all eternally grateful. I know I can speak on behalf of all members of the House when I thank him for his years of service and congratulate him on receiving the prestigious award.

* * *

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

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for the last several nights fires have been burning in the streets of Montreal. Police officers and journalists have been assaulted, stores and other private property were vandalized, and over 85 people have been arrested in riots that started on Tuesday.

Statements by Members

My private member's bill, Bill C-309, would protect Canadians from these crimes and would allow police to arrest masked troublemakers before these unlawful assemblies became full-fledged riots. It would defend Canadians and their livelihoods from senseless violence while helping maintain the right of all citizens to peaceful protest.

The NDP has refused to support this sorely needed measure. In light of the Montreal riots, will the NDP reconsider its dangerous position and help protect the businesses and citizens of Montreal, Quebec, and all of Canada?

[*Translation*]

In light of the riots in Montreal, will the NDP review its dangerous position and help protect the businesses and residents of Montreal, Quebec City and all of Canada?

* * *

LE PIOLET SOCIAL REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about Le Piolet, a very special program in my community.

First and foremost, Le Piolet is a social reintegration program that helps many young people get their first jobs as waiters or cooks. Year after year, 30 or so graduates get well-paying, worthwhile jobs that enable them to reintegrate into society and join the workforce.

Le Piolet is also a safe and welcoming place for people who are too old for youth homes and who still need to be listened to and respected for who they are. Le Piolet is the only place in my riding that opens its doors to these young adults seven days a week.

Le Piolet has acquired buildings that it plans to turn into social housing to complement the range of services it offers. Le Piolet plans to provide medium-term housing for young people in need, making this one of the best and most comprehensive youth social reintegration programs in Canada.

Le Piolet helps to heal our society through its program based on empathy and respect for all people. My Louis-Saint-Laurent constituents truly hope that Le Piolet will garner the attention it deserves and serve as a model for the rest of the country.

* * *

●(1110)

[*English*]

TOM FOORD

Mr. Colin Mayes (Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 1953, Tom Foord and Jim Lockhead started a little tire shop in Vernon, in my constituency of Okanagan—Shuswap, and named the tire shop Kal Tire.

The company is now Canada's largest independent tire dealer, with 4,000 employees and 240 locations across the country. With its head office still in Vernon, B.C. Kal Tire has operations in 20 countries and is the number one supplier of tires to the world's mining sector.

Tom and Jim built the company on dedication to customer service and their commitment to the family of Kal Tire employees.

Tom Foord passed away on April 12, but his values and energy were passed on to the next generation of the Kal Tire family. Tom received many awards for his contributions to the community of Vernon and was named to the Order of British Columbia.

Tom Foord will always be remembered as the man with a big smile who would tell someone, "Go to the Kal Tire shop and tell them Tom Foord sent you." Tom loved life and was loved in return. What more could a man desire?

Our condolences go to the Kal Tire family at the loss of their father, founder and friend.

* * *

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister accused the NDP of not doing enough to stop Hitler. I am sure the NDP's founding members would have found this pretty strange when they first gathered in 1961.

Last night, tens of thousands of Canadians responded with an outpouring of social media comedy. In the spirit of co-operation, I would like to offer the Prime Minister some great suggestions for next week's attacks on the NDP.

Comedian Dan Speerin led things off last night by tweeting, "Damn you NDP for not standing up to Genghis Khan." Another person wrote, "It was really the NDP that helped organize the stampede that killed Mufasa in *The Lion King*." Another person wrote, "The NDP refused to come to the aid of men when Mordor invaded Gondor. Shame." Another person wrote, "The NDP got Fox to cancel *Firefly*." Another person wrote, "The NDP cancelled *Arrested Development* because they oppose free enterprise banana stands."

I hope the Conservatives take this humour in stride and do not respond with more of their humourless anger.

* * *

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously, the truth hurts.

Canada's role in Afghanistan has ensured it is no longer a safe haven for terrorism. Our work there is also making a real difference in the lives of the Afghan people. Nine million children are now in school and the country's GDP has quintupled.

Canada is participating in an international mission to train Afghan security forces so that the country can continue to build on these achievements. Our commitment is until 2014.

The NDP leader stated this week that the NDP does not support this mission. This is not surprising from the left. In 1939, the leader of the CCF even said:

I would ask whether we are to risk the lives of our Canadian sons to prevent the action of Hitler....

Oral Questions

Today the NDP still stands for radical ideas, reckless policy and dangerous left-wing ideology.

* * *

FOOTLOOSE

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had the great privilege Saturday night to attend the musical *Footloose*, performed by students at Bluefield High School in P.E.I. Many in the House will know of the motion picture *Footloose* and its wonderful storyline and message.

I want to speak to the spirit, the quality, and the talent of those students, both in the play and in the orchestra. They were inspiring.

Choreographed by Brittany Banks, with musical direction by Dan Rowswell, the performance had the audience enthralled from the first backflip to the last bow.

Two performers, Brandon Banks, who played Ren McCormack, and Megan McCabe, who played Ariel Moore, deserve special mention—but every performer was superb.

Those young students, whether performing their characters or expressing their music, showed spirit, determination and talent, and honoured the musical's history.

I personally want to congratulate the Bluefield High School staff, the production team, the parents and especially the students for a performance to knock one's socks off.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while our government is focusing on creating jobs, growth and long-term prosperity, the opposition is focused on baseless smear campaigns.

Just weeks after the member for Winnipeg Centre had to apologize numerous times for numerous baseless smears, the NDP has suffered yet another blow to its already dubious credibility.

Yesterday, the ethics commissioner rejected, I would say quite clearly and emphatically, the member for Acadie—Bathurst's claims and cleared the Minister of Labour.

The NDP's willingness to accuse without proof and without hesitation reflects a deeper rot within the whole party.

Now that Ethics commissioner Mary Dawson has proven that the member for Acadie—Bathurst was wrong, and emphatically wrong, will he admit it and apologize here in the House to the Minister of Labour?

* * *

• (1115)

[Translation]

SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people of Rimouski are going through a period of tremendous uncertainty. The employment insurance processing centre in Rimouski is being relocated to Thetford Mines, which could jeopardize 37 jobs.

Consider the facts. Before 2009, the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development announced that EI processing services would be consolidated. In 2009, a decision was made in Quebec: 25 centres would be reduced to six, and there would be one in Rimouski. In August 2011, a press release indicated that the EI processing centre would no longer be in Rimouski, but rather in Thetford Mines, in the riding of the Minister of Industry and the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

What has happened since? We learned a little later, from the local newspaper, that the member for Mégantic—L'Érable said that he had lobbied the minister and that the centre in Thetford Mines would be a good centre.

This is a brazen example of patronage, unworthy of a government that claims to represent all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

FIREARMS REGISTRY

Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Timmins—James Bay was recently named ethics, ATIP and privacy critic. Keeping his word should be important to him.

His large northern Ontario riding has many law-abiding gun owners. For years the NDP member promised his constituents that he would vote to end the wasteful and ineffective long gun registry.

In 2009, when a bill to end the registry came up for second reading, he voted for it and sent out parliamentary resources saying “promise made, promise kept”. However, at the next crucial stage of the bill, he flip-flopped and opposed the bill. If he had kept his word, the bill would have continued on. Instead, the bill was defeated and the registry remained.

The member put his out-of-touch leadership ahead of the promise he made to the people of Timmins—James Bay, our great Kenora riding neighbours.

In 2011, he failed again to keep his promise.

Clearly, the bigger issue here is that the NDP leader and the members of the shrinking northern Ontario NDP caucus no longer represent the interests of their constituents.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Auditor General confirmed what everyone has suspected all along. The cabinet was aware of the rising costs of the F-35. In fact, the Conservatives approved it, but they went out of their way to hide the truth.

Oral Questions

We are talking about significant costs, billions of dollars, hidden from Parliament and Canadians. Where is the accountability?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I answer that question, I know many members of the House will want me to congratulate the Ottawa Senators on a great season this past year.

The government has clearly communicated the budget we have set to replace Canada's aging CF-18s, and we will stay within that budget. Our budget covered the acquisition costs for the F-35. However, other numbers cited include operating costs.

The government has come forward, under the capable leadership of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, with a seven-point plan, which we will fully follow.

[Translation]

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, instead of giving Canadians the facts about the real cost of the F-35s, the Conservatives chose to send the Associate Minister of National Defence to Texas to placate Lockheed Martin. No doubt that is why two-thirds of Canadians no longer trust the Conservatives on the F-35 issue and believe that the Conservatives misled them.

When will this government admit that it has lost control over this file and no longer has an ounce of credibility when it comes to this issue?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I disagree with all of the statements in the member's question. The government has clearly communicated the budget that it set to replace Canada's aging CF-18s, and it will stay within that budget.

The Minister of Public Works and Government Services has announced a seven-point plan, and we will follow that aircraft procurement plan.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mrs. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in fact what this government is doing is trying to find every excuse in the book to defend the failed F-35 process. From cutting environmental protection to putting more seniors into poverty, the Conservatives are turning their backs on Canadians.

Good public administration is about making good choices. Why do the Conservatives insist on choosing the wrong path?

•(1120)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the path that this government has chosen is the path of economic growth and long-term prosperity. Under the economic leadership of this government, we have seen the creation of some 700,000 net new jobs created from coast to coast. We are focusing like a laser on job creation.

The very best social program for every Canadian is a job so that people can provide for themselves and their families. That is why the Canadian economy is performing so well that other countries around

the world are looking at the strong leadership and strong public administration of this team.

* * *

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' regressive priorities do not end with their budgetary choices. While 1.4 million Canadians are unemployed, yesterday, because of the Conservatives, the House was forced to debate women's right to choose. Canadian women will not sit back and allow their hard-earned rights to be attacked like that.

When will the Prime Minister tell his cabinet and his caucus that women's rights are not up for debate?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has always been very clear, before every election and since: we will not reopen this debate.

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians will not be fooled because the Conservatives did the exact opposite and reopened the debate last night in fact.

The Conservative manoeuvre to reopen the debate is not unfortunate, as the Prime Minister called it; it is hypocritical. During an election the Conservatives say one thing and in government they do exactly as they intended to do.

In our Canada, women's rights are human rights. They are not optional and they are not negotiable.

When will the Conservatives stop eroding women's equality in Canada?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was clear before the 2006 election, before the 2008 election, and before the 2011 election, and he is clear today, that the government and the Prime Minister have no intention of reopening the debate on this issue.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while the cost of the F-35 continues to rise, the appropriateness of this aircraft for our defence needs and Arctic sovereignty is being called into question.

Colonel Paul Maillet, an aerospace engineer and expert in fighter jets, is wondering how to ensure that a single-engine, low-range, low-payload, low-maneuvrability aircraft can operate effectively in the north.

Will the government launch a competitive bidding process in order to choose the plane that we truly need and get the best price?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that member sat around the cabinet table when the previous Liberal government spent hundreds of millions of dollars designing this aircraft. If he felt so strongly about it, why did he not speak up then?

[Translation]

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well that we never signed off on a competitive bidding process and that the government did not make any commitment.

[English]

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said that he was not aware that a letter had been sent by the government rejecting the Auditor General's conclusions. The Prime Minister said that he accepted those conclusions, so, we have ministers accepting the conclusions and departments rejecting them.

Why this abdication of ministerial responsibility? How can the minister not be aware that his department rejected the Auditor General's conclusions of its most expensive acquisition?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General, as an independent officer of this House, comes into departments to provide an audit. There is a good deal of back and forth while he and his office conduct that audit. At the end of the day, the Auditor General tabled his report before Parliament and this government has completely accepted the recommendations that he has come forward with.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of International Cooperation seems to think that accountability can be done by forced installments.

First, the minister takes the gamble that the media will not find out about her inappropriate spending. Each time she is caught, she is forced to make an apology and pay back that particular line item. Canadians deserve to know the full extent of her extravagant ways. The minister clearly has no moral compass. Does she really believe that what is right is what she gets away with and what is wrong is what she gets caught doing?

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have said several times earlier this week, the minister in question has apologized and she has repaid all of the inappropriate expenses. More important is the fact that our government has reduced overall travel spending by ministers by over 15% from that of the previous Liberal government. We have also reduced hospitality expenses by \$33 million from the previous government. Our government has always respected taxpayer dollars. We have done so in the past and we will do so in the future.

● (1125)

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget bill shows yet another Conservative attack on independent oversight. This time on the Conservative chopping block is the CSIS Inspector General. Scrapping the watchdog who keeps tabs on CSIS will not make the problems go away. Experts are concerned about this surprise move. Why are Conservatives so scared of independent oversight?

Ms. Candice Hooppner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, currently there is duplicate oversight over CSIS. The responsibilities of the Office of the Inspector General will be merged into the Security Intelligence Review Committee. This decision will preserve all of the oversight and accountability over CSIS while reducing administrative costs, saving taxpayers \$1 million a year. I know the NDP do not really like saving taxpayer dollars, but we do.

[Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have been unable to find a chair for the Security Intelligence Review Committee. The fact is that the Inspector General did his job, and it is a known fact that with this government, those who discover the truth are at risk.

The Inspector General uncovered major mistakes at CSIS, and that is the type of information that Canadians will no longer get in future if this government goes ahead with its irresponsible decision.

Why is the minister so afraid of accountability?

[English]

Ms. Candice Hooppner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is incorrect. In fact, the services that are provided are duplicate in their oversight over CSIS. Again, this will save the taxpayers dollars, and it will not affect the oversight that is provided over CSIS.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, also hidden in the budget bill is a full frontal assault on environmental protection. The bill would exempt many projects from examination, shut concerned citizens in groups out of pipeline reviews, give sweeping powers to the minister to green-light projects in spite of impacts, and much more.

Why is the minister hiding such significant changes in a 400-page budget bill? Is it because he knows that Canadians oppose this reckless attack on our environmental protection?

Oral Questions

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are modernizing the regulatory system and, if the member had come to the natural resources committee over the last year, she would be well aware that everyone is asking for that. Everyone is demanding that there be some improvements in the regulatory system. We want to enhance the opportunities for investments in resource development. We want to create the conditions for economic jobs and growth, particularly for aboriginal communities, and we want to protect the environment while we are doing it.

The NDP needs to get beyond its ideological blinders and come and join us to make this into a good project. We want responsible resource development in this country and we are going to see this through.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was at the finance committee because we were discussing the budget implementation act, not environmental regulations.

However, the Conservatives did not stop at cutting the Environmental Assessment Act, not when protections for fish habitat are standing in the way of higher profits for their friends. This bill dismantles decades of work to ensure industrial development does not destroy our fisheries.

