



# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, June 8, 1995**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 8, 1995

The House met at 10 a.m.

(1005)

Prayers

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 38, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to four petitions.

\* \* \*

[English]

### RAILWAY SAFETY ACT

**Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to the report of the Railway Safety Act review committee.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade concerning Bill C-87, an act to implement the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction.

[English]

The committee has considered this bill and presents it without amendment.

### CONFERENCE ON HIV-AIDS

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 56(1), I move:

That the Subcommittee on HIV-AIDS be authorized to send a member of its research staff to the annual Conference on HIV-AIDS Research to be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, June 8 to 11, 1995.

**The Speaker:** Will those members who object to the motion please rise in their places?

*And fewer than 25 members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 56.1.(3), the motion is adopted.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled the 81st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding Private Members' Business. I know all hon. members will have had an opportunity to read the report.

Accordingly, at this time I wonder if there would be unanimous consent of the House to move concurrence in that report without debate. If so, I move that the 81st report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented to the House on Wednesday, June 7, 1995 be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

### PETITIONS

#### BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from the residents of Saskatoon who request that Parliament desist from passing legislation legalizing the use of BST.

*Routine Proceedings*

They further request that legislation be passed requiring mandatory disclosure on all imports produced from BST treated cows.

## RIGHTS OF VICTIMS

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my duty and honour to rise in the House to present a petition, duly certified by the clerk of petitions, on behalf of 30 individuals from the riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands and surrounding areas.

The petitioners pray and call on the House to enact legislation to reform the justice system for a more just and safe society, increasing recognition and protection for the rights of victims.

**Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition on behalf of a number of residents of Barrière, British Columbia. This brings the total to almost 80,000 signatures.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada, and particularly the Minister of Justice, to take whatever steps are necessary to amend the Criminal Code and parole system to ensure safety and peace in Canadian neighbourhoods.

[*Translation*]

## SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE BUSINESSES

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, concerning small and medium size businesses, these petitioners point out the following:

[*English*]

They point out that while there has been more access to capital for small and medium sized businesses and while there has been a reduction in red tape in dealing with government that still a great deal more needs to be done.

They also emphasize that the GST is still a problem in terms of overhead. They want the government to address these problems because they point out that they contribute to 85 per cent of the new jobs to the Canadian economy.

## THE FAMILY

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present a petition that has been circulating across Canada. This petition comes from my riding of Mississauga South.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value to our society.

(1010)

They also state that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families who make the choice to provide care in the home to preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill and the aged.

The petitioners therefore pray and call on Parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families that decide to provide care in the home preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill or the aged.

## LAND CLAIMS

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present two separate petitions.

The first petition is signed by 675 individuals who call on Parliament to halt native land claim negotiations in British Columbia and turn Indian reserves over to the bands, fee simple, and that the land and the natives fall under the same laws as the rest of Canada.

## REFORM PARTY

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by 46 individuals who call on Parliament to recognize the Reform Party of Canada as the official opposition.

## SOCIAL PROGRAMS

**Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present several petitions signed by residents of my riding of Edmonton East.

The first petition calls on Parliament to maintain and enhance social programs for every Canadian.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I present a second petition from a group of Canadians who believe that Parliament should protect all individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation by including the term, sexual orientation, in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

## ASSISTED SUICIDE

**Ms. Judy Bethel (Edmonton East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition deals with euthanasia. The petitioners ask Parliament to reject euthanasia and physician assisted suicide in Canada and to expand palliative care that would be accessible to all dying Canadians.

## GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from the Langham area in the Kindersley—Lloydminster constituency.

The petition, duly certified by the clerk of petitions, states that the existing controls on law-abiding, responsible firearms owners are more than enough to ensure public safety.

*Routine Proceedings*

It goes on to say that the target of all gun control laws in the Criminal Code of Canada must be criminals who are either a danger to the safety of the public or those who have criminal intent, not law-abiding citizens.

No amount of gun control has ever succeeded in preventing criminals from acquiring guns. Therefore, the petitioners request three things of Parliament. First, that we support laws which would severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of crimes. Second, that we support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms. Third, the petitioners support legislation which will repeal and modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety or have proven not to be cost effective.

## PARLIAMENTARY PRAYER

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from residents of the city and county of Peterborough.

Whereas the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the Lord's Prayer has been included in the historic parliamentary prayer of the House of Commons since 1867, and whereas Canada was founded and built on the principles of Christianity and the large majority of Canadians profess the Christian faith, therefore the petitioners call on the House of Commons to close the parliamentary prayer with the words: "Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen", and reinstate the Lord's Prayer at the conclusion of the opening prayer.

## THE FAMILY

**Mrs. Rose-Marie Ur (Lambton—Middlesex, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to present a petition.

The petitioners call on Parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families who decide to provide care in the home for preschool children as well as for the disabled, the chronically ill and the aged.

## CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

**Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition signed by constituents of Victoria—Haliburton from such places as Bobcaygeon, Lindsay, Woodville, Dunsford and Downeyville.

The petitioners call on Parliament to request the CBC to withdraw its coverage of the Paul Bernardo trail.

## ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions.

The first is from petitioners in the Yukon territory who find it unacceptable that individuals die while in the custody of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Each incident of death while in custody undermines public confidence.

The petitioners therefore call on Parliament to review RCMP procedures for dealing with individuals in custody who are known to have medical conditions.

## GUN CONTROL

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from residents of the Yukon territory, from Dawson City, Yukon, who draw to the attention of the House that the use of firearms by criminals cannot be affected by a computerized firearms control system.

(1015)

The petitioners request that Parliament support only that legislation which severely punishes any violent criminal who uses a weapon and protects the rights and freedoms of the law-abiding recreational firearms community.

## AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions from people in my riding objecting to the generic manipulation of dairy cows through the injection of BST. Their argument seems to be that if Canada is not short of milk why would we unnecessarily risk health hazards that may go with this drug and if we need more milk, why not get more cows.

\* \* \*

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to ask the government House leader when I can expect to receive an answer to Question No. 137, which has been on the Order Paper since February 6, 1995.

I requested an answer from the government within 45 days and as of today 122 days have passed.

Yesterday the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader said I could expect to have an answer to my question soon. I find it hard to believe the Department of Justice does not have this information already. The minister said it is currently renegotiating financial agreements with the provinces to reimburse them for these costs.

It is vital that we have this information on the current costs of implementing the federal gun control laws before the final vote on Bill C-68.

*Government Orders*

Can the parliamentary secretary tell us what he means by soon? Will we have the answer before third reading of Bill C-68?

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot give any further undertaking to the hon. member than what I already have. I told him yesterday the answer will be provided soon. My answer is the same today.

**The Speaker:** Shall all questions stand?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**FIREARMS ACT**

BILL C-68—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that there has been an agreement pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 78(2) with respect to allocation of time for the report stage and the third reading stage of Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons. I therefore move, seconded by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs:

That, in relation to C-68, An Act respecting firearms and other weapons, not more than 6 hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage of the said bill and not more than six hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the third reading stage of the said bill and, at the expiry of the time provided for each stage, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purposes of this Order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the report stage or the third reading stage, as the case may be, of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

[English]

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** Call in the members.

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

(Division No. 248)

**YEAS**

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Allmand	Anderson
Arseneault	Assadourian
Augustine	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand	Bakopanos
Barnes	Bellemare
Bergeron	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Blondin-Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brien	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Belanger	Caccia
Campbell	Cannis
Canuel	Caron
Catterall	Chan
Clancy	Cohen
Collins	Copps
Cowling	Culbert
Deshaies	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dingwall
Discepola	Dubé
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Dupuy
Eggleton	English
Fillion	Finestone
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Gagliano
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Gagnon (Québec)
Galloway	Gauthier (Roberval)
Gerrard	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Guarnieri	Guimond
Harb	Harvard
Hickey	Hopkins
Hubbard	Ianno
Irwin	Jacob
Jordan	Kirkby
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lalonde	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Lebel
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lee	Loney
Loubier	MacAulay
MacLaren	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchand	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick
McKinnon	McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney	Mifflin
Milliken	Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)
Minna	Murphy
Murray	Nunez
O'Brien	O'Reilly
Ouellet	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Paré	Patry
Peters	Peterson
Phinney	Pillitteri
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Proud	Reed
Regan	Rideout
Ringuette-Maltais	Robichaud
Robillard	Rompkey
Sauvageau	Serré
Shepherd	Sheridan
Simmons	Skoke
St-Laurent	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Terrana	Torsney
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Venne
Walker	Whelan—152

*Points of Order*

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Benoit	Blaikie
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Bridgman	Brown (Calgary Southeast)
Duncan	Epp
Frazier	Gilmour
Grey (Beaver River)	Harper (Calgary West)
Harper (Simcoe Centre)	Harris
Hart	Hayes
Hermanson	Hoepfner
Jennings	Kerpan
Manning	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
Mayfield	McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)
McLaughlin	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Penson	Ramsay
Riis	Schmidt
Scott (Skeena)	Silye
Solberg	Solomon
Strahl	Thompson
White (Fraser Valley West)	Williams—42

## PAIRED—MEMBERS

Anawak	Assad
Asselin	Bellehumeur
Bernier (Gaspé)	Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Bouchard	Bélisle
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Collenette
Crête	Dalphond—Guiral
Debien	Dhaliwal
Gaffney	Godin
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guay	Jackson
Landry	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Lincoln	MacDonald
McGuire	Minna
Ménard	Payne
Picard (Drummond)	Richardson
Rocheleau	Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)
Tobin	Verran
Wells	Whelan
Young	de Savoye

(1100 )

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

**Ms. Fry:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I did not get here on time for the vote, but I want you to know that if I were here I would have voted with my party on this issue.