The Conservatives did not campaign on gutting the Fisheries Act. We know Canadians did not ask for weaker protection for fish habitat. Therefore, will the minister tell us who lobbied him to gut the Fisheries Act? Who is he responding to?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the member would read through the measures in the budget implementation act, I think she would agree with me that the measures allow Fisheries and Oceans to focus its efforts in a practical, sensible way on managing threats to Canada's recreational, commercial and aboriginal fisheries to ensure their ongoing productivity and sustainability. The changes will provide greater certainty and consistency for stakeholders and will enhance partnership opportunities with the provinces and territories and conservation groups. All those are good things but, most important, we will have a focused, effective program that will conserve and protect Canada's fisheries for future generations.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy unveiled a report showing that Canadian companies are simply not prepared to deal with climate change.

The report is abundantly clear: the Conservatives' inaction on climate change is putting our economy at risk.

That explains why the Conservatives added a proposal to abolish the national round table to their omnibus budget bill. They simply do not like to hear the truth.

Why are the Conservatives trying to hide the facts by shooting the messenger?

• (1130)

[English]

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am really glad the NDP finally cares about industry in this country and what it is doing. The NDP, over the last several months, has bashed industry with regard to its concern for our environment, including the Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance. We are working closely with stakeholders to provide a balanced approach to protecting Canada's environment but all we hear from over there is rhetoric. I encourage the NDP to support our budgetary measures that support R and D in this country and support our environmental protection measures.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the parliamentary secretary brought up industry, because it is not just the national round table that is calling on the government to take action on climate change; industry is echoing that call.

Three corporations have just withdrawn from a carbon capture and storage project that was receiving significant funding from this government. They say that this project is meaningless without stricter greenhouse gas emissions standards and more regulation from Ottawa.

Why is this government going through the back door and using the budget bill to cut environmental regulations?

[English]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, responsible resource development is key for Canadians if we want to have a strong economy and we want to have strong environmental protection in the future. I get tired of the no-development party over there, because it criticizes everybody and praises no one.

For example, in Saskatchewan there has been successful sequestration for years. We have worked with the Saskatchewan government on the issue. The minister in Saskatchewan said, "I think the eyes of the world are focused on the success that Saskatchewan is having on clean coal and carbon sequestration, building on a decade of our work".

Why does the opposition not get on board and actually celebrate the successes that we are having?

*Oral Questions***EMPLOYMENT EQUITY**

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty hard to celebrate or praise a government whose budget is titled, “How low can you go?”

Ten years ago, it was recommended that the employment equity provisions for the federal worker contract program be strengthened through legislation, but now, instead of strengthening provisions, the Conservatives are using the budget bill to weaken them. Repealing progress on women's equality is becoming routine under the current government.

Does the Prime Minister think that employment equity is outdated?

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is committed to promoting fair and inclusive workplaces free of discriminatory barriers. The amendment is to include the design and delivery of federal contractors programs. It is focused specifically on that subject matter. More important, modernizing the federal contractors program will reduce the administrative burden on small and medium-sized business contractors, a recommendation of the Red Tape Reduction Commission.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, reducing administrative burdens for the Conservatives means no more criteria and no more making checks and balances of equity.

[*Translation*]

Bravo indeed, but more than a million companies with government contracts are going to be affected by this change. The government should lead by example with the private sector instead of just setting the bar as low as possible. One by one, the measures in place to reduce discrimination are being eliminated.

Why dilute legislation that should instead be strengthened? When will this assault on women's equality end?

[*English*]

Ms. Kellie Leitch (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and to the Minister of Labour, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is focused on ensuring that small and medium-sized businesses can be successful in this country. We are focused on job creation and economic growth in this country. The improvement to the act allows small and medium-sized businesses to thrive in this country.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PENSIONS

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, attacking women is a national sport for the Conservatives. Abortion, pay equity, organizations that promote women's health—nothing is sacred. The most vulnerable people, such as seniors, are also under attack. The minister says that the eligibility age for old age security must be raised.

What should we trust, the minister's common sense or the experts' studies? I wonder. Does the minister not understand that studies

show that the most vulnerable will be affected by an increase in the eligibility age for old age security?

[*English*]

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do wish that the NDP would stop the needless scare mongering and fear mongering for our seniors.

We have made it very clear that the changes to the OAS will not affect anyone who is currently collecting benefits and that anyone who is younger and not near retirement right now will have a lot of time to plan and prepare for it.

The key thing is that we need to ensure that this program is sustainable for future generations, which is exactly what we will do, and the Chief Actuary agrees with us.

* * *

• (1135)

41ST GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government continues its campaign of diversion, distraction and distortion when it comes to the election fraud scandal for which it alone is responsible.

However, Canadians do not trust or believe it. Senior staff on the Prime Minister's campaign have been named as being connected with the illegal robocall campaign. Court orders on Conservative offices are becoming the order of the day.

What is the government hiding? If the Conservative Party is not in fact guilty, why does it not call a full royal commission and prove it? What is it afraid of?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was only a few short weeks ago that the Chief Electoral Officer said that he found it troubling all of the sweeping allegations of wrongdoing with no facts to support them.

We just heard the diatribe from the member for Malpeque—completely fact-free, I might add.

However, I will point out one thing. The member talked about trust and he talked about Canadians. Canadians do not trust the Liberal Party, and that is why he is way down there.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians now realize that the Prime Minister is responsible for an increasingly corrupt government.

Election fraud may have been what got him here. We have a CIDA minister who cannot control herself when it comes to abusing taxpayer dollars, a Minister of Industry who was convicted of one and facing two more ethical probes, a Minister of National Defence who believes that the truth is for someone else and a Prime Minister who claimed there was an F-35 contract when now we know there is not one.

Will the Prime Minister give Canadians—

The Speaker: Order, please. . The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, those kinds of allegations from the Liberal Party, I suppose, are to be expected.

However, if we look at the Liberal Party's record, it ran a program that stole \$363 million from Canadians, \$43 million of which is still missing. It is a party that collects personal records of MPs in other parties and leaves them in filing cabinets so that its staff can run vicious Twitter attacks and then says that it does not want them to do it but seem to encourage it.

That is a party that Canadians have lost trust and faith in.

* * *

SENIORS

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the average old age security recipient receives \$16 a day to pay for rent, food and medical bills, \$16 that the government is taking back in the name of austerity.

All this while the government quietly paid an amount equal to 2,400 days worth of OAS for catered snacks at Old Port of Montreal Corporation. The Prime Minister clearly thinks that Canadians will shrug these issues off.

Why does the Prime Minister insist on making Canadian seniors pay for all of the Conservatives' outrageous spending?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. member. Where was she when we were reducing expenses for seniors? She was busy voting against pension income splitting for seniors. She voted against the increase in the age exemption. She voted against everything we have done to help seniors keep more of their money in their pockets.

In fact, a senior was quoted the other day in saying that thanks to this government, he and his wife now have \$4,000 more a year in their pockets than they had under the Liberals.

* * *

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after promising not to, the Prime Minister has now opened the door to keeping soldiers in Afghanistan after 2014. Conservatives are proposing the fifth extension to Canada's role in this war. Is the government going to bring this latest extension before Parliament for a debate and a vote, or is it going to avoid Parliament, as it did last time?

• (1140)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very excited on this side of the House to have the member for Ottawa Centre back as the official foreign affairs critic. We look forward to working with him.

I will say that we have not received any formal request nor made any decision on not having received any formal request to extend anything. However, the Prime Minister has always said that he would bring these issues before Parliament, just like we did on November 25, 2010, when the last extension was voted on.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister has to choose between listening to Canadians or to his friends in Washington, then I am rather afraid of what he will do.

Government sources have confirmed that the Canadian Forces have been asked to remain in Afghanistan beyond 2014. However, the Prime Minister is saying the opposite.

Canadians continue to tell us that they want this mission to end. Will the Conservatives debate this issue in Parliament or will they ignore the will of Canadians by acting unilaterally?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have an announcement for the House. I have three friends in Washington: President Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Canada's ambassador to Washington, the former NDP premier of Manitoba, Gary Doer. We work very well with them.

The NDP does not support sending troops abroad for anything. Let us look at what the former leader of the NDP-CCF said. "...I would ask whether we are to risk the lives of our Canadian sons to prevent the action of Hitler...". The former leader of the NDP-CCF, J. S. Woodsworth, said that.

* * *

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are concerned. The Conservatives are hiding facts about the mission in Afghanistan, and trade agreements are being negotiated behind closed doors.

While the department of Conservative propaganda, also known as the Prime Minister's Office, launches a costly charm offensive, over 50 municipalities across the country have voiced their concerns about the trade agreement with the European Union. The municipalities are concerned about their jobs and local economies.

Will the Conservatives raise Canadians' concerns during these negotiations, or are they too busy trying to push the deal through?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we obviously believe that trade is an important part of expanding economic growth and creating jobs, hope and opportunity. We are working closely with the provinces to negotiate a free trade agreement with the European Union. We think there are a lot of jobs, hope and opportunity for Canadians in this and we are going to continue to promote trade.

The NDP has been very consistent. It opposes trade with every other country in the world. We want a big Canada, not a little Canada.

Oral Questions

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats are in favour of trade. What we are opposed to is selling out Canada.

Canada was built on trade. We believe in trade deals that are actually good for our communities and businesses. However, from softwood lumber to buy American—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Ottawa Centre has the floor.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, from softwood lumber to buy American, Conservatives have a very poor track record as negotiators. Instead of spending their time on these bizarre anti-NDP propaganda tours, why do they not negotiate some responsible trade deals?

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the truth is that the NDP members are ideologically opposed to trade. They do not get it, they do not understand it and they do not like it. The government is focused on the priorities of Canadians because we know that we can drive economic growth through trade.

As we are negotiating the free trade agreement with the European Union, we know that it is going to present significant benefits to Canadians with a 20% increase in trade, 80,000 new jobs and \$12 billion of increased GDP. What is it about trade that the NDP does not get?

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a follow-up. One in five Canadian jobs is generated by trade. That is why our government is leading the way in one of the most ambitious trade plans in Canadian history. With over 500 million consumers, the EU is the world's largest market.

I know the Minister of International Trade would like again to update this House on the negotiations and how this trade plan would positively affect Canadian workers, businesses and families across this great country of Canada.

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend, the member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, for his great work on the trade committee.

A free trade agreement with the European Union would create tremendous opportunities for Canadians. That is why today, at events right across our country, we are highlighting the benefits of a trade agreement for Canadian workers and their families, including, as I said earlier, the creation of some 80,000 new jobs.

Canadians are not buying the anti-trade myth machine of the NDP. Our government understands what the opposition does not, and that is that trade is the new stimulus.

* * *

• (1145)

[Translation]

POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in Papineau, in 2008, significant amounts of money were given to the Conservatives by an individual by the name of Michael Chamas

—also known as “the banker”— who is now on the run over a drug deal.

The Conservative candidate admitted that this man, who went by false names, gave thousands of dollars to his campaign. The Conservatives broke the law by accepting this money, and they made no bones about keeping it.

Will they return all the illegal donations from this individual? How many other campaigns were financed using dirty money?

[English]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course the Conservative Party did no such thing. The member knows full well that these allegations relate to a local riding association. The Conservative Party does not have access to information about any such donations. Anyone with information suggesting the law has been broken should provide that information to the appropriate authorities. I would encourage the member to do that.

The Conservative Party of Canada respects all Elections Canada requirements for fundraising.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is not all. This dubious affair comes on top of an already scandalous week for this government: five-star limousines for the mimosa minister and never-ending revelations about the F-35s, not to mention the ongoing investigation of the minister of conflict of interest, and I could go on.

The Ethics Commissioner's office is running out of staff to properly investigate all the Conservative excesses. It feels like a festival of scandals.

When will the Prime Minister put his foot down and bring back a responsible, ethical culture within his government and his cabinet?

[English]

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member uses the word “dubious”. Here is what is dubious. It is dubious for the member for Winnipeg Centre to make baseless smears against Canadians across this country and then have to apologize. It is the same for the member for Acadie—Bathurst, who made accusations against the Minister of Labour that the ethics commissioner slammed.

Oral Questions

It is also dubious to accept tens of thousands of dollars of illegal union contributions for its annual general meeting the way the NDP did, and then cover it up and hide it by not even presenting those economic records to Elections Canada so it can investigate it. I look forward to that party providing those records to Elections Canada.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives play in a scandal like it is a team sport. Let us look at their 2012 season alone.

The President of the Treasury Board got off to an early start with more Muskoka money mix-ups, with the pinch runner, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, picking up the slack. Then the Minister of National Defence landed in left field in a chopper, no less. The Minister of Industry just keeps striking out.

Why has the Prime Minister not benched any of these minor league ministers?

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is interesting. I have a slightly different run of events since January.

The NDP started out with a caucus that was just slightly larger than the one it has today, probably because following its leadership campaign, the former patron saint of the NDP, Mr. Broadbent, came out and warned people not to put a given individual into leadership.

We now see some of the reaction to that. We have a couple of members of the NDP who are sitting elsewhere because they are not allowed to express their views. They are not allowed to vote on behalf of their constituents. That is the record I am focusing on, an NDP out of touch with Canadians.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative scandal season hit an all-new low this week. The Minister of International Cooperation was called out when her orange juice, limos and five-star hotels caught up with her. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister did not send her back to the benches, where she could learn how to play the game right. Maybe the Prime Minister was too busy striking out on yesterday's history lesson to be the coach his team needs.

Sports fans across the country want to know: when did their government become so bush league?

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we have mentioned several times this week, the minister in question has apologized and has repaid all inappropriate expenses.

Our government continues to respect the taxpayers and the taxpayer dollar. We have done that continuously in the past and we will do it in the future. We have reduced travel expenses by all ministers across the board by 15%. As I mentioned in a previous question, hospitality expenses have been reduced by 33%, totalling \$18 million from the previous Liberal government.

That is a track record that all taxpayers in Canada should be proud of.

● (1150)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 150 pages of the 400-page budget implementation bill are devoted to the destruction of 50 years of environmental safeguards. The bill repeals the Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act, weakens laws protecting species at risk and water, and gives cabinet authority to approve new pipeline projects over the National Energy Board.

Will the Minister of the Environment do the right thing and allow these changes to be separated from the omnibus bill and be publicly scrutinized at appropriate committees?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the right thing. The right thing is not signing on to a grand international agreement and actually seeing greenhouse gas emissions rise under a government's tenure. Our government is taking a balanced approach to economic growth and environmental stewardship, a principle that the opposition parties do not understand.

With regard to the budget implementation bill, it is scrutinized under the finance committee where it belongs. A subcommittee will be struck to do so.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, astonishingly, the Minister of Natural Resources is proud of legislation that will gut environmental protection.

Could the Minister of the Environment explain how slashing 200 positions from Environment Canada, cutting research and monitoring initiatives in air pollution and water quality, and cutting the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency by 43% is protecting the environment? Is he ashamed?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if my colleague opposite delved into the budget that she is maligning at length, she would note that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act received increased funding this year, yet she voted against it. Maybe she should take a little time to review the budget first.

Our government is the first government in a long time that has actually cared about the environment. When will that member vote to support our government's budgetary measures to support R and D and clean technology, clean water management and our world-class air quality management system?

*Oral Questions***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, funding for the aboriginal justice strategy reached its sunset date on March 31. The Minister of Justice has not said a word yet about new funding for this program. Crime prevention, youth gang strategies and restorative justice programs are at risk in over 600 communities across the country. Organizations are already laying off staff.

Why the silence from the minister on this important program?

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to enhancing the safety and security of aboriginal communities.

Our budget has proposed funding of \$11.9 million over one year for the family violence prevention program, which would allow the department of aboriginal affairs to continue to offer current programming at a total budget of \$30.4 million. This investment would contribute to the safety and security of ongoing reserve residents, particularly women and children.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal justice strategy was an investment in crime prevention that was working. The Department of Justice's own study showed in communities with these programs, repeat crime was reduced by half. I do not know of any other investment that could show such a return. The minister himself praised this program at committee last month and told MPs to wait for the budget and see what would happen. We have waited, and there is nothing.

When will the minister support real crime prevention that we desperately need in our communities?

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess the member opposite just cannot take yes for an answer.

I would like to remind the House about how the opposition members have been voting lately on justice issues. They voted against mandatory minimum penalties for child sexual offences. They voted against tougher penalties for child kidnapping. They voted against eliminating house arrest for sexual assault. Most recent, they have been unsuccessful in delaying a bill to crack down on human traffickers.

What can we talk about justice from that party?

* * *

• (1155)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we awoke to sad news out of Ukraine today. A series of explosions rocked the town of Dnepropetrovsk. Reports suggest that dozens of people were injured. Terrorism is suspected.

Could the Minister of Foreign Affairs please update the House on this situation and Canada's response?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his long-standing interest in Ukraine.

It is indeed a sad situation, and our thoughts are with the victims and their families. Canada condemns these cowardly acts, without

reservation, and supports efforts to bring those responsible to justice swiftly. The investigation must, however, be free and fair of political interference. We are also strongly encouraging the Ukrainian government not to use this unfortunate situation as a pretext to curtail basic freedoms, such as freedoms of expression.

Canada denounces terrorism in all of its forms and stands with those engaged in fighting it.

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[*Translation*]

AIR CANADA

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on March 23, the mayors of Montreal, Winnipeg and Mississauga wrote to the Prime Minister, asking him to bring the parties together to ensure that Air Canada's repair and maintenance centres remain in their cities, in accordance with the Air Canada Public Participation Act.

Is it not shameful that over a month has passed and the mayors of those cities have received no reply, not even an acknowledgement of receipt? Is this because of negligence, arrogance or both?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our position on this matter is clear: Air Canada still has its maintenance centres in the cities the member mentioned.

The decision to shutdown Aveos is up to its owners. We are talking about two private independent corporations.

Our position has been clear from the beginning. Since this matter is before the courts, for Aveos in particular, we have no further comments to make.

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WELFARE

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the last budget, the Conservatives announced that subsidies to the National Council of Welfare will end in 2013-14, forcing it to close its doors, yet, the Council's role is to advise the government on matters pertaining to poverty.

We can imagine that losing this expertise suits the government just fine. However, we truly need the council's research in order to implement more effective measures to fight poverty in Canada.

Will the Conservatives reconsider their decision or will they once again abandon the poor?

Routine Proceedings

[English]

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a government, we continue to take poverty seriously. That is why we are investing in skills and training and support for families in every part of Canada, so they, each and every one, have the opportunity to participate fully in the economy.

Through our review of the programs that the government offers, we recognized that there was some duplication of effort. That is not an efficient or effective use of taxpayer's dollars. Therefore, we are streamlining processes. We are ensuring that the duplication is gone and that taxpayers get the best possible value for their money.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 1997 the former Liberal government signed on to the Kyoto protocol, saddling Canada with unachievable job-destroying targets, and proceeded to do nothing for a decade while our greenhouse gas emissions rose by some 30%.

In contrast, our government has committed to working with our international partners on a responsible, realistic plan to achieve real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Could the parliamentary secretary update the House on Canada's progress in achieving our goals under the Copenhagen agreement?

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government recently published our country's 2010 inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. While our economy grew by a rate of 3.2% in 2009-10, our greenhouse gas emissions held steady.

In spite of the rhetoric we hear from the NDP and the unfettered growth of greenhouse gas emissions that we saw under the previous Liberal government, through our government's balanced approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through our sector-by-sector regulatory approach that does not shut down wholesale sectors of the economy, as the NDP would have, we are seeing real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Our plan is working.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, cutting the Internet community access program will leave disadvantaged groups without access to information and government programs.

Just 54% of low-income households have access to the Internet. The Conservatives can afford to pay for \$700-a-night hotel rooms, but not all families can afford to pay \$50 a month for Internet service.

Does the minister really believe that funding Internet access in libraries and community centres is not necessary?

[English]

Mr. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, the community access program was launched in 1995 and has successfully met its objectives.

Free computers will still be made available, however, through the federal government's computers for schools program, which collects, repairs and refurbishes donated surplus computers from government and private-sector sources and distributes them to schools, public libraries and not-for-profit learning organizations throughout Canada.

For Canadians who have been using a CAP site to access federal government services and are seeking alternatives to these sites, Service Canada offers single-window access to a wide range of Government of Canada programs and services for citizens through more than 600 points of service located across the country.

* * *

● (1200)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I note that it is outrageous for the parliamentary secretary to attempt to claim credit for her government's actions for reduced greenhouse gases. It is entirely due to Ontario shutting its coal plants.

Meanwhile, let us compare and contrast. Bill C-36, which we are debating today, is three paragraphs. Bill C-38 is 420 pages of omnibus abuse of parliamentary process, pushing changes to environmental laws that will never go before an environment committee and never go before a fisheries committee.

I ask the Prime Minister to separate out bills that matter to the environment so the appropriate committees can deal with them.

Ms. Michelle Rempel (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague opposite that what is included in the budget implementation act is reviewed through the finance committee. As we said earlier, this will be reviewed through a subcommittee at finance.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 38(6) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to nine petitions.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human rights regarding Bill C-304, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act (protecting freedom).

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House.

[English]

FINANCE

Hon. Gordon O'Connor (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations on the following travel motion. I move:

That, in relation to its study on the pre-budget consultations 2012, twelve members of the Standing Committee on Finance be authorized to travel to Washington, D.C., United States of America, and New York, New York, United States of America, in the spring of 2012, and that the necessary staff accompany the Committee.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today to present a petition from the people of Kitchener Centre.

The petitioners point out that Canada's 400-year-old definition of a human being that says a child does not become human being until the moment of complete birth is contrary to 21st century medical evidence. They say that Parliament has a solemn duty to reject any law that says some human beings are not human.

They therefore call upon the House of Commons and Parliament to amend section 223 of the Criminal Code in such a way as to reflect 21st century medical evidence

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with hundreds of names in support of my bill C-322.

The petitioners state that horses are ordinarily kept and treated as sport and companion animals. They are not raised primarily as food-producing animals. They are commonly administered drugs such as phenylbutazone, which makes the meat unfit for human consumption.

Therefore, they call upon the House to bring forward and adopt into legislation Bill C-322, An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act and the Meat Inspection Act (slaughter of horses for human consumption), thus prohibiting the importation or exportation of horses for slaughter for human consumption as well as horsemeat products for human consumption.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition regarding CCSVI. While the government lags 60 other countries in treatment for CCSVI, it does allow people with MS to take Genelia and Tysabri.

Health Canada is now reviewing Genelia after it was linked to 11 deaths outside Canada. The new recommendations are that it should not be given to patients with a history of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease.

Tysabri was fast-tracked by the government despite the fact that it was known to cause the fatal brain infection PML. As of April 2012, there have been 232 cases of PML worldwide, and 49 have died.

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

• (1205)

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, today I have the honour to present a petition signed by 1,100 people from Sherbrooke who are rallying behind a man who is being deported tomorrow morning. They are calling on us to proclaim loud and clear our complete disagreement with and utter disbelief over the government's decision to deport Jorge Alberto Castro, who has been living in Canada for three and a half years.

I hope this further encourages the Minister of Immigration to change his decision. Everyone in Sherbrooke is rallying behind this resident in order to have him stay here. I hope this will have an impact.

[English]

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege for me to present three petitions today that follow up Motion No. 312.

The first petition was given to me by Strathroy and District Right to Life organization. It is asking for a special committee to be appointed and directed to review the declaration in subsection 223(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada, which states that a child becomes a human being only at the moment of complete birth.

The second petition is on behalf of the Association for Reformed Political Action, Chatham division, asking for the House of Commons to confirm that every human being is recognized by Canadian law as human by amending section 223 of the Criminal Code in such a way as to reflect 21st century medical evidence.

The last petition is from the Strathroy-London division of the Association for Reformed Political Action. It calls for the House of Commons to confirm that every human being is recognized by Canadian law as human by amending section 223 of the Criminal Code in such a way to reflect 21st century medical evidence.

[Translation]

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. José Nunez-Melo (Laval, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is my privilege and honour to present a petition signed by a number of Canadians regarding Bill C-322. As you know, animal welfare is closely related to the health of Canadians. That is why I am honoured to present such a petition.

[English]

AIR CANADA

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first one calls upon the House of Commons to take the action needed to hold Air Canada accountable to the Air Canada Public Participation Act. It should be taken into consideration that we are talking about thousands of Canadians who are unemployed and that they are very valuable jobs, in particular for the provinces of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

PENSIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the second petition is with regard to the pension issue. Constituents and others are asking that people continue to have the option to retire at the age of 65 and that the government not in any way diminish the importance and value of Canada's three major seniors programs, the OAS, GIS and CPP.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mrs. Kelly Block (Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Canadians, most of whom are from the beautiful city of Saskatoon and many of the towns and communities surrounding the city. The petitioners ask that the Government of Canada call upon the government of Pakistan to repeal their blasphemy laws in their current form, provide protection to people of all faiths and reject any notion of banning the Bible.

Additionally, the petitioners ask that the Government of Canada call on the government of Pakistan to release Asia Bibi, as well as others imprisoned under these laws.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am presenting a petition from a number of Canadians who state that as the undersigned citizens, they draw the attention of the House to the following: that horses are ordinarily kept and treated as sport and companion animals, that horses are not raised primarily as food-producing animals, that horses are commonly administered drugs that are strictly prohibited from being used at any time in all other food-producing animals destined for the human food supply and that Canadian horsemeat products currently being sold for human consumption in domestic and international markets are likely to contain prohibited substances. Therefore, the petitions call on the

Routine Proceedings

House of Commons to bring forward and adopt into legislation Bill C-322, an act to amend the Health of Animals Act and the Meat Inspection Act (slaughter of horses for human consumption), thus prohibiting the importation or exportation of horses for slaughter for human consumption.

• (1210)

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I rise today to present two petitions.

The first is from residents throughout British Columbia from within my own riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands, as well as from Prince George, Nelson, Vancouver, Port Alberni, Surrey, Maple Ridge and Chilliwack. There over 500 signatures on this petition, which calls on the House to ensure that the CBC, as our national public broadcaster, has stable, predictable funding to be able to continue to hold this country together across the airwaves.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, the second petition is primarily from Ontario residents in the Guelph area, and a few from Toronto. I am grateful that Canadians from coast to coast are taking an interest in helping to ensure that British Columbians do not have to bear all of the burden and all the risks and damage of the pipeline and supertanker scheme that is being proposed by Enbridge and so violently supported by the government. The petitioners ask that the review process be allowed to continue in a fair and impartial manner.

[Translation]

OLD AGE SECURITY

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to present two petitions. The first is signed by residents of several cities in the Montreal region, including Sainte-Thérèse, Boisbriand and Terrebonne.

The people who signed this petition believe that the changes to old age security constitute a direct attack on the poorest seniors who depend on this money for their daily needs. These people are asking the House of Commons to maintain funding for old age security and to make the necessary investments in the guaranteed income supplement to help all seniors escape poverty.

FALUN GONG

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to present a second petition signed by a number of Quebecers, most of whom live in Longueuil.

They are asking the Government of Canada to publicly condemn the Chinese communist regime for its illegal persecution of Falun Gong and to save members of Canadian families mentioned in the petition who are incarcerated in China just because they are Falun Gong adherents.

Government Orders

OLD AGE SECURITY

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Madam Speaker, I recently visited some residents in the Quebec City region who were worried about the cuts to old age security announced by the Conservatives.

Today, I have the honour of tabling a petition signed by over 500 people in the riding of Louis-Saint-Laurent who are opposed to funding for old age security being cut. In fact, they are aware that the experts say this public pension program, which works to combat poverty directly, is financially viable—because that is what the experts say. They are therefore calling not only for this program to be continued in its present form, but also for the guaranteed income supplement to be increased so that seniors are able to escape from poverty.

* * *

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Madam Speaker, if Questions Nos. 521 and 523 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 521—**Mr. Malcolm Allen:**

With respect to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA): (a) at any one time during the years 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, what were the highest and lowest total numbers of CFIA inspectors employed in the delivery of Compliance Verification System (CVS) tasks at federally-registered (i) slaughter establishments, (ii) non-slaughter meat processing establishments; (b) what were the highest and lowest total numbers of full-time equivalent CFIA inspectors engaged in the delivery of CVS tasks at federally-registered slaughter and non-slaughter meat processing establishments at any one time during the years 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; (c) what were the highest and lowest total numbers of staff employed by the CFIA for the years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; (d) what was the average frequency of complete control system audits in federally-registered meat processing plants for the years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; (e) how many full audits took place at the Maple Leaf Foods Bartor Road plant in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; and (f) what was the average frequency of full audits for each sector covered under the CFIA's inspection mandate (meat, fish, dairy, eggs, processed products, fruits and vegetables, etc.) for the years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 523—**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims:**

With respect to contribution agreements transferred from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in January 2010: (a) how many contribution agreements were transferred; (b) for each project involving a contribution agreement that was transferred, what was (i) the name of each client, (ii) the description of the project, (iii) the duration of the project, (iv) the country where the project was located, (v) the total cost of project, (vi) the amount contributed by the government for the project; and (c) for each project involving a contribution agreement that was transferred, (i) was the project selected for formal audit, (ii) was the project selected for formal evaluation, (iii) has a results report been submitted for the project?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PROTECTING CANADA'S SENIORS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-36, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (elder abuse), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for York West has 15 minutes remaining, following by a 10-minute question and comment period.