\* \* \*

## POINTS OF ORDER

## BILL C-68

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to bring a procedural matter to your attention.

Bill C-68 was tabled on February 14 with a royal recommendation. The Standing Committee on Justice did not rule a government amendment calling for the appropriation of funds from consolidated revenues out of order. However, on June 5, 1995, the chairman, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, ruled a series of amendments moved by the member for Hamilton Mountain on behalf of the member for Fredericton—York—Sunbury out of order as an expenditure of funds that would be necessary to affect the provisions.

On June 1, 1995, the vice-chairperson, the member for London West, with what appears to be without advice from the clerk of the committee, permitted clauses 98, 99, 100, 101, and 101.1 to be amended to replace certain duties of police officers in making the duties of firearms inspectors.

The parliamentary secretary stated that while police officers will also in some cases carry out the function of inspectors, in some areas the police are fully employed at present. These officers do not have the luxury to assume additional demands on their time. In those circumstances, inspectors will be hired and trained to enforce the Firearms Act.

I quote from the transcript of the committee proceedings:

Inspectors wouldn't be police officers. They may be in some smaller communities where the police officer could do this role, but in most communities the police officers' time is so taken up right now that to give the police officers these additional tasks would not be reasonable. In most cases they would be separate. New inspectors would be hired and trained to fulfil the role.

(1105 )

Obviously this new provision in the bill will result in an expenditure of funds. The Governor General has not provided the House with the required recommendation in this regard. I would quote from citation 598 of Beauchesne's:

No cases can be found of any private member receiving the authority of the Crown to propose a bill or motion involving either the expenditure of public money or an increase in taxation.

The royal recommendation included in Bill C-68 did not contemplate the appropriation of public revenue for the expenditure outlined in the government amendments G-41, G-42, G-43, G-44, and G-46.

Furthermore, the Constitution Act of 1867, section 54, states:

It shall not be lawful for the House of Commons to adopt or pass any Vote, Resolution, Address, or Bill for the Appropriation of any Part of the Public Revenue, or of any Tax or Impost, to any Purpose that has not been first recommended to that House by Message of the Governor General in Session in which such Vote, Resolution, Address, or Bill is proposed.

I will not take the time of the House, but I could also quote from citations 595 and 596 of Beauchesne's, which also verify this requirement.

*Government Orders*

The first government amendment was not ruled out of order by the vice-chair of the committee. Whether that was due to lack of experience or the lack of procedural advice from the clerk is no longer at issue here. With respect, what is at issue is Bill C-68, as reported to this House on Wednesday, June 7, 1995, is not lawful.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to review the minutes of the committee to verify that what I have presented to you is absolutely correct and accurate.

I have one short additional comment. This bill was reported yesterday. The government has not even seen all of the amendments. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I bring two points to your attention. Drafters have not had time to draft amendments, so they have not all been tabled. In spite of this, the government has moved time allocation and closure on this bill. If this is not illegal, it is certainly immoral.

Second, I believe that it is not only imperative but it is your duty, Mr. Speaker, to not permit debate on Bill C-68 until you have ruled on this matter.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the Chair will recognize, this bill is not called today. Therefore, any royal recommendation that would be required, if such were required, would not be required today in any instance.

You can be sure, Mr. Speaker, because of the government's tremendous respect for the rules of the House, that the royal recommendation that is required will be provided when it is required.

**The Speaker:** There has been a request that I make a review of what has gone on. I will make that review and come back to the House today with my decision on this particular matter.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CRIMINAL CODE**

## BILL C-41—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that there has been an agreement pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 78(2) with respect to allocation of time for the report stage and the third reading stage of Bill C-41, an act to amend the Criminal Code (sentencing) and other acts in consequence thereof. I therefore move, seconded by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs:

That, in relation to Bill C-41, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (sentencing) and other Acts in consequence thereof, not more than six hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage of the said bill and not more than six hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the third reading stage, of the said bill and, at the expiry of the time provided for each stage, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purposes of this Order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the report stage or the third reading stage, as the case may

be, of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

(1110)

[English]

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion, the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** Call in the members.

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

(Division No. 249)

**YEAS**

## Members

Adams	Alcock
Allmand	Anderson
Arseneault	Assadourian
Augustine	Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)
Bachand	Bakopanos
Barnes	Bellemare
Bergeron	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Blondin—Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brien	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Bélanger	Caccia
Campbell	Cannis
Canuel	Caron
Catterall	Chan
Clancy	Cohen
Collins	Copps
Cowling	Culbert
Deshaies	DeVillers
Dhaliwal	Dingwall
Discepola	Dubé
Duceppe	Duhamel
Dumas	Dupuy
Eggleton	English
Fillion	Finestone
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Fry
Gagliano	Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Gagnon (Québec)	Galloway
Gauthier (Roberval)	Gerrard
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Guarnieri
Guimond	Harb
Harvard	Hickey
Hopkins	Hubbard
Ianno	Irvin
Jacob	Jordan
Kirkby	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lalonde
Laurin	Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)
Lebel	LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)
Leblanc (Longueuil)	Lee
Loney	Loubier

*Government Orders*

MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Marchi  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McCormick  
McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)  
Mifflin  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nunez  
O'Reilly  
Pagtakhan  
Parrish  
Patry  
Peterson  
Pillitteri  
Pomerleau  
Reed  
Rideout  
Robichaud  
Rompkey  
Serré  
Sheridan  
St-Laurent  
Steckle  
Stewart (Northumberland)  
Terrana  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Walker

MacLaren  
Maloney  
Marchand  
Marleau  
Massé  
McKinnon  
McWhinney  
Milliken  
Mitchell  
Murray  
O'Brien  
Ouellet  
Paradis  
Paré  
Peters  
Phinney  
Plamondon  
Proud  
Regan  
Ringuette—Maltais  
Robillard  
Sauvageau  
Shepherd  
Simmons  
St. Denis  
Stewart (Brant)  
Szabo  
Torsney  
Tremblay (Rosemont)  
Valeri  
Venne  
Whelan—152

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

\* \* \*

(1120)

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT RETIRING  
ALLOWANCES ACT**

BILL C-85—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House that there has been an agreement pursuant to Standing Order 78(2) with respect to allocation of time for the report stage and the third reading stage of Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act and to provide for the continuation of a certain provision.

I therefore move:

That, in relation to Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act and to provide for the continuation of a certain provision, not more than four hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage of the said bill and not more than four hours shall be allotted to the consideration of the third reading stage of the said bill, and at the expiry of the time provided for each stage, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purposes of this order, and in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the report stage or the third reading stage, as the case may be, of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** Call in the members.