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to add to my comments in regard to Bill C-36.

Bill C-36, the “protecting Canada's seniors act”, sounds good and has a great title but delivers very little. It is very similar to many other pieces of legislation in that the government puts great titles on them, but in effect we have to look at what they accomplish at the end of the day.

It is rather remarkable that with such a broad title, the bill itself is one paragraph and only changes sentencing considerations. Again we are into that same continuing mode of how we can punish people rather than how we can prevent some of these things from happening.

It is just one sentence. That is all it is in the context of what the change is. It is too little, too late. Given that Bill C-36 only proposes a change in sentencing, the bill does not actually protect seniors, which is what I think is what many of us in the House, the government included, are probably concerned about, and it only comes into effect once a crime has been committed. That is too little, too late. This bill does nothing to prevent crime, nor does it protect seniors from becoming victims of crime, which is something that I believe many of us would like to see looked at on a more serious level.

It is also worth mentioning that bias on the basis of age is already a sentencing factor in section 718.2 of the Criminal Code. Bill C-36, unfortunately, adds nothing new. We already have the opportunity. Again it sounds as if we are addressing something, but we are not.

Bill C-36 is far too broad. The language in this legislation is broad and vague. While I am not a lawyer, I have been here long enough to understand that “broad and vague” means that there will be considerable court time and legal wrangling before any provision is going to take hold and before it is able to help anybody.

Government Orders

Victimized seniors do not have the time or the resources to wait. I would have preferred to have the government deliver a far more targeted and comprehensive piece of legislation that would look seriously at this issue. We need to focus less on sounding as though we are doing something positive and focus more on actually doing what is necessary to help protect vulnerable seniors.

I am also troubled by the fact that Bill C-36 requires evidence that the offence had a significant impact on the victim. Just imagine how difficult that is going to be, because a lot of this is emotional abuse that comes in addition to, for example, financial abuse from misappropriation of funds from a senior or whatever. Evidence that it has had a significant impact is going to be very difficult to prove.

Let us imagine having to prove that a criminal offence committed against someone caused an impact on them. It probably has a lot to do with the emotional impact it would have, especially on an elderly person. Seniors living in poverty will have to figure how they are going to prove in court that one of their children or a caregiver was abusive to them. The seniors are going to have to go and give evidence to that fact.

Why should any senior be required to have to prove that a crime against them has injured them? Surely every criminal act has a significant impact on any victim, whether the victim is elderly or not. This should be understood as a basic, fundamental principle in our Criminal Code.

Let us try to keep our eye on the ball on this issue. I understand the need to prove that a crime occurred, but forcing seniors to provide proof that they have been victimized in this manner runs counter to seniors' interests. In many cases they are very vulnerable people who have gotten to a particular time when they are not as confident as they would have been in their earlier years, and there may be the added challenges of poverty or poor health; putting them in the position of having to convince a court that they have been victimized really seems to go against what all of us want to achieve.

● (1215)

The bill effectively requires a judge to consider both the health and financial situation when sentencing. To do this, one could easily require evidence to be given for both. This means that a court would have to probe into areas that were not necessarily matters at trial, and which the senior involved does not wish to speak about or have become part of the public record. In reality, Bill C-36 could easily put seniors who have already been victimized into a situation where their finances and medical records become the subject at a public trial.

In simple words, this legislation is inadequate. The provision of Bill C-36 only becomes active once a crime has been committed. Our focus needs to be on prevention of crime, whether we are talking about young people throughout Canada or elsewhere. It should be about prevention and not just about punishment.

The bill presupposes that the abuse has been reported to police, which is often not the case, that there has been a trial, which again often is not the case, and that the matter is criminal, which is seldom the case. In areas such as wills, estates, contracts signed under duress, and other important civil matters, this legislation is clearly silent.

What could we do on this issue?

If the government is serious about preventing elder abuse, it should be focusing on the following areas. It should address the low rates of pay typically available to caregivers. Quality care choices would go a long way toward reducing abuse of seniors. It should allow financially for family members to care for loved ones. It should reverse the lack of regulatory oversight of institutions. This is a significant problem in Canada. It should promote proactive educational efforts and monitoring of elder abuse. It should provide more resources for affordable, quality seniors housing. Most important, the government should not slash the primary income source for most seniors, the old age security, OAS. Never mind slashing it; we are talking about moving the eligibility age to 67 years which would make people work longer and wait longer.

The Liberal Party believes that vulnerable seniors are in need of protection from elder abuse, but Bill C-36 unfortunately does not accomplish this. Measures should be adopted to prevent elder abuse before the crime occurs, and that does not mean spending who knows how many millions of dollars on TV ads, but what we can do to prevent it from happening.

Clearly we need to protect our vulnerable seniors. While this Criminal Code change is supportable, it is a far cry from what is actually necessary to protect Canada's seniors who surely merit more than a questionably effective change to one paragraph in the Criminal Code.

We need to ensure that seniors are protected against abuse. While I understand that this is no easy feat, I would have hoped that the government, with all the talk and words it bounces around, would have done more than just introduce a change to one paragraph in the Criminal Code to penalize after the fact.

We need to be investing far more resources before these issues happen and make sure that our seniors have a better quality of life. This starts with the OAS and GIS and with the proper dollars and cents. Seniors also need safe, adequate housing and access to affordable quality caregivers to look after them and ensure that they are not subjected to elder abuse, which is something we are all very concerned about.

● (1220)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to bring up a point that arose several times in my colleague's presentation, which was that one paragraph is not enough in the bill that has been introduced and that we support. That paragraph is actually quite short.

Some more "modern" abuse, for example aggressive telemarketing, can be even worse when it targets seniors. We know about cases, including in my riding. These are recent cases involving certain companies and certain political organizations in Canada.

Should cases like that be addressed in detail in a future bill so it is clear?

Government Orders

• (1225)

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Madam Speaker, a variety of things could be put into that piece of legislation which are not there.

It is interesting that the member raised the issue of telemarketing. It is a problem for many people, but especially for the elderly who get phone calls telling them all kinds of different things. They get very alarmed. It is something that needs to be looked at more aggressively. It can be very abusive to older people, especially if they get a phone call from someone claiming to be from a bank or someone is trying to sell them something. They get phone calls telling them that they could save all this money with another way to heat their homes. It is probably completely fraudulent. Those are all forms of abuse that we need to more seriously address.

If there were an opportunity to amend Bill C-36 in that way, it would be welcomed.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I know my colleague has a special place in her heart for seniors issues. In listening to her in regard to Bill C-36, I believe she cares enough to look at the bill and recognize there are many things the government could have done to address the issue of elder abuse both directly and indirectly. It could have made a real difference. Elder abuse takes many different forms.

For the Conservatives to have been in government for a number of years and then to come up with this, it is interesting. There is a bit of irony here. We have this relatively simple, straightforward bill and yet we have the action the government is taking in regard to OAS, increasing the age of eligibility from 65 to 67 years. I would suggest that in time that will put more seniors into poverty, which will lead to more elder abuse.

Maybe the member could comment on that.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Madam Speaker, I found it quite interesting that the government put forward this bill at a time when we are dealing with the proposed change from age 65 to 67 years regarding OAS. For many that is another form of abuse.

The president of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities said at a recent round table that many of the disabled in Canada look to age 65 when they can get out of poverty. Many of them are living on a minimum amount of income and barely can make that do. They are probably living on \$8,000 or \$9,000 a year. When they reach 65 years old, if they have no other income, they will get the OAS and the CPP, or whatever, which would probably bring their income up \$2,000 or \$3,000 more. They look to being 65 so they can get out of poverty. That is such a condemning comment from the president of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities.

When we are talking about elder abuse, that is another form of abuse. The government will be forcing people, maybe not today's seniors but tomorrow's seniors, to wait until age 67.

There should be more investment in housing. If we had more seniors' housing in Canada where people had a safe place to live, they probably would be less vulnerable to the kind of abuse that a lot of us have heard about. Educational opportunities could be provided for them. They should be provided with money so they can get out

into the community and take advantage of the health and wellness opportunities, such as going to local community centres. Having that social interaction would reduce elder abuse because people would be interacting with one another. Those are opportunities for seniors to continue to contribute to society, which I know many of them want to do.

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Madam Speaker, I had the honour of being a member of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women with my Liberal colleague. We heard a number of witnesses in the course of a study on the abuse of older women. We had witnesses tell us that there had been cuts to women's rights organizations.

Since my colleague spoke about prevention, which could also improve the situation, I would like to ask her whether she thinks cuts of this type have damaged the situation—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member from York West.

• (1230)

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague and I sat on a committee together and did some reasonably good work on a report which at some point will be tabled in the House. The report could have been much stronger and much more effective, but we did not have the time to go into those kinds of details.

The organizations throughout Canada that are having their funding cut are the same organizations that would have been dealing with seniors, that would have been there in a very proactive way to help people to prevent the issue of elder abuse.

Spending millions of dollars on fancy TV ads does alert people to the issue of elder abuse, but what do we do to prevent it? Bill C-36 would not prevent any of that. Investing in many of our community organizations that would be alert to where seniors are, what is going on with them and what is happening in their lives would be helpful. Seniors need someone to talk to about their concerns, such as about money missing out of their bank accounts and possibly family members abusing their privilege. It often happens. Unfortunately, much of that funding to many of those organizations is being cut.

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have worked with the member on issues relating to seniors and pensions over the last number of years. She knows the file fairly well.

One of the things that occurs in this place quite regularly is members on the government side talk about all the things they have done for seniors. They list a number of things they have done, but most of those things seem to apply to the more affluent seniors, the seniors who already have full pensions or some resources saved over the years.

It seems to me the Conservatives have missed the mark, that they are not taking care of the lower income seniors to any degree at all. I would like to hear the member's comments on that.

Government Orders

Hon. Judy Sgro: Madam Speaker, I have yet to see the government do much for those who are at the lower end of the spectrum, whether they be seniors or families in general.

Clearly, it is the more affluent Canadians, the more affluent seniors for whom the government is much more in tune to doing things. It leaves a whole segment out of the picture. Almost 50% of Canadian seniors live on less than \$25,000 a year. That gives me grave concern, as I know it does many of our colleagues.

On the issues of elder abuse and poverty, it takes away the pride in our country when we find out how many seniors are suffering and are living on \$12,000 to \$14,000 a year. Maybe in the future things will be different, but clearly forcing people to work until the age of 67 before they get their pension is not an issue of sustainability, it is an issue of choice.

When a party is in government, it makes all the choices it wants, and it will have to stand before the electorate and justify those choices.

I will be able to stand with our party in saying that we believe people should get their pensions at age 65. If people want to work, God bless them, they should be able to work as many years as they want, but that should be their choice. We will continue to support people getting the pension at age 65, and given the opportunity to form government, we will make sure it stays at 65.

[Translation]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, what does my hon. colleague think about the NDP's proposal to increase the guaranteed income supplement so that no seniors should have to live in poverty?

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Madam Speaker, the guaranteed income supplement, the OAS, the CPP and the spouse's allowance were all initiatives introduced by Liberal governments. I can only say thank goodness for all of that. Thank goodness for the foresight of Liberal governments and Liberal prime ministers, who brought in the kinds of programs that would reduce the number people in poverty.

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Madam Speaker, after the last comment, I cannot help but interject at this point. Yes, the Liberals did bring in OAS, but OAS was proposed by J.S. Woodsworth in 1926. Yes, they did bring in the Canada pension plan but that was suggested by Stanley Knowles in this place. That is just an example of how we have worked together over the years on these files. However, for the Liberals to take exclusive credit for it, I find that quite interesting.

The NDP supports the bill but with reservations. There are changes that will do some things to protect seniors but there is so much more. How do we define supporting and protecting seniors? There is a lot more to it than laying charges.

We made proposals during the 2000 election campaign in reference to seniors, and further on in my remarks I will speak to that a little more.

My generation looked for the good in people, and in those days we found it. However, to some extent I think the same people of that generation are now failing seniors, their parents. Oftentimes we find

that because of the aging process, the number of illnesses seniors have and, in some cases, even the outcome of medications, these have caused them to slow down in their thinking process and, to some degree, even act a little like children. Members may recall, with their parents, as with mine, and others as we were growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, that our parents were very patient with us. They listened to us, helped us to develop and they protected us. Now it is our turn because some of our parents are very much like the children we once were and we owe them that return of patience that is lacking in this fast paced society.

The government can legislate some things and put in punitive laws that will punish people for the mistakes they make but as a society we need to look into this matter even further.

In my role as a parliamentarian, I often try to bring to this place some of the life experiences I have or family members or friends have because we need to bring the discussion down to the place where it is actually happening. We have a forum here where we discuss things and oftentimes the rhetoric or debate gets heated and there are a variety of things that impede us from telling the true stories of Canadians. In this case, I will tell a bit of the story of my own mother.

My mother, through a series of illnesses and needing prescriptions with fairly strong chemicals in them, as she aged we could see her mental capacity start to diminish. For a variety of reasons, I had not seen her in a number of years. She was on the east coast. In fact, I had been estranged from her from the age of 12 to the age of about 40. Just prior to my reconnecting with her, she had been in a nursing home in New Brunswick, which we found out had her sleeping in the laundry room in the basement and there was some evidence that perhaps she had been chained to a laundry tub. Fortunately, I had cousins back east who discovered this and moved her to a much finer place in Saint John, New Brunswick. I commend the New Brunswick government of the day because at that time there were processes in place that when she got into the newer facility its prices were fairly high and she did not have the resources to cover it all and that government provided assistance. Therefore, the remaining about 10 years of her life were lived out in relative comfort and in the hands of provincial workers in that registered nursing home who gave her the kind of support and care that we should be giving to all parents.

When I go from consideration of what happened to my own mother in this instance, I start looking at what happens to other seniors. Elder abuse takes lots of forms.

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•(1235)

I was just recently assigned a new critic area but I previously was the critic for pensions and seniors and I held 47 meetings on pensions in my community over a three year period. My travel has taken me to a variety of places. I was in Elliot Lake where I spoke with a 75-year-old woman who was trying to get by in her own apartment on her own means. She was making \$1,160 a month if I remember correctly. She took me aside because she did not want her neighbours and friends to know that she was worried about how the HST in Ontario would affect her. She had a hydro bill of approximately \$2,000 a year and was looking at paying roughly \$150 more a year. While that appears to be a small number to most of us, it was a huge amount for her. How can we not call that elder abuse?

Three hundred thousand seniors across this country live below the poverty line of \$22,000 a year. I have heard the figure \$25,000 a year but most seniors are making in the area of just over \$15,000 a year. If people are making \$1,100 a month, they need to pause in terms of where they are living, how they are living and what choices they are making.

The New Democratic Party repeatedly questions the government about the choices it makes. We as parliamentarians need to back up and really give serious consideration to the choices that our seniors have to make when they are living in poverty.

I was standing in line at a pharmacy waiting for a prescription a while back and there was a young man ahead of me. The young man was living in poverty and he had to make a choice. He had serious back pain and needed a muscle relaxant and something to address the pain itself but he could not afford both prescriptions. He had to make a choice. Seniors are like that except that their choices are far more fundamental. They must choose between eating or buying a prescription. A lot of things in the province of Ontario happen to be covered but not every senior in every place in this country has that kind of protection. Some seniors have to make choices as to how to dress.

Over the years I have gone into the homes of family and friends whose elderly parents have passed away and they are starting to distribute their parents goods, perhaps to some poorer people in the community. However, when they open the closets they find one or two dresses or a coat not fitting for Canada's weather. They wonder how they missed that? How as a society did we miss that?

We need to back up and look at choices. The government has made a necessary choice with this legislation and part of that necessary choice is to ensure that there is acknowledgement of and punishment for people who abuse. However, we need to stop and think about this for a moment. We need to think about seniors who are dependent on a child or a friend to take care of them. My wife goes regularly to London from Hamilton to take an aunt to a grocery store or to medical appointments. However, we need to think about those seniors who are dependent on someone who abuses them. They have another choice to make. What do they do or say if they lose the only support they have in the community?

In the last election campaign, the NDP members talked about things that we could do within our communities to help seniors stay

in their homes, such as pharmacare, and to ensure they are protected. We talked about things that would make the choices for seniors somewhat easier. We talked about a \$700 million boost to the guaranteed income supplement, which would have equated to about \$200 a month for people in the worst case situation, 75% of whom were women who stayed at home to raise their families and never managed to get into the Canada pension plan. All they had was OAS-GIS of roughly \$1,100 a month.

•(1240)

When we said that the GIS should be increased by \$200, the response from the government was an increase of the \$50 that I referred to before. Yes, it was something. We hear the litany of things that have been done. I mentioned earlier that some of the things that have happened here seem to address the so-called needs of more well-to-do seniors. However, we need to bring the focus back to where it belongs. We need to take care of our most vulnerable first. However, in Canada today, sadly, our seniors are among the most vulnerable.

During the election campaign, the New Democrats made a number of proposals. We talked about an elder abuse hotline. Can seniors talk about the abuse that is happening to them without naming names? Is there some way of getting mitigation between the fact that if they report that family member or that friend specifically, that family member or friend could face some kind of charge and, thus, they would be very reluctant to do it? Or, is there some way to manage this thing or to help them through a hotline that they could call? We also talked about an elder abuse consultant. The Government of Manitoba has worked with this type of initiative and I understand it has been very successful.

However, we also, like the government, and it is not often I compare us with the government, talked about changes to the Criminal Code of Canada to ensure there were appropriate sentences for the perpetrators of this elder abuse. Contrary to the thinking of the government, the NDP does agree that we need to put consequences into place for seniors' abusers, which is why we are supporting this legislation from the government.

I would like to reference a report from the ad hoc parliamentary committee on palliative and compassionate care. It indicates that between 4% and 10% of seniors experience some kind of elder abuse in their lifetime.

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We often talk, and rightly so, about battered women and how one in four is battered. We have statistics here that are very close to that. This is almost like a silent situation that has been there for years. I guess most of us do not want to believe that somebody could actually strike a senior. However, beyond the physical, there is the mental abuse. I guess I would have to commend the government. I do not like the expense it has incurred for the TV ads that show elder abuse because I think the money could have been more appropriately used. However, we do see in those ads the mental anguish caused by the browbeating of a senior just by the use of words.

When I was a younger person, before I grew up in many ways, I used to actually shout people down. I did not realize I was doing it. I never thought about the damage I was doing. When I reached about 18 years of age, I kind of grew out of that and went on. However, I look back at my own personal shortcomings from time to time to remind myself that seniors can sometimes try our patience because they cannot communicate their feelings well or they get frustrated because they do not understand things, which takes me to another place just for a moment or two.

I have referred to the times I have travelled across the country to hold 47 town hall meetings on old age security. Can members imagine what the last seven were like that took place after the OAS announcement? There was about a two and a half week period where nobody knew what the government was going to do. Day in and day out, members of the NDP would ask the government whether it was going to increase the age. Our former interim leader would ask repeatedly whether it was a yes or a no, but there was no response. There was just evasiveness.

Seniors were saying that they heard their Prime Minister give a speech in Davos, Switzerland. In fairness to the Prime Minister, he did not say in that speech that he would change OAS eligibility. However, the PMO's speaking notes to reporters did, which caused consternation.

In the House we would ask about it, and there would be no response. At my meetings, people would come up and ask me what was going to happen. I would reference the fact that in 2009 we had looked at OAS and at CPP, that we had Don Drummond from TD Bank at the time, Mike McCracken and other people like that who all said that CPP was funded for 75 years and that OAS looked perfectly sustainable.

● (1245)

My response to them was that we did not know what the government had in mind at this point in time, but we realized there would be an interim period. It would not affect people today and we agreed with the government on that. However, a lot of the people still did not quite comprehend. They were fearful. They were frightened by the mismanagement and ineptitude of how this was handled. It took two full weeks before there was a fairly definite statement by the finance minister in a scrum. He said that the government may change it in 2020 or maybe 2025. The shift that occurred in the meetings was that people aged 45 to 55 said okay, but the ones within the window wondered if it would affect them.

A great concern, though, going back to seniors, is why the government allowed for that two-week window of fear for seniors, which was totally unnecessary. If it had a plan, I thought we would

have heard about it in the election, but we did not. If the Prime Minister had a plan in Davos, he should have said so and he should have been definite. Then seniors would have known and we would not have had that problem.

When I held the seven meetings, the first words out of my mouth to seniors were that they did not have to worry about OAS, that they were safe. Sixty to seventy per cent of the people in the room were seniors already on pension, and that gave them a sense of relief, but it took too long to do that.

The report I referenced before the Parliamentary Committee on Palliative and Compassionate Care had a number of other recommendations or highlights in its report. It said that any senior could become a victim of elder abuse regardless of gender, race, income or education. We have learned that about abuse over time, whether it is child abuse or spousal abuse. Oftentimes, it has to do with the status of people's income or sense of well-being because there might be a risk of the so-called breadwinner being laid off. There is a variety of things.

My generation was called the sandwich generation. My kids are in their 40s. Sometimes kids leave home and come back. Parents are pleased to help them, but on the side they have their mother or father or the spouse's mother or father and they are squeezed. That kind of pressure is added to any family, whether it is budgetary or just plain emotional. People are dealing with a level of fear.

Seniors have issues of their own. They are fearful of life out in the community because, as they age and become more fragile, fear develops. There are the young people who have to move back home because of economic circumstances. Then people have their own lives with which they are trying to deal. When we put all that together, sadly, in some instances, there is a response that leads to elder abuse.

● (1250)

Seniors, as I have come to learn over the years, are a very proud group of people. They have worked very hard for their country, they have done anything right and they have come to this place in their lives. If somebody abuses them, they feel shame. Victims often do. That is why victims oftentimes will not report it. They feel shame that perhaps their sons or daughters have done something to them that no son or daughter should ever even consider doing. That stops the victims from responding. I referenced earlier the suggestion from the NDP of having a hotline to deal with such things.

There is another word that does not get used too often, which is the love of the abusers—their children, or someone close them. I also referenced earlier the kinds of impairments some seniors have that interfere.

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The other area we need to look at, which I referenced with the situation with my mother, is how the so-called caregivers deal with the various cutbacks in services—mainly at the provincial level, to be fair to the government. A senior perhaps living alone used to have many hours of care available. I know one senior in the Hamilton area, a friend of mine, had one bath a week by a caregiver. I think the maximum was two. Those caregivers are dashing from home to home. It is not like they do one job and then relax. They are stressed and, sadly, their response to that stress is negative to elderly persons.

• (1255)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to the speech by my colleague from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek. I know he cares and is passionate about these issues.

My constituency has one of the largest number of seniors in the country, people over the age of 65. In fact, we have 9% or 10% more women in my constituency than men, and that is primarily made up of widows, women seniors above the age of 65 and a huge number of women above the age of 85.

Income support is a huge challenge. For that generation, it is a particular challenge because years ago many did not work outside of the home. These seniors lack CPP or any private pension, and often were widowed with very little additional support.

It is a challenge to our governments at all levels to respond to these needs. We increased, which I fought quite hard for this in last year's budget, the guaranteed income supplement. I know many would have preferred more. I think there was an acknowledgement that it was pretty tough economically for these women.

We have also taken substantial measures on health care. When I go door-knocking at many seniors' residences, the number one concern for people when it comes to the services they get from the government is quality health care. That is why we have sought to balance the budget, to take some difficult decisions and at the same time to honour our commitment to increase by 6% our transfers to the provinces. I know the member opposite remembers a time when it was different, when there are cutbacks and not increases.

Mr. Wayne Marston: Madam Speaker, I know the riding the member represents, not to the degree he would, but it is in the national capital region. A lot of the folks in the national capital region have been here for a number of years and have had families. Their spouses or they have worked in the public sector and have had the benefit of good public service pensions to help them.

I would suggest that it has some of the problems that are in other ridings, but I think it is to a lesser degree. I will use my community of Hamilton as an example where we have a more than 20% poverty rate, and much of that is seniors.

I commend the minister if he pressured his government friends on the increase to the GIS. I just wish it had been a little more effective and been more. Again, it is a matter of choices. When the government brought in the budget that gave a \$50 a month increase, it had a choice. Corporate tax rates were being changed at the time, to the tune of billions of dollars.

The government made the choice to proceed with those tax breaks that went to corporations that were profitable. It was not even

helping the corporations in trouble. Our estimates of the cost to give \$200 a month to those 300,000 people was approximately \$700 million. Axe a corporate break at that time and it could have been done.

I am not using this as a measurement of someone's commitment to his community or to the elders in his community. I am pleased the minister is paying attention to it. However, those choices have to be made in a different fashion.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments from the government side, but I want to emphasize what I think are three very important issues that seniors face today.

If we were to canvass our constituents, we would find that health care is the number one issue. One of the greatest expenditures for seniors is in the whole pharmaceutical area. It is a huge concern. They feel that the government has really dropped the ball or that it has not listened as those costs skyrocket. We have too many seniors trying to decide if they should be buying the food they require or sacrificing their diet in order to get their pharmaceuticals. This is something the Liberal Party has been bringing to the government's attention for a number of years, and we will continue to do so.

We could talk about the whole issue of personal safety, which includes elder abuse. It is of critical importance. Not only do seniors want to feel safe with their family members, but in the community as a whole. Seniors want to feel they can walk outside. They want feel comfortable with the health care workers who visit their homes and so forth. The vast majority of the time that is the case. Seniors want to feel comfortable, knowing that their future income needs are going to be taken care of. That is one of the reasons why the Liberal Party has come out so squarely against the increase in age from 65 to 67.

My question is very specific. I believe we underestimate the amount of elder abuse in Canadian society today. Would the member agree that this is an issue that has to be given much more attention?

• (1300)

Mr. Wayne Marston: Madam Speaker, I agree with many of the aspects that the member said, but in point of fact elder abuse has been something that we have been silent on as a society.

One of the points the member mentioned was that of seniors feeling safe in the community when they are out and about. I mentioned how when they become fragile, seniors are more concerned about the things that could happen to them.

We have a government that has come in with mandatory minimums and a variety of provisions to change the laws of our country to protect seniors or to put people away for a variety of crimes. On the other hand, in the prisons we are taking away those services that are provided to prisoners to help them modify and change their lives and points of view so when they come back out of that facility, they have the ability to correct their behaviours.

We have to put moneys into those areas in advance where there is a better understanding of the needs of our communities so people are less inclined to go ahead with the kinds of abuses that we see.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Madam Speaker, my understanding is that in this bill, the goal is to provide more severe punishment for those who abuse seniors, especially when they are particularly vulnerable, and I agree with that.

On the other hand, I am having some trouble understanding another aspect. In my view, for such unfortunate situations, the first thing should be to try and prevent them. This bill contains nothing about prevention. I believe that everything possible should be done so that seniors never have to suffer such violence in the first place.

For example, might it not have been possible to introduce measures to prevent informal caregivers from becoming exhausted? The fact is that violence is often inflicted by someone close. Should help be provided to informal caregivers to combat that? Can more be done to combat poverty?

Does my colleague believe that this bill needs a section on prevention?

[*English*]

Mr. Wayne Marston: Madam Speaker, a number of speakers to the bill have pointed out the fact that the title is almost as long as the provisions of the bill. When we look at the total lifestyle and environment around seniors, from their source of income to whatever support services they receive, or how they are treated within their own family and the areas where the breakdowns occur, there are so many areas that the government could have addressed along with the punitive measures that are put into law.

We have to look at the situation that our seniors find themselves in today from a holistic point of how to address in the community a greater respect for seniors from those who do not have it. People who are vulnerable in our society, either because of drug abuse, substance abuse, or whatever reason, turn to crime and often their victims are elderly.

There are a variety of places that need addressing, those areas which cause the problems for people who ultimately take it out on the seniors. There are direct measures for seniors that need to be put in place around their prescription drugs, support services, palliative care, the stresses in which the families live. There is a whole place that we could have gone with this.

To some extent, how we treat our seniors is representative of our entire view of how we treat our community. By fixing areas of the community, we will fix some of the circumstances for seniors, even if it is not as direct.

This bill, in its very narrow focus, fails the elderly.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Madam Speaker, we are basically going to speak about a transition—the transition from the prevention of and sentencing for mistreatment to proper treatment. We are going to ensure that people are entitled to decent, respectable service.

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The New Democratic Party is not against this bill, quite the contrary. It can see the first steps—but only the first steps—of a policy to protect our seniors. What specifically does this bill propose? It recommends a hotline for abused seniors, which is a very good thing. The problem is that we do not want to force people to telephone, and we cannot compel them to blow the whistle about their abuse. That is the major problem with this service: the fact that people have to make use of it.

Unfortunately, all too often, the people who abuse seniors are their close relatives or people on whom they depend. They depend on them to do their shopping or housework or to take care of them. It is not easy to report someone who is so badly needed. That person is very often the only one they know. So, the service is viable as long as people call and as long as the people who call have access to some other resource to replace the person who is abusing them.