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

(Division No. 250)

**YEAS**

Members

Alcock  
Anderson  
Assadourian  
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)  
Bakopanos

**NAYS**

Members

Abbott  
Benoit  
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)  
Bridgman  
Epp  
Gilmour  
Harper (Calgary West)  
Harris  
Hayes  
Hoepfner  
Kerpan  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Penson  
Riis  
Scott (Skeena)  
Solberg  
Strahl  
White (Fraser Valley West)

Ablonczy  
Blaikie  
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)  
Duncan  
Frazer  
Grey (Beaver River)  
Harper (Simcoe Centre)  
Hart  
Hermanson  
Jennings  
Manning  
Mayfield  
Meredith  
Morrison  
Ramsay  
Schmidt  
Silye  
Solomon  
Thompson  
Williams—40

**PAIRED—MEMBERS**

Anawak  
Asselin  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Bouchard  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Crête  
Debien  
Gaffney  
Gray (Windsor West)  
Guay  
Landry  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Lincoln  
McGuire  
Ménard  
Picard (Drummond)  
Rocheleau  
Tobin  
Wells  
Young

Assad  
Bellehumeur  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Bélisle  
Collenette  
Dalphond—Guiral  
Dhaliwal  
Godin  
Grose  
Jackson  
Lefebvre  
Leroux (Shefford)  
MacDonald  
Minna  
Payne  
Richardson  
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)  
Verran  
Whelan  
de Savoye

Adams  
Allmand  
Arseneault  
Augustine  
Bachand

*Government Orders*

Barnes	Bellemare
Bergeron	Bertrand
Bethel	Bevilacqua
Blondin—Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brien	Brown (Oakville—Milton)
Brushett	Bryden
Bélanger	Campbell
Cannis	Canuel
Caron	Catterall
Chan	Clancy
Cohen	Collins
Copps	Cowling
Culbert	Deshaies
DeVillers	Dhaliwal
Dingwall	Discepola
Dubé	Duceppe
Duhamel	Dumas
Dupuy	Eggleton
English	Fillion
Finestone	Finlay
Flis	Fontana
Fry	Gagliano
Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)	Gagnon (Québec)
Galloway	Gauthier (Roberval)
Gerrard	Godfrey
Goodale	Graham
Guarnieri	Guimond
Harb	Harvard
Hickey	Hopkins
Hubbard	Ianno
Irwin	Jacob
Jordan	Kirkby
Knutson	Kraft Sloan
Lalonde	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Lebel
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	Leblanc (Longueuil)
Lee	Loney
Loubier	MacAulay
MacLaren	Malhi
Maloney	Manley
Marchand	Marchi
Marleau	Martin (LaSalle—Émard)
Massé	McCormick
McKinnon	McLellan (Edmonton Northwest)
McWhinney	Mifflin
Milliken	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nunez
O'Brien	O'Reilly
Ouellet	Pagtakhan
Paradis	Parrish
Paré	Patry
Peters	Peterson
Phinney	Pillitteri
Plamondon	Pomerleau
Proud	Reed
Regan	Rideout
Ringuette—Maltais	Robichaud
Robillard	Rompkey
Sauvageau	Serré
Shepherd	Sheridan
Simmons	Skoke
St-Laurent	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Terrana	Torsney
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)	Tremblay (Rosemont)
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Venne
Walker	Whelan—152

## NAYS

## Members

Abbott	Ablonczy
Benoit	Blaikie

Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)	Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)
Bridgman	Duncan
Epp	Frazer
Gilmour	Grey (Beaver River)
Harper (Calgary West)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Harris	Hart
Hayes	Hermanson
Hoepfner	Jennings
Kerpan	Manning
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)	Mayfield
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Penson	Ramsay
Riis	Schmidt
Scott (Skeena)	Silye
Solberg	Solomon
Strahl	Thompson
White (Fraser Valley West)	Williams—40

## PAIRED—MEMBERS

Anawak	Assad
Asselin	Bellehumeur
Bernier (Gaspé)	Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)
Bouchard	Bélisle
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Collenette
Crête	Dalphond—Guiral
Debien	Dhaliwal
Gaffney	Godin
Gray (Windsor West)	Grose
Guay	Jackson
Landry	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Lincoln	MacDonald
McGuire	Minna
Ménard	Payne
Picard (Drummond)	Richardson
Rocheleau	Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)
Tobin	Verran
Wells	Whelan
Young	de Savoye

(1130)

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

\* \* \*

## CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD ACT

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-92, an act to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before I get into the substance of my remarks today I should advise the House that in a few minutes I have to attend a meeting of the cabinet and I regret that I will not be able to remain for the entire debate this morning. I extend my apologies particularly to the official spokespersons for the opposition parties. They may rest assured I will from the record in *Hansard* read very carefully what they have to say about this important legislation.

As I open debate on Bill C-92, certain amendments to the Canadian Wheat Board Act, I begin with a sincere request to all hon. members to help facilitate in the House the timely passage

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of various pieces of agricultural legislation now before Parliament.

In addition to Bill C-92 I think of the amendments to the Farm Improvement and Marketing Co-operatives Loans Act, FIMCLA, which will double to \$3 billion the volume of agricultural loans from the private sector financial institutions which can qualify for government guarantees, thus enhancing the availability of loan capital for farmers across the country.

By the end of July we will have bumped up against the existing \$1.5 billion ceiling for FIMCLA loans across the country. To avoid a hiatus in this very useful program Parliament needs to enact the proposed amendments to raise the ceiling before we adjourn for the summer and I certainly trust that can be done.

I think of the amendments to our dairy legislation which will provide the legal framework to allow the Canadian dairy industry to implement certain price pooling techniques beginning this fall.

(1135)

This initiative is essential to enable our dairy industry to position itself to comply with new international trade rules coming into effect this year under the new GATT. Again, time is very much of the essence. Parliamentary approval before the summer recess is vitally important.

With respect to both the FIMCLA amendments and the dairy amendments there is virtually unanimous support among all the various stakeholders in our agriculture and agri-food sector and there is obviously clear urgency.

I ask all hon. members and also our colleagues in the other place to ensure these amendments are fully completed before we rise for the summer break.

The same arguments apply to Bill C-92. These amendments to the Canadian Wheat Board Act are urgent. They need to be in place before August 1, 1995, the beginning of the new crop year in western Canada. They enjoy broad support among the majority of farm organizations.

In effect we are moving ahead with these amendments at this time in direct response to the requests of those western farm organizations. I trust my parliamentary colleagues will co-operate in facilitating timely passage.

Bill C-92 deals with the long standing system by which freight costs are pooled among prairie farmers under the Canadian Wheat Board marketing system. Under this system western Canadian grain producers share common costs of shipping their wheat and barley from Canadian export ports to market destinations around the world.

The ports traditionally used as the points of departure for our overseas sales have been Vancouver and Thunder Bay because the world market value of grain in store at each of these two

locations, one going east and the other going west, have been effectively the same.

Over the past decade or so changes in international marketing patterns have altered that historic equilibrium between Vancouver and Thunder Bay. In relative terms the effective world market value of grain in store at Thunder Bay has declined while the comparable value at Vancouver has increased.

To restore the balance in export values between grain moving west and grain moving east the eastern point of departure needs to be located in the lower St. Lawrence region, not at Thunder Bay. This change carries several different implications for prairie farmers in the returns they will receive on their wheat board sales.

Overall it will increase the amount all wheat and barley producers receive because the wheat board's total freight costs will be reduced. This will happen because the board's pooled costs will no longer include the seaway charges. The board's costs will be calculated from the lower St. Lawrence instead of Thunder Bay. The net result will be a general price improvement across the prairies of between \$5 and \$7 a tonne.

At the same time it needs to be noted that for producers in Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan who ship their grain east, their domestic shipping costs to get their grain into final export position will increase because they will absorb their own costs to the lower St. Lawrence and not just to Thunder Bay.

Going in the other direction producers in Alberta and western Saskatchewan who ship their grain west will no longer cross subsidize a portion of the domestic freight bill for more easterly located producers. They will pay only their own costs going to the west coast.

For many years farmers in the western part of the prairies have complained that the use of Thunder Bay as the wheat board's eastern point of departure for export sales was both unrealistic and unfair in that it added costs to those western producers and they were bearing those costs unfairly.

Farmers in the eastern part of the prairies have acknowledge this anomaly in the freight pooling system but they have worried, understandably so, about the higher domestic costs they would face if the eastern point of departure were shifted from Thunder Bay to the lower St. Lawrence.

Many discussions on how to fix the problem fairly have been held over the years dating back at least to 1985.

(1140)

In our February 1995 federal budget we served notice that the time had come to implement a solution. We proposed to provide a final period of time for final consultations with all of the stakeholders with the necessary changes to be made as of August 1, 1996.

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Since the budget over the past three months intensive discussions with prairie farm organizations, the grain companies and co-operatives, the wheat board and provincial governments have led to a strong consensus that this issue can and should be resolved more quickly.

The industry has told me we should begin implementing the change in the freight pooling system on August 1 of this year, not next year, with the full impact to be phased in over three years.

As we said at the time of our February budget, a portion of the federal government's multiyear, \$300 million transportation adjustment fund will be utilized to ease the impact of the freight cost pooling change on those most affected, namely farmers in Manitoba and in the eastern part of Saskatchewan.

For the 1995-96 crop year, since this change is being announced at a relatively late date and farmers have already made their production decisions for 1995, the available federal assistance will be designed as compensation to offset a very significant portion of the affected farmers' increased costs in the eastern prairies. For two additional years the federal assistance may be more flexible and more in the nature of adaptation encouragement in the affected area. This was the consensus of the western grains industry.

I have undertaken to try before the end of June to be very precise about the portion of the \$300 million fund which will be available over the next three years to help address the impact of the pooling change.

While we are still working on all of the necessary calculations, I have informed the western grains industry I would estimate the available funding for this purpose to be in the order of some \$100 million in total spread over a three year period. Depending on how we are able to apportion that very substantial sum year by year this level of transitional funding has a high level of industry support.

While the proposed freight pooling changes are now scheduled subject to parliamentary approval to begin to come into effect on August 1, 1995, the same date on which railway subsidies under the Western Grain Transportation Act will come to an end, it should be clear the cost changes which result from the pooling issue are separate and apart from the WGTA changes; the two should not be confused.

The WGTA subsidy is being eliminated for four very strong reasons: to comply with new world trading rules, to increase grain transportation efficiencies, to end freight rate discrimination against greater diversification and value added economic growth, and because the WGTA subsidy in excess of \$560

million each year is no longer sustainable in the face of a \$500 billion government debt.

By contrast, the freight pooling system has never involved a government subsidy. It has constituted instead a hidden form of cross subsidization among different groups of farmers, with those in Alberta and western Saskatchewan absorbing some freight costs on behalf of those in Manitoba and in the eastern part of Saskatchewan. Bill C-92 will end this anomaly. The cross subsidization will be phased out and significant transitional funding will ease the impact on those most affected.

Like the other agricultural bills I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, Bill C-92 enjoys good support among the stakeholders in our agricultural sector. It is very time sensitive and must be enacted before Parliament adjourns later this month.

I invite all hon. members to ensure its passage in a prompt and timely manner.

(1145)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac, BQ):** Madam Speaker, you will agree it is quite an honour for the official opposition critic for agriculture and agri-food to speak to a bill introduced by the Minister of Agriculture himself.

The purpose of Bill C-92 is to amend the Canadian Wheat Board—often referred to as the CWB—Act. It proposes to change the way transportation costs are shared by Prairie wheat and barley producers. As a result, prices paid by the CWB to farmers will more closely reflect actual transportation costs.

Currently, the calculation is based on the distance between the farm and so-called pooling points. In other words, from the farm to the port of delivery. The two pooling points are now Vancouver and Thunder Bay. The cost of shipping grain through the St. Lawrence Seaway from Thunder Bay is paid by the Wheat Board. This means the cost is shared by all Prairie producers, irrespective of the port they happen to use or their geographical location.

Of course the port of Thunder Bay does not have the facilities to handle large ocean-going vessels. Wheat and barley will be loaded onto ships that can negotiate the locks and the Great Lakes, and the wheat will be transhipped in one of the ports on the St. Lawrence. The bill does not say which ports. It just says "in the lower St. Lawrence region". The lower St. Lawrence is pretty big. The hon. member for Beauséjour will appreciate that these ports could include Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, Trois-Rivières, Quebec City, and Montreal. And there are other ports along the St. Lawrence.

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For instance, it could be Baie-Comeau. The grain will then be transferred to huge ships with up to three times the capacity of those coming from Thunder Bay.

The cost of shipping grain through the St. Lawrence Seaway from Thunder Bay is paid, as I said earlier, by the Canadian Wheat Board. This means the costs are shared by all Prairie producers. Producers from the western Prairies who send their grain west to the port of Vancouver are paying part of the cost for farmers from the eastern Prairies whose grain is shipped through the St. Lawrence Seaway. In other words, western Prairie farmers are subsidizing eastern Prairie farmers.

Bill C-92 will shift the pooling point from Thunder Bay to the St. Lawrence Seaway. You will remember, Madam Speaker, if you were listening carefully, but I will repeat, nevertheless, that it is not spelled out which ports along the St. Lawrence Seaway will be part of this new pooling point, but I am told it might be Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, Trois-Rivières, or Quebec City, and possibly other ports along the St. Lawrence.

In this way, eastern Prairie farmers who send their grain through the St. Lawrence Seaway will pay the real cost instead of being subsidized by western Prairie producers. This change will have an impact on the price Prairie farmers will get for their grain.

(1150)

The amount the CWB pays all wheat and barley producers in general will increase. It will increase because the CWB will no longer pay the cost of transportation from Thunder Bay to the St. Lawrence Seaway, since transportation costs are combined and deducted proportionately from market revenues distributed among all producers. This will affect prices.

In the future, they will be calculated from St. Lawrence ports, rather than from Thunder Bay. Producers in Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan shipping their grain east will pay increased domestic shipping costs, because they will now have to assume the real costs of shipping via ports on the lower St. Lawrence and not just via the port of Thunder Bay.

However, producers in western Saskatchewan and Alberta will no longer have to subsidize a part of the domestic transportation costs of producers living further east. Farmers in the western prairies have been saying for years that the Canadian Wheat Board's choice of Thunder Bay as the point of departure for exports to the east was unrealistic and meant additional and unfair costs for them. I agree with them. Farmers in the eastern prairies have always been aware of this anomaly, but are, understandably, somewhat anxious about the way it is being changed, because it will certainly lower their returns.

This change could take effect this August 1—in two months and three weeks, approximately—if Bill C-92, which we are discussing this morning, is adopted. The bill would indeed

affect the returns of producers in various regions. A producer in the eastern prairies living in Brandon, Manitoba, for example, will have a \$5.81 a tonne decrease in returns. He was previously dealing with the port of Thunder Bay, but will now have to use a port on the Lower St. Lawrence, which will decrease his returns by \$5.81 a tonne.

When there is talk of a decrease of \$5.81 per tonne, you must admit, Madam Speaker, that things are getting lean. Producers' net returns are being pared to the bone. The initial freight deduction would increase from \$20.34 per tonne to \$31.14 per tonne. However, due to a \$4.99—almost \$5—per tonne higher return from the CWB because of the elimination of the pooled shipping costs, the net effect would be a \$5.81 per tonne decrease in returns. If you subtract \$20.34 from \$31.14, you get \$10 and some loose change, minus the \$4.99 per tonne producers will not have to pay, hence a decrease in returns of \$5.81 per tonne, as I said before.

Obviously, when you look at it on a per tonne basis, it does not amount to much, but for a big grain producer, it adds up to a very substantial amount. The first example was located in the eastern portion of western Canada, in Manitoba. However, if we go further west, and take the example of a producer located near Calgary, Alberta, his return would not decrease but increase by \$4.99, let us say \$5 per tonne.

(1155)

And yet, in Calgary, the initial freight deduction would remain the same at \$22.19, because freight is still deducted to Vancouver only. However, with the increase in the CWB pool return because of the elimination of the pooled shipping costs from Thunder Bay, since all producers were contributing an additional amount, the net effect for producers in the Calgary area would be a \$4.99 per tonne increase in returns.

I realize that all this talk about increasing and decreasing returns might be very technical for my colleagues in the House. But the many western grain producers who are listening to us this afternoon understand perfectly well what I am talking about. They know what it means to gain or lose \$5 a ton; it is not an inconsequential amount. If they sell a ton of wheat for \$135, a difference of \$5 represents an additional income, or a loss, of 3.5 to 4 per cent, and a difference of 3.5 or 4 per cent is very important. Unions are fighting these days for new collective agreements with a 2 or 3 per cent wage increase, and they often have to go through several months of strike to get that.

Since we of the Bloc Québécois came to Ottawa, 18 months ago already, our position on the transport subsidies has always been very clear. We strongly support deregulating. A system which conceals true prices with subsidies given left and right only brings the type of results we see today, that is a major distortion of markets. And that is exactly what we experienced.

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The rail system, as it now operates, is proof enough of that. The criteria used to determine if a railway line should stay open are not the same in the west and in the east. In Western Canada, surprisingly enough, and I want to point this out to my Quebec colleagues in particular, a railway line is supposed to operate in the best interests of the public; in the east however, and especially in Quebec, it must be cost effective.

Let me mention the case of the Quebec Central Railway line which goes from Sherbrooke, through Lévis, to Vallée-Jonction and then from Vallée-Jonction to Lac-Frontière and St-Georges de Beauce, a total distance of 382 kilometres. Quebec Central always neglected its clients and gave poor service on that line; so it lost its clients one after the other. In my opinion, this was planned, to prove to the National Transportation Agency that the Chaudière-Vallée line was not viable. Finally, last year at about this time, Quebec Central, through its parent company Canadian Pacific, requested and obtained permission from the National Transportation Agency to abandon this line.

Of course, politicians, economic stakeholders and the regional county municipalities protested against this abandonment because, once more, we in this great and beautiful country of ours were up against distortions and double standards.

A secondary line similar to the one I mentioned which goes through Thetford and East Broughton, in my riding, would not have been abandoned in the west even if it had not been viable, because it would have been in the public interest. There is a double standard.

(1200)

The result is that some railway lines, in Quebec especially, which served small and medium size municipalities were abandoned to offset the financial losses of other secondary lines in the west. Needless to say, we will be supporting Bill C-92, because we are in favour of people paying the real cost of transportation, and because we want to put an end to the market distortions that we presently have.