Creating positions of consultants who are specialists in elder abuse is another option. There is already a project in Manitoba that has had good results. In fact it is not enough just to report someone; the situation has to be improved. Specialists in elder abuse can refer the person to the appropriate service. They can ensure that the person finds the services that are available in the community.

Very often, a number of volunteer services are free of charge. Demand for these services is high. But for them to be effective, the first step has to be taken. These consultant services will be a necessary resource and that is great.

The Criminal Code must also be amended so that elder abuse is considered an aggravating circumstance and leads to sentencing for a crime. Showing contempt for a senior, insulting a senior and being impatient with a senior is not a crime, but it is abuse. Treating seniors like children and considering them intellectual rejects, depriving them of their freedom of choice in making decisions about their finances, the way they dress or some other matter is not a crime. On the other hand, to the person who is going through this, to the person who is insulted, belittled and despised, this is abuse. Unfortunately, the Criminal Code will not change anything. It cannot fix offensive behaviour. The Criminal Code is not meant to do that.

You understand all the limitations of this legislation. It is a first step, a very small first step. We support it, but we note and stress the fact that it does not go far enough.

In my riding, there is the CLAVA, the Laval committee on abuse and violence against seniors. This service encourages seniors to stand up for their rights. It accompanies them during court proceedings and provides training on what elder abuse is. These people tell us that every senior may become a victim of abuse, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, income or level of education.

• (1305)

These things are not relevant. It is how isolated seniors are that determines the extent to which they are victimized. That is the key issue.

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There are meals on wheels services in Laval, Sainte-Thérèse, Rosemère, Bois-des-Filion and Lorraine. Often, the meals on wheels staff provide not only meals, but also a welcome change from the isolation. These seniors are visited once a week by a person who looks at them, listens to them, checks to see whether their home is well maintained, whether they are eating well, whether they have medication and are taking it. Of course, care is also taken to listen to the seniors to determine whether they have been mistreated, beaten, or stolen from. The volunteers take note of all this information. They break the isolation. This is probably a much more precious gift than the food they bring. It is essential.

Often, the people that use this service really appreciate being visited by someone who sits with them over a cup of tea or coffee, who is approachable and who makes them feel listened to. It is so important that the isolation be broken. It is also an opportunity for the seniors to share information that they would not share over the telephone. Seniors will talk with someone who visits them once a week, but they will not tell a policeman or someone from a helpline that their child is disrespectful, that the landlord is stealing from them, or that their electricity has been cut off. Only someone who has an intimate relationship with the elderly person can get this kind of information.

It is important to understand that there are things that can be done to prevent abuse. Isolation may also be linked to poverty. Seniors who do not have the money to go out to dinner with friends once a week feel isolated. That is economic isolation. It is called social exclusion and is the result of not having enough money.

There is also the matter of housing. When an elderly person lives on the third floor and has arthritis, it is understandable that they avoid going up and down the stairs as much as possible. Housing can be a form of isolation. If a person's home is not adapted to their deteriorating physical health, they may feel isolated.

Pharmacare is a major issue when it comes to poverty. Serious consideration should be given to establishing a national pharmacare plan. It would save a lot of seniors from having to make choices: between housing and drugs, food and drugs, clothing and drugs. It would save them from having to choose to restrict the use of a certain drug or from needing to choose, for example, their arthritis drugs at the expense of their diabetes drugs. Canadians should not have to make these choices. That is something else to consider.

We support the notion of a helpline. It is a first step and a worthwhile initiative. It would be a mistake, however, to set up a helpline and then cut back on meals on wheels services. That would not make sense.

Any investment in the prevention of elder abuse must not be about doing away with the services that currently exist and replacing them with lesser ones. The helplines must be additional services; they must not replace services that already work well.

We support the consultant positions, particularly since these consultants can direct seniors to services in the voluntary sector. That can sometimes also result in people becoming volunteers themselves. They can be active if they have help to break out of isolation, to break out of poverty.

●(1310)

We want to facilitate access to adapted social housing and prescription drugs for seniors. We also want to eliminate poverty and isolation, because they are what make it easy for seniors to become victims. Obviously, raising pensions is one part of that. What needs to be done is not cutting pensions in future, raising the retirement age from 65 to 67 and saving \$10 billion, and then saying the government is going to invest \$25 million in telephone lines. That makes no sense. Old age security and the guaranteed income supplement combined have to provide an income that, at a minimum, is equal to the poverty line.

It makes no sense for seniors who have only these two sources of income to end up below the poverty line. That is encouraging poverty. It means accepting that people should have to go to food banks. It means making them limit the drugs they decide to buy, make do with substandard housing and move out of a home that suited them for something smaller and not as comfortable. That is unacceptable.

The combination of old age security and the guaranteed income supplement must at a minimum be equal to the poverty line. Anything else is quite simply accepting poverty and giving up on fighting it.

Long-term home care is also important. They are going to raise the cost of health care. The population is aging, and the older people are, the more health care they are going to need. Limiting health transfers to 2.5% is not the way to solve this problem. At some point, we are going to have to accept that if people in fact need medically necessary services, we have to give them to them. This is not the time to start scrimping. That is unfortunately how it looks to us.

We are going to keep saying that right now, taking away people's drugs and their safe housing because of the economic restrictions imposed by the government is a form of abuse. Accepting that we have seniors living in poverty is abuse.

Trying to combat abuse by putting in a phone line while cutting the things that are essential to people is a form of abuse. Cutting \$200 million from social housing for seniors, cutting growth in the health insurance plan, raising the retirement age from 65 to 67 and limiting growth in the guaranteed income supplement—if that is not abuse, it is knowingly and intentionally agreeing to an increase in poverty, and that is a form of abuse.

We are also going to have to face an economic challenge. It is necessary to provide the services and have the means to pay for them. It is possible. It can even be easily achieved. There is a lot of volunteer activity. It has to be encouraged. It does not cost very much and it contributes a great deal, particularly in terms of human kindness. It provides human contact. People do not just want a public servant providing the service. They want to meet people they trust, people they like, and people they want to talk to. Socializing, talking to someone from time to time, not being stuck in front of a television—all this is useful in the fight against abuse.

Social housing co-operatives can also be a big help and are not necessarily that expensive. The construction of co-operative housing also lets seniors know that they will be paying part of the cost of that social housing.

• (1315)

The advantage of co-operatives is the enormous stock of housing available once the building has been paid for, once it has been built with a minimum down payment from the federal government, because the people will have paid their rent and paid the mortgage. Not only will this housing be available at a very affordable price, but it can be adapted to the seniors' situation, giving them the ability to move around the rooms in their wheelchair, with an accessible bathroom, door handles that are not round but simply replaced with hooks, and space to allow a wheelchair to fit under the kitchen sink. These ergonomic changes are essential for people with diminishing independence. And we will be able to build it.

Of course, when \$200 million in funding for social housing is cut, a lot of harm is done. The government cannot claim to be fighting poverty among seniors and then turn around and take away \$200 million. And saving \$600 million by making cuts to the guaranteed income supplement is also not particularly useful in the fight against poverty.

The government is not even talking about a prescription drug plan. The only thing it is willing to talk about is curbing the rate of growth in health insurance transfer payments.

I am sorry, but on one hand the government is sending a message saying that it is going to fight elder abuse, and on the other, it refusing to take responsibility for something that could lead to increased poverty among seniors. The government needs to be consistent. There is no consistency here.

We are going to support this bill, but I can guarantee that we will not be supporting the budget. We will support this bill as a first step in showing Parliament's collective will to fight poverty and reduce violence. As I have said, nothing in the Criminal Code punishes bad manners.

We are willing to fight something, but it must be understood that, for seniors, being insulted by one of their children hurts as much as being beaten. Unfortunately, the Criminal Code will not be able to do anything to prevent that. It will be necessary to collectively ensure that seniors are not always left on their own, that they still have an active life, and that they still have the means necessary to have an active life, from a financial point of view, as well as in terms of medical support and access to drugs and health care.

We will have to make sure that seniors are able to receive family members and friends in decent living quarters where they feel totally at home and comfortably sheltered. People want to be able to live independently; they do not want to live in a dormitory or hospital room where people can come and go as they please. They want to live at home. They want to live in their own home as long as possible. Everyone agrees that seniors have an attachment to their home.

We need to take steps to ensure that they can enjoy this home. We need to do it without necessarily overhauling the whole budget. We

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are not talking about billions of dollars, but simply a number of societal choices.

I am now ready to answer any questions my colleagues may have.

• (1320)

[*English*]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his compassionate speech.

I would like to address two issues that increase the risk of elder abuse: namely poverty and health issues, particularly limited functional capacity. I am absolutely against raising the age of OAS eligibility and find that unnecessary change is reprehensible. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has made it clear that the economy is strong and that this is a false crisis. Senior poverty could increase by one-third with the government's changes.

The second issue is health. The World Health Organization's report, *Dementia: A Public Health Priority*, and the Alzheimer Society of Canada's *Rising Tide* report are wake-up calls for us to develop a national plan for dementia. Today in Canada, one person is diagnosed with dementia every five minutes. There is a terrible human cost and the economic cost is \$15 billion. In 30 years, we are looking at a person being diagnosed once every two minutes and the cost to be \$153 billion.

Five of the G7 countries have nationwide plans. Why is Canada lagging behind?

• (1325)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Madam Speaker, on the matter of raising the age of eligibility for old age security from 65 to 67, the only argument that the government has put forward is a demographic one. Unfortunately for the Conservatives, this was already suggested by Brian Mulroney. He said that it was horrible to have seven people working to support one retired person, and that in the 2010s, the ratio was going to be four to one. He said that in 2010, the country would be bankrupt.

Well, here we are in 2012, and we can see that the demographic argument put forward by Brian Mulroney is not true. The same could be said of the current government's measure that would increase the age of eligibility for old age security from 65 to 67. The important thing is whether the government's finances are healthy. Are they? Yes. Can the government rely on a significant revenue base? Yes, Canada is rich. Finally, Canada has the ability to collect its taxes, which is often not the case in certain European countries.

[*English*]

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Madam Speaker, I had an interesting incident in my constituency office a number of months ago. A senior talked to me about a problem he had with his son taking advantage of him with his low-cost housing. He was afraid that he would end up in trouble with the housing authority. I told him to simply ask his son to leave, but he said that his granddaughter was there as well.

Private Members' Business

When we talk about elder abuse and raising the bar on penalties, in many cases they would be inflicted on the relatives of the elder and those most closely connected. I think we have to be very careful with this. I would like my colleague to comment.

Are we going to find that in some cases elders do not report abuse because they are worried about the kinds of penalties that would come down on those who are closest to them who may be engaged in the abuse? If the penalty is too high, would elders be inclined not to bring that forward? It is a very important question because it will play out over and over again in our society.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère: Madam Speaker, the problem is serious, especially when those who are suffering such abuse have a close relationship with the person who is failing to show them respect. The cases that lead to criminal charges are the most serious and the most extreme. But what do we do for people who have \$100 stolen from them every week and no longer have that money to buy their medication? That is where the seriousness of the situation lies.

Very often, a crime and the consequences it has are disproportionate, and people are afraid of the repercussions of a criminal charge. They do not want someone to go to prison, particularly if there are family, friendship or emotional ties to the person in question.

I repeat once again that in the Criminal Code, there is no punishment for lack of respect, which very often amounts to serious abuse. People are disparaged and neglected and considered worthless. A person who suffers this finds it extremely painful, but the Criminal Code will not be of any help.

On the other hand, enabling them to break out of their isolation and to have access to volunteers who can provide support, a friendly ear, advice and even love is quite another story. Unfortunately, the Criminal Code is of no help to us.

• (1330)

The Deputy Speaker: When this bill reappears on the order paper, the hon. member for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin will have four minutes for questions and comments.

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC) moved that Bill C-310, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons), be read the third time and passed.

She said: Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak to my private member's bill, C-301, an act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons).

I would like to begin by thanking the member for Ottawa—Orléans who graciously agreed to exchange spots in the order of

precedence so Bill C-310 could be debated on March 30, 2012. I also want to thank the member for Kitchener—Conestoga, who without hesitation agreed to exchange spots so that Bill C-310 could be debated today instead of May 31. The selfless actions of these members have allowed Bill C-310 to proceed sooner and place important legal tools into the hands of prosecutors and law enforcement.

I also want to thank the hon. members on the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for their work on the bill at committee stage.

Bill C-310 would amend the Criminal Code to add the current trafficking in persons offences, 279.01 and 279.011, to the list of offences which, if committed outside of Canada by a Canadian or permanent resident, can be prosecuted in Canada. Bill C-310 would also amend the definition of exploitation in the trafficking and persons offence to add an interpretive aid for courts to consider when they are determining whether a person was exploited.

The first clause of Bill C-310 was amended at justice committee to include the two other human trafficking-specific offences: the material benefit offence in section 279.02 that prohibits receipt of a financial or other material benefit from the commission of a human trafficking offence; and the offence of withholding or destroying documents, such as travel or identity documents, to facilitate human trafficking in section 279.03. This ensures all human trafficking offences are covered by extraterritorial jurisdiction.

The second clause of Bill C-310 recognizes that courts and law enforcement would benefit from an interpretive provision to provide clear guidance on what exploitation consists of. This clause was also amended by the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. The committee's amendment simplified Bill C-310's proposed listing of conduct and made it more consistent with the way other similar clauses in the Criminal Code are drafted. It now reads:

In determining whether an accused exploits another person under subsection (1), the Court may consider, among other factors, whether the accused (a) used or threatened to use force or another form of coercion; (b) used deception; or (c) abused a position of trust, power or authority.

This wording provides clear examples of common exploitive methods used by traffickers in cases of sex trafficking and forced labour. It is also consistent with a similar clause in the Criminal Code and international protocols on human trafficking.

The justice committee also heard from key stakeholders regarding the importance of Bill C-310, including representatives from Walk With Me, Beyond Borders and Dr. Amir Attaran, a University of Ottawa law professor and expert on extraterritorial law.

Timea Nagy, program director of Walk With Me, was herself a victim of human trafficking. She said:

Walk With Me's position is that this [Bill C-310] is a necessary and desperately needed amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada. ...Conceivably, as the Criminal Code presently stands, a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident could set up an office in eastern Europe and traffic in human persons to Canadian soil without the threat or worry of prosecution when they return to Canada.

Private Members' Business

Ms. Nagy knows that well because she herself was trafficked from abroad.

Roz Prober, president of Beyond Borders testified. She said:

Beyond Borders early on endorsed this bill, as it includes child sex traffickers.... It is essential, to ensure global justice for children, that Bill C-310 is supported by this committee.