This morning I was at a sitting of the Standing Committee on Agriculture where we heard witnesses representing dairy farmers. I knew that a litre of milk cost about \$1.06 but this morning I learned that there was a threshold price of 98 cents, below which the retailer cannot sell his milk, and a ceiling of \$1.09, above which the same retailer cannot sell. Most consumers believe that the dairy producers get about 70 cents or 75 cents on this amount of \$1.09.

Could you tell me, madam Speaker, what portion of the \$1.05 or \$1.09 that you probably paid for your litre of milk yesterday goes directly to the producer? This is not a trick question, Madam Speaker. You do not have the slightest idea, and this is not surprising. If I were to ask the same question to the vast majority of my hon. colleagues in the House, most of them

would not be able to tell me what portion goes directly to the dairy producers.

Personally, I thought that the producer was getting 50 cents, but it is not even that much. This morning, we were told that the producer was getting 56 cents. You might say that it is more than 50 cents, but on that amount, the producer must pay the transportation costs from his farm to the dairy, or 18 cents. So, if you deduct 18 cents from the 56 cents, you end up with 38 cents.

So the producer gets 38 cents for each litre of milk he produces. Did you know that big dairies have to pay some fees to the retailer to be able to place their product on the display racks? You did not know that. It is very costly.

So a producer gets 38 cents per litre and the dairy will pay up to 20.5 cents to the store owner. The farm producer must feed, milk, and tend the cows, and keep them in a clean environment, which is costly and brings him only 38 cents per litre, whereas the retailer gets 20.5 cents per litre. This is totally unfair. Unfortunately, the vast majority of consumers are not aware of these facts.

(1205)

I see my colleague from Charlesbourg, who is a veterinarian, and who treated several dairy herds in his practice. He was probably not aware of the fact that dairies have to give 20.5 cents to be able to sell their milk.

I would also like to point out that, in Canada, almost 80 per cent of the markets are shared between four main distributors, four main grocery chains. So they can decide, for example, whether they want to have the products of a particular dairy in their store or not.

In the end, who foots the bill? The consumers. Every year, I see dairy producers asking for an increase. I suppose that in August, the Canadian Dairy Commission will be hearing from the dairy producers that they want to get an increase. They will explain, in great detail, the effects of the 30 per cent cut in subsidies, which will come into effect in a few weeks or a few months, as well as the increase in production costs. I can assure you that the increase will be much more than only a few cents and a small fraction. The increase will have to be justified, when in fact there is no need to justify it to anyone.

I want to get back to Bill C-92. Furthermore, the amendment made to the bill does not involve taxpayers' pockets in any way. In fact, what it involves is a change in the system that affects only the grain growers. So, it is only a matter of setting transportation costs more fairly to reflect reality.

Though we can easily see that this amendment is more suited to the wishes of producers in the western part of the prairies than of those further to the east, we would be severely judged if we interfered in the internal business of grain producers.

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However I have doubts about some clauses. By lowering returns of eastern prairie producers, Bill C-92 could well cause a reduction in quantities of grain shipped through the St. Lawrence Seaway. It would be very useful to know the extent of this possible reduction in order to be able to prevent the loss of too many jobs in the ports of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

I would appreciate very much if somebody on the other side, and I am thinking in particular of my colleague and friend for Beauséjour, could respond to this legitimate concern of stakeholders.

The other curious aspect of this bill is that it allows for the use of the grain transportation adjustment fund which, worth \$300 million. Around \$100 million could be allocated to ensure a smooth transition. At the outset, a \$300 million fund over a five-year period was put aside for western grain producers. But in the next three years \$100 million will be spread between Thunder Bay and the ports of the St. Lawrence Seaway and there is talk of spending some \$40 million for the 1995-96 crop year starting at the end of summer.

This fund was meant to help producers adjust to the new situation, not to maintain the illusion, I repeat, the illusion that freight subsidies are still in place. Fortunately the agriculture minister said a few words about that earlier.

(1210)

You know, in Quebec, we thought that this government was much more generous towards western grain producers than towards farmers in the east.

Western farm owners or tenants will receive \$1.6 billion in direct subsidies. Considering that, in the west, 35 per cent of farms are leased, will this money be given to the owner or the tenant? No decision has been made yet. This \$1.6 billion equals \$18 an acre, and it is tax-free. Quite a gift.

If you find a \$100 bill in the street, you put it in your pocket and do not declare it on your tax return. This is about the same thing. It is a gift, a present from the Liberal government.

Personally, I think it is too much, but grain producers think it is not enough. Liberals saw that in the Manitoba elections. They were almost sure to win, but only managed to get a few of their candidates elected. A real slap in the face. I have more fingers than I need on this hand to count the Manitoba Liberal members. My colleague for Chicoutimi reminds me that there are three of them.

According to opinion polls, the Liberal Party of Canada seems to be very healthy. We could try to find reasons for that. But once in the booth, it seems that Canadians often change their mind. We will see tonight, at 8 o'clock, if the policies and openness of

this government really reflect reality when we know the results of the Ontario election.

A few weeks ago, in Ontario, Ms. Lyn McLeod was on cloud nine survey after survey; some of them gave more than 55 per cent of the votes to her Liberal Party. I remember that many of my colleagues in this House were bragging during statements by members. They were saying that Ontarians are intelligent, nice, that they know what they are doing, so they will vote for Lyn McLeod and the Liberal Party in Ontario.

Today, Ontario Liberals have changed their tune. Now, they say that Ontarians are being exploited, that they are naive and do not get the message. That is funny, they are not nice Ontarians any more. Six weeks ago, they were beautiful, nice, smart and today, they are not as much.

There are 99 federal ridings in Ontario. Only one is represented by one of my Reform colleagues, 98 out of 99 are Liberal. Does that really reflect reality? I do not think so. I had the opportunity on several occasions to go to Toronto in the last months. I was able to see that the Liberal Party was not enjoying the fine reputation that some here seemed to be bragging about.

(1215)

I am inviting the hon. member for Beauséjour to my apartment tonight to watch the election results on the French information network in a friendly atmosphere.

To complete my remarks on Bill C-92, the \$100 million to be allocated for adjustment purposes should be available only over the next three years. Farmers should not become dependent on this fund—it should not become a kind of antibiotic—since we might as well go back to the WGTA we have lived with for 98 years, which everyone wanted to revoke but did not dare do so for fear of creating uncertainty.

In three years, this \$100 million will be gone, but it would be a shame if producers were left high and dry. This approach may simply delay the problem for three years. Why is this fund not used to really help people adapt or take early retirement?

We in the Bloc Québécois will support Bill C-92, to compensate a little for market distortion, but this does not mean in any way that Bill C-92 does not have flaws that could perhaps be corrected.

Since I still have a few minutes left, allow me to get back to the problem facing most farmers in Quebec, Ontario and the maritimes. I referred earlier to the amounts the federal government is going to give western grain producers. There is a tax-free \$1.6 billion, the \$300 million adjustment fund to be spent over five years, and another \$1 billion to promote agricultural exports.

The Minister of Agriculture is being very honest. He said earlier that the main purpose of reducing, of revoking the WGTA

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is to diversify western agriculture and create value-added industries. Nothing could be better than creating value-added industries for our agricultural products. This is not a Canadian invention. All the countries in the world want added value, not for Canada but for themselves.

The proof is that Japan does not buy canola oil; it buys canola and makes its own oil, fats and margarine. That is quite normal. The Japanese are not crazy. I understand perfectly what they are doing. They come here and buy our wheat, but do their own milling and make their own flour. They do not buy wheat flour in bags. They do the value adding in their own country. They do not come here and buy loaves of bread just to please us. They buy wheat from us and bake their own bread at home.

We will have to play our cards right and, more importantly, be innovative in creating new products and carefully protecting the manufacturing processes, so that no one can come and copy them. So, every one is in favour of value adding, but the concern Quebecers and Ontarians in particular have is that federal subsidies could be used to diversify western agriculture, which would then compete with us on our own markets. I discussed this matter with two colleagues from the Reform Party; one is from Western Canada and the other from Ontario.

(1220)

Of course, that is more or less what they are up to, but as long as I sit in this house, rest assured, Madam Speaker, that I will look after the interests of the people of Quebec, particularly those of the riding of Frontenac whom I represent. At the risk of ruffling the feathers of our western colleagues, I will say out loud what we, Quebecers, know how to use our brains.

I should point out that there is a new phenomenon at work in this House, and I hope that the people of Quebec will not repeat the mistake they made in 1970, 1972, 1976 and 1978, when they elected to this place 74 Liberal members—you are right, Madam Speaker, to whisper the figure to me—out of a maximum of 75, the exception being my pal Roch LaSalle, who had to run a one-man opposition from Quebec in this place.