Dr. Amir Attaran, a faculty of law professor at the University of Ottawa, stated:

...Bill C-310 is a very helpful bill. It's necessary. It's constitutional. It definitely should pass....The heart of the bill is really those provisions that clarify the meaning of exploitation and trafficking and that make trafficking a Canadian crime worldwide.

In closing, once again, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the courageous members who have supported Bill C-310. By working together in this House, we can all effectively combat human trafficking in our country, as well as abroad.

I look forward to your assistance, Madam Speaker, in helping Bill C-310 become law, and I look forward to all members of the House helping Bill C-310 become law just as quickly as possible. Innocent victims are waiting for this.

• (1335)

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her bill, which I fully support. In committee, we heard testimony from various witnesses and groups. Does she believe that further amendments are required to help put an end to the scourge that is human trafficking?

[English]

Mrs. Joy Smith: Madam Speaker, for this particular bill it is necessary right now to have the amendments that were considered at committee. They were thoughtfully considered and brought forward in a helpful manner. I do not think that any new amendments need to be done right now.

It is important to get the bill through at this time. We know that Canadians travelling abroad have set up brothels and are exploiting children. We know where they live and we know what they have done.

It is necessary that this legislation be passed through the House so that Canada will have the tools to reach out and protect victims. Canadians and permanent residents should not be travelling to other countries to exploit children.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member bringing Bill C-310 forward. We in the Liberal Party recognize the type of exploitation that is taking place and would have been quite happy to see the bill go through the process the other day. We believe the bill will make a difference.

I have no further comments or questions. The member can feel free to comment on what I have just said. I just wanted to let her know that we are quite prepared to see the bill pass today.

Mrs. Joy Smith: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the member for Winnipeg North. It is important to note that the member and his party have always been supportive of this very important bill. As well, the former leader of the official opposition,

Jack Layton, fully supported my previous bill. I have very fond memories of the conversations we had.

I would not like to see the House hold up the bill, even for another four days. It could possibly be held up for another four days because there has to be a vote on Wednesday. I know it is only three days and is not as important as it was last time, but I would like to see it get through. I would like to see this happen.

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Madam Speaker, this legislation works toward eliminating this heinous crime. Could my friend tell me how it would help police officers not only in Canada but around the globe?

• (1340)

Mrs. Joy Smith: Madam Speaker, the member for Kootenay—Columbia is an ex-Mountie and knows full well the importance of the bill.

Canadians have set up businesses abroad and are making money and exploiting and sexually attacking innocent children in those countries. We know a lot of them and we know where they come back to in Canada, but we need this legislation to be able to go to other countries and bring them to justice.

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party and myself, I want to reiterate my full support for Bill C-310, which was introduced by the member for Kildonan—St. Paul. I would also like to remind this House that, to date, there have been three votes on the bill being discussed today: one at second reading, one in committee, and a third at report stage.

At second reading, on a recorded division, all the NDP members voted in favour of this bill, without a single dissenting voice. At the 27th meeting of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, held on March 15, 2012, the four NDP members on the committee, including myself, voted in favour of Bill C-310, along with the proposed amendments. At report stage, on the 181st recorded division, all the NDP members who were present—93 in total—once again voted unanimously in favour of this bill. We voted in favour of this bill at every step of the legislative process.

It is, in my opinion, extremely important that I state this for the record because, at one point, the media and certain social networks questioned me about whether the NDP had changed its position. No, it has not. On this side of the House—especially in the New Democratic Party—several of my colleagues were anxious to rise on this issue. There were more members interested in speaking than there were spots available, given the time allocated for debate. Members were interested in speaking about this extremely important subject for a number of reasons. That is why we are now happy to have this opportunity at third reading. Our vote will not change come next week when it is time to revisit this bill.

I am pleased that the amendment was adopted as mentioned by my colleague because there were some questions about the bill as introduced. It was not clear whether the factors could prove exploitation. We are reasonably confident about the way in which clause 279.09 will now be read. It reads as follows:

Private Members' Business

(1) For the purposes of sections 279.01 to 279.03, a person exploits another person if they cause them to provide, or offer to provide, labour or a service by engaging in conduct that, in all the circumstances, could reasonably be expected to cause the other person to believe that their safety or the safety of a person known to them would be threatened if they failed to provide, or offer to provide, the labour or service.

(2) In determining what constitutes exploitation under subsection (1) [that was the part that was missing], the Court may consider, among other factors, whether the accused...

The use of “among other factors” indicates that these are not the only factors. However, if an accused exploits another person under subsection (1), the criteria listed become proof of the exploitation. That was the missing piece of the bill:

(b) used or threatened to use violence;

(c) used or threatened another form of coercion;

Other factors are the use of deception and the abuse of a position of trust, power or authority.

Human trafficking and human smuggling should not be confused, as they are in some bills concerning refugees. They are not the same thing. We are dealing with human trafficking. People who do not believe that this takes place in Canada should wake up. It does happen, even in 2012. This may be the reason for this bill, which was introduced by my colleague from Kildonan—St. Paul. It is very important. This is real. It is not just talk. There are specific problems.

Over the years, there have been few court cases not because the problem does not exist, but because we did not have the means to prosecute offenders in the circumstances. For that reason, it is even more important to pass the bill.

The testimony presented in committee broke our hearts. The exploitation of a person can be physical, but human trafficking involves people who are used as slaves.

● (1345)

This is 2012 and there are people being held in slavery or forms of slavery by Canadians. That is what we mean by exploitation in this context. This is absolutely intolerable. For people like me who live in Gatineau, just on the other side of the river, it seems absolutely unbelievable that people could still be trapped in situations like that in this day and age.

My colleague's bill is complete in itself, but we may have to add to it in this House, in other bills, to make sure that certain intolerable situations do not arise in different contexts.

The Walk With Me Canada victim support centre appeared before our committee to voice its support for the bill. The examples it gave us and the ways this bill could be useful to it were striking.

I am pleased that my colleague mentioned our former leader, the Right Honourable Jack Layton. He was at all times what I have always called the greatest feminist I have ever met in my life. To him, whether a person was a man or a woman, the values of equality were always very important. When he saw anything that was unfair, he was outraged. He was always saying that something had to be done or something had to be changed. That is why I have no trouble seeing how he might support this bill.

Sometimes, we are not proud of what goes on in this House, not proud of the things said about various people. But certainly, all my

colleagues and myself will be very proud to stand with the government to support the member's bill next week.

The study may have taken a few days longer, but sometimes, and I am familiar with the justice system too, three days or five days or a week more may not necessarily make too much of a difference in terms of initiating prosecutions and making sure the situation is resolved. I do not think that anyone's life was endangered during this time.

This is a matter of principle for us. It is extremely important that all members of the New Democratic Party have this opportunity to rise in this House. They may have wanted to debate the question to show their support, because that is part of our job, but they also wanted to be counted specifically instead of just knowing that it was passed and that was that.

Members want to be able to go back to their ridings and tell the groups working right on the front line on these issues that we are working for them, that we are there. Members want to be able to clearly explain our colleague's bill to their constituents and help them to better understand it.

I am not going to make a long speech because 10 minutes goes by quickly and I have barely a minute left, but there are people who do not know what human trafficking or exploitation is. I spoke of slavery. People can imagine what went on in the southern United States in previous centuries. Somewhat the same thing is going on in the case of human trafficking, and there are Canadians engaging in this as a business. It affects primarily women, children and aboriginal people. Some classes of individuals are still sought after for this kind of disgusting trade. This is not a trade in objects; it is a trade in persons. We are all supposed to be equal in this world, but these people are taken and enslaved, sometimes for base commerce, or for other reasons.

That is unacceptable. I think my colleague will have no difficulty getting the support of this House for her bill. Once again, I congratulate her for introducing this bill, for doing a good job of it and for being a worthy spokesperson for it in committee.

● (1350)

[English]

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I too am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-310, an act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons), introduced by my colleague, the member for Kildonan—St. Paul. As my colleague from Gatineau has just done, I will take this opportunity to commend the member for her ongoing initiatives and engagement in this regard, of which this bill is but the latest example.

As I have said in the House and as this bill seeks to do, there is an ongoing need to combat this scourge of human trafficking, this pernicious, persistent and pervasive assault on human rights, this commodification in human beings, whereby human beings are regarded simply as cattle to be bonded and bartered. Indeed, this pernicious evil continues to be as persistent and pervasive as ever.

Private Members' Business

If we look at the situation, we will see that just this week Yuri Fedotov, the head of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, estimated that as many as 2.4 million people are victims of trafficking worldwide at any given moment in time. His comments came as the heads of various UN organizations associated with tourism condemned human trafficking in that sector and proposed a series of reforms.

Of course, it is not in just one agency, be it the UN, or in one sector, be it tourism, where we need to act. The OSCE special representative and coordinator for combatting trafficking in human beings, Marcia Grazia Giammarinaro, recently noted in her address to global parliamentarians that human trafficking is “not a marginal phenomenon, but a new form of slavery on a massive scale in which people lose their freedom of choice, and are reduced to commodities for the benefit of their exploiters”.

In fact, if we look at the situation, the evidence speaks for itself. We know that this grotesque trade in human life generates upwards of \$15 billion a year. We know that trafficking is so profitable that it is the world's fastest-growing international crime. We know that the majority of victims being trafficked each year are girls and women under the age of 25 and that many trafficking victims are young people, including children. We know that the victims of trafficking are desperate to secure the necessities of life, and as a result their lives are mired in exploitation and rooted in the greed of those who prey upon them.

We know that UNICEF continues to remind us that 1.2 million children are trafficked globally each year and that the ILO estimates that 2.5 million children are currently in situations of forced labour as a result of being trafficked. We know that no matter for what purpose they are trafficked, every trafficked person suffers deprivation of liberty and physical, sexual and emotional abuse, including threats of violence and actual harm to themselves and to their family members.

Although all of those numbers taken together represent compelling and cumulative evidence of this scourge of human trafficking, we must always remember that behind each of the statistics and behind every number is a face, a life, a world shattered by this evil of human trafficking.

Lest it be thought that there is no Canadian connection to this, the U.S. State Department earlier this year released a chilling report on human trafficking, which found:

Canada is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour. Canadian women and girls, particularly from aboriginal communities, are found in conditions of commercial sexual exploitation across the country. Foreign women and children, primarily from Asia and Eastern Europe, are subjected to sex trafficking...

Indeed, some Canadians have a hand in human trafficking, and it is therefore important, as this legislation seeks to do, to send a message that complicity in the trafficking of persons is not only not acceptable in any way but that we in fact will pursue those traffickers, be they Canadians, here and abroad. This therefore includes extending the reach of our laws to actions that occur beyond our borders.

Last year, Canada prosecuted a child sex tourist, a Canadian who abused girls in Cambodia and Colombia, for violating subsection 7

(4.1) of the Criminal Code. Bill C-310 would expand this provision to apply not only to sexual offences against children, as it does now, but to offences related to trafficking in persons.

• (1355)

We should note that just this week the news from Britain reflected the situation where a young woman was trafficked for organ harvesting. So, while our minds may think of human trafficking only for the purposes of sexual exploitation, it exists in other contexts that are no less reprehensible. Indeed, our Criminal Code must stand for the proposition that such trafficking is unacceptable for any person anywhere, for any reason, at any time.

With specific regard to Bill C-310, I will cite World Vision's characterization of it. It reads:

This bill is a significant and necessary step in responding to human trafficking, and a vital part of a broader strategy to tackle trafficking at home and overseas from the key internationally recognized intervention angles: prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships.

As I referred to earlier, this was initially introduced legislation and the four Ps for combatting trafficking.

While the bill we are debating this afternoon is an important step in the right direction, there is much more that needs to be done to address all aspects of the trafficking process. In this regard, I would like to note two items among a number of them that the U.S. report of this year found with respect to Canada. I reads:

Canada's law enforcement efforts reportedly suffer from a lack of coordination between the national government and provincial and local authorities, which prosecute most human trafficking cases.

That is something that was noted before but which needs to be continuously addressed.

Simply put, changing the law, while important, will not be enough without adopting a national approach to its enforcement that includes co-operation with provincial and local authorities. I know that the sponsor of this bill has a number of proposals in mind for how we can combat trafficking beyond the legislation before us and has spoken to these other recommendations and needs before. I and other members of this House look forward to working with her on the next steps involved, particularly with respect to coordination between actors at the federal, provincial and local levels.

Referring again to the U.S. report, it was also found that in Canada:

...there were no nationwide protocols for other government officials to proactively identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, such as women in prostitution or migrant workers. Victim support services in Canada are generally administered at the provincial level. There were no dedicated facilities or specialized programs for trafficking victims.

That reminds us yet again of the importance of the protection function of the protection of victims, at the same time as we seek to prosecute the perpetrators and always, foremost, the prevention of trafficking to begin with.

Private Members' Business

Indeed, we must ensure that we are not only looking at human trafficking with a view toward the punishment and prosecution of those involved, but with an ongoing appreciation of the victimization of those who are, have been and continue to be victimized in the process. We must ensure that programs for their protection are fully funded, that they provide services in a variety of languages and they assist toward rehabilitation and reintegration into society for those who have been victims of trafficking.

Trafficking constitutes an assault on our common humanity. Accordingly, it must be seen first and foremost as a human rights problem but with an ongoing human rights face reflected in all of the individual victims and being the very antithesis of what the universal declaration of human rights is all about.

As Professor Harold Koh put it, while dean of Yale Law School:

By their acts, traffickers deny that all persons are born free and equal in dignity and rights; they deny their victims freedom of movement, freedom of association, and the most basic freedom: to have a childhood.

I am delighted to stand in this place and support the legislation.

• (1400)

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to echo the message of my colleagues in the NDP that we support this piece of legislation, Bill C-310, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons).

I would like to note the work of the MP for Kildonan—St. Paul, a fellow Manitoban, on this particular file.

This chamber has heard of the importance of addressing the gaps in the Criminal Code relating to human trafficking. We in the NDP welcome legislation that assists in strengthening the law and works to put an end to human trafficking. As the status of women critic for the NDP, I note the particular victimization that women face when it comes to human trafficking. A majority of people trafficked are women and girls.

Strengthening legislation to prosecute traffickers and prevent others from trafficking is critical; however, legislation is not enough. When we hear from advocates about what can be done to prevent human trafficking, a recurring message is that of changing the social circumstances that leave people vulnerable to trafficking. Both here at home and abroad, we must work with other countries to reduce poverty, underdevelopment and the lack of equal opportunity that make people, particularly women, vulnerable to trafficking.

Because human trafficking is a hidden operation, reliable statistics are obviously difficult to find. In 2004, the RCMP estimated that 800 people were trafficked into Canada each year, of which 600 were destined for the sex trade. They also estimated that 1,500 to 2,200 people are trafficked from Canada into the U.S. annually. According to Canadian non-governmental organizations, the number of foreign women brought into Canada and into the sex trade here each year becomes much higher.