We have seen what good it did Quebec to be represented by so many good Liberals, who were supposed to stand up for us. Just think of the War Measures Act. My hon. colleague will no doubt remember that, while there were only a handful of FLQ members, 498 people were arrested without any warrant, and detained for weeks. Tactics used in Russia and others totalitarian states were applied in Canada in the days of the good old Liberal Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Léopold Corriveau, the member who represented my riding at the time, voted for the War Measures Act, a bludgeon law only fit for totalitarian states. Yet, any time a totalitarian state implements such measures, the Canadian government, the world

leader of democratic governments, is the first to protest and make representations against them.

Last week, in the region where I live, young people from my village were collecting money to buy postage stamps to send letters to Latin-American countries, on behalf of Amnesty International, asking that prisoners of conscience, not to say political prisoners, be released.

I still admire Pauline Julien, but I admired her even more when I was a teenager, for her wonderful songs. Her husband, the late lamented Gérald Godin, was jailed under the War Measures Act. That very feeling man told himself: "In the next election, I will run against the man who contributed to having me unfairly imprisoned, and I will win". That man was one of your friends, Robert Bourassa, in 1976. He was soundly defeated in a French-speaking riding of Montreal's east end by Gérald Godin, who had been illegally jailed under the War Measures Act. That legislation had been supported by 74 Liberal members, with only one opposing it. This is a real shame.

Quebecers' motto is "Je me souviens", I remember. We do remember, but we are very ashamed.

I am pleased to participate in the debate on this bill, but it makes me relive all these episodes, and all the injustices done to Quebec in the past.

(1225)

I do hope that the day is soon coming when Quebecers will have a country of their own, collect their own taxes, draft their own legislation, and manage their own affairs as they see fit, and I also hope that there will be nothing untoward that we would live to regret for the rest of our lives. Liberal members opposite will have to live with the War Measures Act of 1970 for the rest of theirs.

*[English]*

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am here today to debate Bill C-92, which is a bill to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act. I find I have today less energy and less enthusiasm for debate and participation in the House than I should have and would normally have.

We witnessed in the House less than an hour ago an action that makes me sad and angry at the same time. What we have seen is the Liberal government, a government that campaigned on a more open and honest type of government, a government that campaigned on improving the democratic system in the House, invoke closure on three bills that are very important to Canadians and that Canadians want to be debated fully in the House.

One of these bills is Bill C-41, the bill that will allow the courts to impose greater sentences on those convicted of crimes motivated by hate. Hate can be based on many—

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**Mr. McKinnon:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to question the relevancy of what the member is speaking on in connection with Bill C-92.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** I request the member for Vegreville relate his remarks to the bill before the House.

**Mr. Benoit:** Madam Speaker, as members will see as I go along, one of the aspects I deal with in regard to this legislation is the lack of democracy in the Canadian Wheat Board. That is related to this bill. I make these comments and they will be tied in to my presentation later.

I can understand the member's not wanting me to bring up the issue of closure. He should be ashamed. It is important that I do, and it will strengthen my argument later when I talk about the lack of democracy in the Canadian Wheat Board.

Three bills now have had closure invoked by the Liberal government. They are bills that are very important to Canadians and they should have full debate in the House.

This follows on the heels of the corruption we have seen in the government on the part of the heritage minister, which has not been dealt with by the Prime Minister, who would have called for the resignation of the heritage minister had he been willing to deal with this issue the way he should. It really makes it difficult for me to gather any kind of enthusiasm to debate any bill, including this bill, Bill C-92, having to follow that kind of performance on the part of this government.

I will discuss Bill C-92 today under three basic categories. First I will talk about what the bill is, what is in the bill and what should be in the bill. Second, I will talk about the impact on grain farmers and on the grain industry of this legislation if it is passed as it has been presented. Third, I will talk about how this bill fails to deal with the broader changes that are needed in the Canadian Wheat Board, including the democratic changes I alluded to.

(1230)

The bill is another attempt to tinker with a system that needs major change. I am talking about the Canadian Wheat Board, an organization which I think Reformers support. I believe there is widespread support in the Reform Party for the Canadian Wheat Board and our policy demonstrates this. There is also widespread support for reform of the Canadian Wheat Board particularly to make it more responsive to farmers who after all pay for the full cost of operating the board and whom the board exists to serve.

The bill is a move in the right direction and will provide a move toward a more market driven and more transparent system, at least in this one very narrow area of freight pooling. However, this bill is tinkering with the system when we should have broad legislation which would completely change the Canadian Wheat Board as it exists today.

The tinkering is because of other changes that have been implemented in the transportation system with the trade agreements in the grain handling system. I believe even these changes are not wanted by the minister and certainly not by the Canadian Wheat Board, but they are needed to keep up with the times.

Bill C-92 if passed will make changes to the Canadian Wheat Board Act which will allow changes to the Canadian Wheat Board's freight pooling system. Farmers from eastern Saskatchewan and all of Manitoba will pay higher freight costs, while farmers from western Saskatchewan and Alberta and the Peace River block of British Columbia which is in the Canadian Wheat Board area will pay lower freight costs. This change in freight costs will reflect more accurately the actual cost of moving the grain from these locations. In this regard the bill does provide a move in the right direction.

I have many concerns about the bill. It includes very little in terms of detail. The bill will allow for the changes which will make the freight costs that farmers are paying much closer to what the market would indicate they should be but there is very little in the bill that will ensure these changes will take place. There is nothing in the bill that says it must happen. There are only changes that will allow it to happen. This is of great concern to me. Any changes that are made will be made by order in council, by the minister and cabinet.

While there is some background information on the numbers and the specifics of the changes, there is very little detail of this in the legislation. We will push for amendments that will add some certainty to the legislation as to just what kinds of dollar changes will be made in the freight costs for farmers across western Canada with regard to wheat board grain.

The bill only applies to board grains which are wheat and barley for export. It does not apply to all the other grains and special crops that farmers produce.

(1235)

I will go over in a bit more detail what is included in Bill C-92. The stated purpose of the bill is to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act to change pooling points on which initial payments are based from Thunder Bay and Vancouver to points in Canada designated by the governor in council and to establish

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a deduction from the initial payments that reflect the relative transportation cost advantage of each producer.

Through the bill, which will be effective August 1 if it is passed by the House before the session ends, the federal government will change how eastward grain transportation costs are paid. That means eastern prairie farmers who ship through the St. Lawrence seaway will have to pay the full cost of movement, or at least close to the full cost, within three years.

In the past, all prairie farmers have shared the costs of shipping Canadian Wheat Board grain through pooling. The extra cost of shipping Canadian Wheat Board grain through the seaway system, which is on average \$22 a tonne, has been pooled. Not only are the farmers who are shipping their grain through Thunder Bay and on down the St. Lawrence paying the extra costs, but all farmers within the wheat board designated area who ship grain to the board are sharing the costs through the pool.

That means all farmers, in particular the farmers from western Saskatchewan and Alberta, have been receiving less for their wheat and barley than they should have been. Farmers from eastern Saskatchewan and Manitoba have been receiving more than they should have been. This has been done by pooling the freight costs so that all farmers take an equal deduction from their price for the cost of freight. I have many concerns about this being done and I will discuss some of them later.

Originally the government planned to change the eastern pooling points next year. However, at least according to the minister, several Manitoba farm groups have called on him to make the change effective at the start of this crop year which begins on August 1.

The minister claimed that the farm groups which have been encouraging him to make the change have said they need the change in order to bring more certainty to the system. In other words, they say they want to know what will happen and they want to know now. They want to know how much more it is going to cost them. That is coming from the farmers in Manitoba who are going to pay more. That is the way the minister of agriculture explained the need for making the change this crop year on August 1 rather than next year.

It is commendable that the minister would want to allow this kind of certainty to at least creep into the Canadian Wheat Board freight pooling system. It is unfortunate that the same kind of certainty will not be in place when the changes are made to the WGTA, in terms of moving grain by the rail system. That uncertainty will be there until 1999, the year before the maximum freight rates may be lifted. The decision will not be made until the year before the rates can be lifted and that leaves a lot of uncertainty in place. I encourage the minister to be as concerned

about the uncertainty caused by that change which was implemented by the budget as he is about the change to the pooling of freight through the Canadian Wheat Board.

Consistency is needed. We need the minister to make some decisions which will add certainty to the agriculture industry. I commend him for doing it in this one narrow area.

(1240)

In terms of transitional assistance, a fund which came about as a result of this budget, \$300 million was put in place for a transition fund. It is meant to be used to help different sectors of agriculture deal with the change in the freight rate.

Nothing in the bill states this but through discussions the department has said that about \$100 million of this \$300 million in transition funds will be paid to farmers in Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan over a three year period to help them deal with the added freight costs they will find themselves covering out of their own pockets. This is reasonable because it is an additional burden put on the Manitoba farmers even above the burden of paying full costs which, as a result of this budget, have been put in place for all western farmers.

All western farmers will be paying the full freight costs as of August 1. With this change, Manitoba farmers will be paying an additional cost of approximately \$6 a tonne. It would be extremely difficult for the farmers to deal with this starting on August 1 of this year. The transition money being paid to these farmers is reasonable. I know some of my colleagues will talk about a concern they have about there being enough money left in this fund to help alfalfa and timothy shippers deal with the radical changes they face in their industry.

I have talked about what is in this legislation. Now I will talk about what is not in this legislation as it applies to the government achieving the goals it has laid out through this legislation.

As long as there is a Canadian Wheat Board where there is a price pooling system in place, it will be necessary to have a pooling schedule for freight. It is necessary for that system to work.

There are very few specifics in this bill regarding the exact nature of the new freight pooling system. For instance, there is very little information about the decision on the actual catchment areas, which will be smaller areas of pooling within these catchment areas, and what they might look like. There have been some proposals put forth but there is no certainty in these. We do not know for sure what the catchment areas will look like.

If the government decides to put in place the national grains bureau recommendation for catchment areas, then there will be four catchment areas for wheat: the west coast, the east coast, Churchill and the U.S. There will still be freight pooling within these areas. Why are we not moving toward a system that fully

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reflects the marketplace and the cost to farmers? Why are we just tinkering and going part way? However, it is definitely a move in the right direction.

If the government goes with the national grains bureau proposal on malting barley there would be two catchment areas, the west coast and the United States. Again, it is a move in the right direction even though it does not go far enough.

It is appropriate at this time to explain clearly what this freight pooling does and how it relates to the price pooling which operates under the Canadian Wheat Board. The freight pooling as I explained before causes all farmers who sell grain through the Canadian Wheat Board to pay an equal amount of the freight bill, even if after looking at the market signals they should be paying less, or perhaps more.

This has lowered the price in the price pool which gives all farmers an equal price for their wheat. It has lowered the price by the same amount no matter what the freight costs are. Clearly to have this price pooling system work there must be some kind of a freight pooling system in place. Otherwise it would be extremely difficult though not impossible for the wheat board to calculate the payments which go to all farmers.

(1245)

To explain a bit more about the pooling system I will give a brief summary from a background document which, while not part of the legislation, is said by the department to be what the legislation is based on. It is a summary of two proposals put forward by the National Grains Bureau and the Canadian Wheat Board.

The first proposal comes from the National Grains Bureau. Under its proposal all producers would be deducted a decreasing freight amount moving east or west of the west coast catchment area.

The proposal was widely discussed in the payment producer panel report. The payment producer panel was established by the Conservative government and was continued by the Liberal government. Unfortunately its proposals really were not considered when the changes were made to the Western Grain Transportation Act which is what this panel was discussing.

The National Grains Bureau proposal was later modified to include shipments through Churchill and directly to the U.S. market. The relative proximity of a producer to these markets would determine the basis for the deduction. That is the National Grains Bureau proposal.

The second is the CWB '85 proposal, as it is called. This proposal recognizes the general equivalence of west coast and St. Lawrence ports in terms of sales returns. It recommended that the eastern pooling point be changed from Thunder Bay to the St. Lawrence. That is what will happen if the legislation is passed as the department says it will.

However this proposal will not work under the current circumstances because of the higher demand for grain from customers in the Japan and Saudi Arabian markets. The proposal will not work until a balance can once again be achieved between the east coast and the west coast shipments.

The Canadian Wheat Board proposes to devise a system of pooling based primarily on the National Grains Bureau model. The Canadian Wheat Board is hoping that because of the increased transportation costs inherent in the National Grains Bureau proposal, producers will compare returns from pool accounts for wheat, durum, feed barley, malt barley and non-Canadian Wheat Board crops and eventually diversify, based on anticipated future rates of return.

The Canadian Wheat Board wants to move toward the CWB '85 proposal as constraints on the west coast catchment area are reduced. It believes in the long term this will be a viable option.

In a nutshell those are the two proposals which were outlined in the background paper given to the committee and to MPs who were interested in Bill C-92.

I will now comment on how the Liberals are trying to rig the entire system in order to keep the Canadian Wheat Board as a monopoly seller even though it is really no longer practical or viable.

The bill seeks to make a new pooling system with the same type of structure, except using smaller catchment areas, so there is an advantage, but using the same type of system. Instead of making major changes to the whole wheat board system and to the freight costs to farmers, the government has chosen to try to modify the old system. Too often this is the type of thinking that creeps into a bureaucracy. It is certainly here in this bill. It is unfortunate because it really does fulfil all of the changes that are needed.

One of my concerns about this legislation is that we really do not know the details. The background paper is there, but it is not part of the legislation.

That summarizes what is in the bill and what is missing at least as it relates to what the stated purpose of this bill is. I would now like to discuss the impact of this legislation on farmers and on the grain industry if it goes forward as it is proposed.

(1250)

This change reflects at least partially the actual cost to farmers of shipping from different points on the prairies, again limited because they are still pooling within each of the four catchment areas.

At least it moves in the right direction. I will demonstrate using some numbers from the background paper for wheat and for barley. First for wheat. Wheat being shipped from Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, Brandon under this new proposal will cost

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farmers about \$5.80 more per tonne than it does under the present system.

On the other hand, farmers from Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary would pay about \$5 a tonne less than they do under the present system. Therefore it will cost about \$6 more for farmers in western Saskatchewan and Manitoba, depending on which catchment area they are in, and farmers in southern Alberta will receive \$5 more for their grain. The amount in other areas depends on which catchment area farmers are in.

The change for feed barley is even more dramatic. Feed barley is a lower priced commodity. Under this proposal, farmers in the Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, Brandon area will pay anywhere from \$16 to \$18.50 a tonne more to ship their grain than they have in the past, whereas farmers from Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Calgary will pay \$7 to \$8 per tonne less than they do under the present system.

The change will cause the freight cost paid by farmers to reflect more closely the actual cost of moving the grain. Therefore this is a move in the right direction.

The third area I will discuss is what this bill fails to do in reforming the Canadian Wheat Board. I certainly cannot talk about everything it fails to do but I want to talk about the points that are most relevant to this bill.

I begin by reading an open letter to grain farmers that I sent to papers across western Canada. This letter was picked up by most of the weekly papers across western Canada and some of the larger papers.

I want to read the letter. It certainly ties in with the importance of making the wheat board more democratic:

Over the past year, the Canadian Wheat Board has been greatly debated by both farmers and national media. The publicity and discussion surrounding this issue has resulted in a polarization of public opinion. Farmers who support changing the Canadian Wheat Board are immediately branded as board destroyers. Farmers who do not support changes to the Canadian Wheat Board also find themselves under attack by those who strongly favour change.

During meetings with farmers and farm groups, I have been promoting a mechanism for building a bridge across the gap that separates those who favour changes to the board and those who are opposed. It is a mechanism which all farmers could support. I believe the first real step toward meaningful change to the Canadian Wheat Board is through a farmer elected board of directors which would replace the current system of government appointed commissioners and an advisory board that has no real power.

Farmers should be given the authority, which is rightfully theirs because they pay the bills, to decide what type of wheat board they want. An elected board of directors would replace the current system of government appointed commissioners and shift control away from the federal government to farmers.

Within 6 to 18 months of electing a board of directors, farmers should be given a chance to democratically examine their organizational and jurisdictional options. This will allow grain farmers to carefully consider and vote on a variety of market opportunities.

These options could include introducing greater domestic and international market competition, allowing the purchase of wheat and barley on either a cash basis or a pool basis and allowing the board to operate as a seller from export terminal positions only, which would take the board completely out of the car allocation and grain handling process. These and other issues would be decided directly by farmers through referendum.

An elected board of directors would submit their proposals for initial crop payments to Parliament as the commissioners do now. Elected representatives would then vote to determine if these payments were reasonable. The purpose behind the measure is to provide a government check on the otherwise independent board by having Parliament approve initial payments and loan guarantees because taxpayers' dollars are involved.

Farmers themselves will have their own ideas regarding the Canadian Wheat Board and how to make it work better for farmers. All of these proposals must be considered.

Several people have asked what my personal position is regarding possible changes to the board. I support the concept of opening the board up to competition. However, it is not up to me or the federal government to decide on the future of the Canadian Wheat Board. This decision must be made solely by western Canadian grain farmers.

The Canadian Wheat Board will be a subject of continued discussion until the democratic rights of Canadian grain farmers are restored and they are given a real choice in how their organization will run in the future.