As we know, there are also many Canadian women who are trafficked within Canada's borders. Canada's aboriginal female population is prostituted and trafficked in disproportionate levels. Aboriginal youth are only 3% to 5% of the Canadian population, yet in some cities they are 90% of the visible sex trade.

Young women who have been sexually exploited and abused in the past are more vulnerable to trafficking. There is no doubt that the bill before us strengthens the ability to prosecute traffickers, but unfortunately it does nothing to deal with the root causes of trafficking. When we look particularly at the situation that aboriginal women face in Canada, I believe that many of us know that the government has to do a lot more. The factors that make aboriginal women in Canada more vulnerable include the socio-economic status that many of them have. In census after census, we find out that aboriginal women are among the poorest in our country.

We must also look at factors that make them more vulnerable as a result of the residential school experience, which we know aimed to assimilate aboriginal people, thus leading many of them to lose their language, sense of identity and pride. This cultural experiment, supported by the Government of Canada at the time, allowed for a legacy to be left behind that has further marginalized aboriginal people, particularly aboriginal women. That is an area where we need to see the government step up in terms of its commitment to cultural revitalization, its support of the learning of aboriginal languages and its promotion of how important the retention of language and culture is among aboriginal communities.

Another area where we can seek to challenge a key factor that makes aboriginal women even more vulnerable is their level of education and learning. As the MP for Churchill, I have the honour of representing 33 first nations. I know that on many of these first nations, the educational standards and educators the communities are able to provide are substandard, particularly compared to non-aboriginal communities. Why is that? It is because Canada's previous Liberal governments, as well as the current Conservative government, have ensured that federal funding for aboriginal education was and is at a lower level than for non-aboriginal educational systems, thereby ensuring that young people growing up in aboriginal communities are less able to access a quality education. I believe, and our party has noted, that this is a crying shame in a country as wealthy as Canada.

• (1405)

In terms of education, we know that the application of the 2% cap on funding for aboriginal students ensures that young aboriginal people, who know that obtaining a post-secondary education is key to moving ahead in life, are unable to do so. The circumstances of poverty and hopelessness that exist in their communities hold them back from being able to access an important opportunity which so many Canadians know is the key to moving ahead in the future. The removal of the 2% cap and ensuring that young aboriginal people can have access to post-secondary education is another step the federal government could take in order to ensure that aboriginal young people, particularly young aboriginal women, are made less vulnerable.

Community capacity building is another area where there needs to be federal support in order to support young aboriginal people, in particular, young aboriginal women. We need to ensure there is key programming and services offered in aboriginal communities, wherever they might be.

Private Members' Business

With respect to housing, for example, many of us have seen the kind of images that came out of Attawapiskat and other first nations communities across the country. I represent some of those communities that face dire situations when it comes to housing: Pukatawagan, St. Theresa Point, Garden Hill, Gods Lake Narrows, communities across northern Manitoba that have a similar circumstance to those of northern Ontario and northern regions across our country. For decades, and particularly as aboriginal populations have grown recently, aboriginal communities have been saying that they need the federal government to step up its funding when it comes to providing proper housing and proper infrastructure in aboriginal communities.

Another area in which the federal government could truly step up when it comes to supporting aboriginal women and aboriginal people is with respect to healing. Many aboriginal people face the challenge of marginalization. I remember some years ago standing in this House with my colleagues in the NDP and fighting the government because of its cuts to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, an extremely successful program which took a decentralized approach when it came to funding critical healing programming to aboriginal communities across the country. Despite research that indicated it was an extremely successful program, the Conservatives unfortunately decided to make serious cuts to it. Again, we have a situation where thanks to federal government cuts, many aboriginal people and aboriginal women who are seeking to heal from the traumatic experience of residential schools and oppression do not have the kind of programming that they had a few years ago.

In general, I would say that the work this government needs to do in terms of achieving women's equality is enormous. However, instead of moving forward, the Conservative government is moving Canada backward on a whole host of measures, some of which I have mentioned in this House just in the last 24 hours: the removal of the word "equality" from the status of women mandate; the elimination of the court challenges program; the elimination of pay equity legislation; cuts to advocacy programs; cuts to research; and cuts to services. That indicates the government is not interested when it comes to achieving true gender equality for aboriginal women in Canada and for all women in Canada.

In conclusion, while we support this piece of legislation, we hope that the government will turn the clock forward and work with us to achieve true equality for all women in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise here today to speak to Bill C-310 to combat human trafficking in Canada and abroad.

Of course, we support this bill, which contains amendments to the Criminal Code that will make it possible to better combat this form of modern slavery. Furthermore, I would like to thank the sponsor of this bill for addressing this problem, which only seems to be growing. I believe this is a time when all parties of the House can really work together to improve the situation and women's rights.

• (1410)

When this issue is discussed, we often think of sexual slavery. However, there are other types of exploitation of human suffering

which, though they may be more insidious and are almost invisible, are no less tragic. My honourable colleague from Montreal mentioned the case of a woman who was a victim of trafficking because of organ theft.

While any estimate of the number of victims of human trafficking is questionable because of the clandestine nature of this phenomenon, there may be as many as 2.5 million victims of human trafficking worldwide. It is estimated that traffickers profit by about \$10 billion US every year. This gives an idea of the magnitude of the current situation.

The figures for Europe, compiled by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, are horrifying.

According to the report, trafficking of human beings is the most lucrative illegal activity in Europe. The UN estimates that crime groups derive profits of over \$2.5 billion by organizing forced labour and sexual exploitation of human beings.

According to the report, 140,000 people are trapped in a cycle of brutal violence, abuse and degradation in Europe. About 84% of the victims in Europe are trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The majority of victims are young women who have been raped, beaten, drugged and held prisoner. Most of them are in debt, have been subject to blackmail and have had their passports taken away.

Canada is a country of arrival and transit for victims of human smuggling. According to a Department of Justice document, 600 to 800 people are sold in Canada annually, and 1,500 to 2,200 people pass through Canada before being exploited in the United States.

A more surprising and little known fact is that Canada is also affected by domestic human trafficking as a result of the exploitation of aboriginals, which makes Canada a country of origin for victims. Most of these victims are aboriginal women.

Under Bill C-310, human trafficking would also be added to the list of extraterritorial offences.

Currently, when human trafficking is perpetrated abroad by Canadians or by people who ordinarily reside in Canada, these criminals cannot be prosecuted in Canada.

Bill C-310 will correct this situation by criminalizing human trafficking perpetrated by Canadian citizens or permanent residents outside Canada.

I would now like to say a few words about the constitutionality of the extraterritorial provision since the courts will undoubtedly test it.

It is important to remember that subsection 7(4.1) of the Criminal Code already contains an extraterritorial clause regarding pedophile tourism and that this provision was challenged in a recent case before the Supreme Court of British Columbia. Basically, the issue was whether it was constitutional to apply Canadian legislation to crimes committed abroad by Canadians.

Private Members' Business

Justice Cullen determined that the provisions on pedophile tourism were constitutional and that Parliament had the authority to adapt the extraterritorial provisions. He categorically rejected the defence's argument that the rights of the accused guaranteed by the Charter were violated because the crimes were committed outside Canada.

The president of Au-delà des frontières, Rosalind Prober, and law professor Amir Attaran gave assurances to parliamentarians that the bill was entirely constitutional.

A second measure contained in the bill would add a provision stipulating the factors that courts can take into consideration in determining what constitutes exploitation.

Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, experts in the fight against human trafficking, and NGOs have voiced their concerns about how vague the current wording is.

Traffickers who use psychological pressure to control their victims without threatening to use force or violence will be clearly identified as criminals since the bill clarifies the notion of "exploitation". It appears that, to date, this has been a loophole.

● (1415)

Under the existing regime, a trafficker who has exerted significant psychological pressure on an individual can be found innocent on the grounds that the victim's life was never in danger. That is completely ridiculous.

Robert Hooper, chair of the board of directors of Walk With Me, an organization that provides first response services to victims of human trafficking, told the committee about a gap in the bill by describing a recent case involving a Hungarian migrant worker trafficking ring based in south-western Ontario.

...some of the victims were not overtly threatened with violence or death, but a very subtle version of coercion was placed upon their lives. There was never an explicit threat to their safety, but the complete isolation of the victim, leaving him or her bereft of any dignity, help, or any hope, was used as a tactic to exploit those people. They were left with absolutely no avenue to escape, left to the unknown, without language, funds, or safety. Included in the systematic, subtle coercion was the removal of official paperwork, including immigration documents and passports, from these people who had recently come to Canada.

Although those involved in this ring were finally convicted, this case illustrates the range of constraints used by traffickers to control their victims.

I have one criticism of this bill, which I am pleased to support, and that is that it does not go far enough. As is often the case with the Conservatives, the law is made more severe, but the victims are forgotten. Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to study the other measures that could be used to deal with the problem of human trafficking.

I especially appreciated the presentation by Dr. Amir Attaran, who testified in committee on this issue. This University of Ottawa law professor has studied U.S. law on human trafficking and had some interesting comments. For example, he said:

American law requires the trafficking victims be housed and be given legal help and medical treatment as victims. They are not imprisoned as criminals.

In America, the law gives foreign trafficking victims the right to stay lawfully in the country with protection so they can turn star witness and help put the trafficker in prison...in Canadian law, we don't have those victim protection measures right now.

To summarize, it is not possible to fight human trafficking by targeting only the traffickers. We also have to look after the victims. Unfortunately, Bill C-310 avoids that entire question. That said, I applaud the work done by my hon. colleague who introduced this bill, which I am pleased to support. However, we need to be concerned about the budget cuts that the Conservative government has imposed across the board.

Witnesses have said, in committee, for example, that resources are not adequate at present and there are not enough liaison officers in our embassies abroad to combat all the crimes committed outside Canada. If we really want to fight and put an end to human trafficking, there should be more RCMP liaison officers abroad and we should invest more in preventing sex crimes against children committed by Canadians. So investing in front-line services is really how we are going to tackle this problem.

In conclusion, I want to thank the member for Kildonan—St. Paul for her bill and offer her my assistance so that we can adopt a more global approach to all these forms of modern slavery, an approach that will also take into account prevention and victim assistance.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate.

I should let the hon. member for Western Arctic know ahead of time that he will not have 10 minutes, because I must give a right of reply to the hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul before 2:30 p.m.

● (1420)

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand for even the shortest time to offer my congratulations to the member for Kildonan—St. Paul in moving the bill forward.

I followed the progress of the bill through three parliaments, and it is a great thing when a private member's bill moves toward completion. I think we all revel in it, especially when the bill is such that it attracts support from the entire House. Standing as Canadians together, we support these endeavours by individual members of Parliament.

Before I came to Parliament, there was a bill that caught my attention. It came from a Conservative MP as well. It was to remove the substance from cigarettes that kept them lit when they were not smoked. That took 20 years to get through the House of Commons. Lives were saved when that bill went through and that substance was taken out of the cigarettes so they did not fall out of someone's fingers and set something on fire or create second-hand smoke in the ashtray.

The value that private members can bring to the House is so important and it sometimes puts attention on small, definitive but extremely important issues that can change our society. To that endeavour, as MPs we should all salute this initiative.

Having said that, I will speak to the bill before my time runs out. The bill, as far as it goes, would work to deal with this issue. In some ways society has to have a greater recognition of the nature of human trafficking.

The latest example of human trafficking in Canada was on April 3. The head of the Domotor crime group, which the RCMP claims is Canada's largest human trafficking ring, was using males in the construction industry as slaves in Hamilton, a large city with labour unions, with inspectors, a city administration with better business bureaus and all those things, and our society could not recognize what was happening. Could it recognize that perhaps this was going on?

We have picked off the head of this organization, but we have not changed society. It is important that we understand the people who are working for us, that we understand what is going on in our society around us and that we understand what our communities are representing. To me, that spoke volumes about the nature of our society and how we would have to move from exploitation, as we have tried at all times to do, and understand laws that would remove the opportunities for exploitation and identify for Canadians the nature of exploitation.

Certainly, if the example of this person in Hamilton does not get attention in the construction industry right across the country, there is something wrong.

It is a time for reflection. When the bill passes, when we move forward in this regard, we need to recognize that society is still the answer to most of these issues.

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Madam Speaker, today modern slavery exists in all corners of the globe. Our resolve to eliminate it must grow stronger. Bill C-310 would have a significant impact on the anti-human trafficking efforts of Canada at home as well as abroad.

I am encouraged by the strong support this legislation received at second reading and again at committee. However, I hear how

Private Members' Business

supportive members opposite are, yet I was so disappointed that at report stage on March 30 members of the official opposition, the NDP, opposed the adoption of Bill C-310 at the beginning of the hour debate. This prevented any debate from taking place on that day. Instead of joining the Conservatives, Liberals, Bloc and Green MPs who sought to send this important legislation right to the Senate, the NDP forced a recorded vote at report stage, a procedural move that is unheard of when there are no new amendments.

The NDP's decision to oppose Bill C-310 on March 30 so it could vote for it on April 4 also dropped my bill to the bottom of the order paper. Were it not for the member for Kitchener—Conestoga, and I am very grateful to the member, Bill C-310 would not have come up for debate until the end of next month and the royal assent would certainly have been put off.

Today I hope all members, instead of delaying it yet another four days and because they have spoken in support of it, will pass the bill straight to the Senate.

• (1425)

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 2:25 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday next at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:25 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MS. DENISE SAVOIE

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MR. NATHAN CULLEN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

HON. GORDON O'CONNOR

MRS. NYCOLE TURMEL

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

First Session—Forty-first Parliament

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

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

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) (La Francophonie)	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)		
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Penashue, Hon. Peter, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada	Labrador	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)		
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Armstrong, Scott	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and for the Atlantic Gateway	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of National Defence	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP
NUNAVUT (1)		
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency	Nunavut	CPC
ONTARIO (106)		
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Chris, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP

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

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

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of National Revenue	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (75)		
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Coderre, Hon. Denis	Bourassa	Lib.
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP

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

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

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of April 27, 2012 — 1st Session, 41st Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chair:	Chris Warkentin	Vice-Chairs:	Carolyn Bennett Dennis Bevington
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Ray Boughen Rob Clarke Jean Crowder	Jonathan Genest-Jourdain Carol Hughes	LaVar Payne Greg Rickford	Kyle Seeback David Wilks	(12)
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Associate Members

Eve Adams	Nathan Cullen	Ed Komarnicki	Michelle Rempel
Mark Adler	Joe Daniel	Daryl Kramp	Blake Richards
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Mr. David Anderson	to the Minister of Natural Resources and for the Canadian Wheat Board

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