An elected board of directors is the only real option for the federal government. After all, who can argue with democracy?

(1255)

It has become apparent from what we have seen in the House today that the government can argue with democracy. We do not have a functioning democracy in Parliament and we must get a functioning democracy in the House. The Liberals must uphold their promise in that regard.

They must also make the changes necessary to allow farmers to democratically control the future of the Canadian Wheat Board and to decide what the wheat board should be. Why should government make these decisions? Why should the farmers marketing board be answerable to the minister and be directed by the minister rather than by farmers? It makes no sense.

This issue has been a very emotional one for several reasons. Farmers who remember when the Canadian Wheat Board came into place know that it served a very useful function.

At the time the Canadian Wheat Board was established there was a lack of competition in the grain buying business in Canada. Farmers never had a properly functioning marketplace. There was no competition at a lot of delivery points. Farmers were at the mercy of the grain buyers because the information system in place today was not there. Today's transportation system was not in place and farmers were largely hauling grain

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by wagon. It would be too difficult to take a load of grain home again after they had delivered it to the elevator. Therefore, they really were at the mercy of the grain buyers.

When the wheat board came into being it served a very useful purpose. It still does but it is a different purpose now.

The people who remember what the wheat board gave them when it came into place in 1935 tend to forget the changes that have been made since. They also forget the reality of the marketplace we live in now, with good information sources and relatively good transportation to get the grain from the farm to the elevators.

People also forget that when the wheat board was developed in 1935 it was a voluntary board. Farmers had a choice. They could choose to deliver to the Canadian Wheat Board and share in the pool price or they could choose to ship to a buyer to any market and completely bypass the board. That is the way it was when the Canadian Wheat Board was established.

(1300)

In 1943 under the War Measures Act the wheat board was given a monopoly. Why was it given a monopoly? I found it very interesting to read the newspaper articles and to read the discussion in the House that surrounded this change in 1943 that gave the wheat board its monopoly. This change was made by order in council; it never passed through Parliament.

The change was made to the Canadian Wheat Board to make it a monopoly so that the war effort in Canada and in Europe would be helped. Grain prices at the time were increasing rapidly and the government was finding it too expensive to ship grain to Europe to help with the war effort and to feed the troops in Canada. The choices it had were to borrow more money to pay more for the grain or to make the wheat board a monopoly buyer in the Canadian market. Through order in council it chose to make the wheat board a monopoly buyer in the Canadian market, which it has remained until today, even though the circumstances are much different today.

When people discuss the Canadian Wheat Board there is a lot of talk about the monopoly selling aspect of the board. The wheat board does not have a monopoly on sales. It sells into a market with a lot of competition. Grain companies from around the world compete on the sell side. There is no selling monopoly. The only monopoly the Canadian Wheat Board has is on the buy side. Farmers have been forced to sell grain through the board since that order in council passed in 1943 for any grain, any wheat or barley being sold for export and for wheat being used for domestic purposes in Canada.

This has been an emotional issue for some time. A second reason this has been an emotional issue is that people are generally afraid of change. I will give a few quotes from a paper given by Dr. Larry Martin to the B.C. egg producers in March. I sincerely hope the quotes I use allow the content of his paper to be brought forward. It is a commendable paper. He is talking about change in agriculture generally, not just this change that is being proposed to the Canadian Wheat Board. Dr. Martin says the biggest obstacle to Canadian agriculture competing over the next decade is farmers themselves. The change in thinking that is needed is that the agriculture industry in place today nowhere nearly reflects the agriculture industry that will be in place 10 years down the road.

Here are some of the quotes I thought were particularly good: "Look forward 20 years", Martin challenged, "and you won't recognize the Canadian agri-food industry. We are lucky to be living during the most exciting period for the industry. This is why we have to think seriously about how that change can be managed, because we have only that one chance to get it right". This is from the Canada *Poultry Man* magazine.

The other quote compares the American system in the supply managed industries, with very large operators, to the Canadian system, which has smaller operators. He says the smaller operators can still compete very well: "Small operations allow for industry flexibility, whereas larger U.S. companies may be low cost but can't switch quickly and have to market using the 'here it is, buy it cheap and eat it' philosophy". This philosophy applies as well to the grains industry. Farmers need the ability, even though they are small operations, either directly or through the grain companies to sell to whomever they want, without the regulations and the unnecessary interference from government.

(1305)

At second reading Reform will be supporting Bill C-92. However, we will be looking for amendments. We will be looking for changes and we will be proposing amendments in committee or in the House at the appropriate time.

**Mr. Glen McKinnon (Brandon—Souris, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to speak in support of Bill C-92, which is a bill to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act. The bill will result in a fairer method of allocating freight costs among prairie producers of wheat and barley sold through the Canadian Wheat Board.

The change in freight cost pooling has been requested by the western grains industry and by those farmers who make their living doing what they do best, growing wheat and barley on the Canadian prairies. This change, once approved, will allow the

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returns received by farmers from the Canadian Wheat Board to more accurately reflect actual market conditions and costs.

My hon. friends may be asking themselves just what wheat board pooling is, how it works and why it is being changed. At this juncture some background explanation may be instructive.

Currently producers within the Canadian Wheat Board who deliver grains to the board have deducted from their initial payment the freight costs incurred in moving their product to export position. That has traditionally been either Thunder Bay or Vancouver, whichever happens to result in the lower freight rate. For example, under the current pooling system producers in my home area, which is Brandon, who live closer to Thunder Bay, would have an estimated \$20.34 a tonne in freight charges deducted from their initial payments as of August 1, 1995. A similar grain producer in the Calgary area would naturally be closer to the port of Vancouver and would have a freight deduction estimated at about \$22.19. Grain being shipped to Thunder Bay faces an additional cost of about \$20 a tonne to move from Thunder Bay east through the St. Lawrence seaway to final export position.

The additional costs are currently shared equally by all producers through the Canadian Wheat Board's pool accounts. For wheat, around \$7 per tonne is paid by all producers out of the pool account to cover the additional expense.

The current pooling system means that income from the western part of the prairies is being transferred to the eastern part of the prairies. Even if the grain producer ships all their wheat to Vancouver, they are paying through the pool accounts to have eastern prairie grain transported from Thunder Bay farther down the St. Lawrence to ports that handle more export business.

Farmers in the western prairies are subsidizing part of those shipping costs for farmers in the eastern prairies. Clearly, the situation calls for change. A need for change has long been recognized by many throughout the industry. As some of the previous commentators on the bill have indicated, many producers have been afraid of embarking on a route that would enable such changes to occur. The driving force behind the change has come from industry and farm groups themselves. Parliament is merely carrying out the strongly conveyed wishes of those who work in and earn their living from the western grains industry. In addition, the four western provincial governments also support the necessary changes.

At this juncture some may be asking themselves why the government is carrying out its comprehensive reform to Canada's grain transportation system. More specifically, why is the grain freight cost pooling system being changed now?

There are at least four reasons why it makes sense to take action to reform the grain transport system. First, the new GATT agreement contains a number of rules against trade distorting export subsidies, including the WGTA, which all parties have recognized has been a distorting mechanism. If we do not make fundamental changes to our grain transport system, Canada could see itself being shut out of vital export markets.

(1310)

Second, it is in our interest to develop a grain transport system that is more efficient, faster, and less expensive to operate. The savings that will come from such a system must be shared fairly and equally among all the participants, most especially by the farmers.

Third, Canada's prairie economy has been stifled for decades by a freight rate structure that promotes exporting of primary products and actively discourages diversification and value added processing. Until we end that discrimination, the west will be prevented from achieving its full potential.

Finally, this government and the people of Canada can no longer afford the luxury of annual rail subsidies of more than half a billion dollars, not when the government is facing a debt load of more than \$500 billion and interest charges amounting to \$120 million each and every day of the year.

For years now farmers in the western regions of the prairies have complained that maintaining Thunder Bay as the eastern pooling point was just not realistic and that it unfairly added to the cost borne by the producers in the western part of the prairies. For their part, the farmers in the eastern parts of the prairies have acknowledged this anomaly but have voiced concern about higher freight costs they would face if the eastern pooling point were changed from Thunder Bay to the lower St. Lawrence.

It is my belief that this bill strikes a careful balance between the interests of western and eastern prairie producers. It is a product of a long debate, going back as far as 1985, and more recent intensive analysis and close consultation involving the prairie farm organizations, industry, the provinces, and the grain cooperatives. This consultation has resulted in the proposed changes we are debating here today.

The grain farmers of western Canada have spoken. They have told us with a strong and united voice that there is a problem with the current grain pooling system, that the problem needs to be addressed, and that it must be addressed now.

We must act now. The freight pooling system has never involved a subsidy. It has involved a form of cross-subsidization of one group of farmers subsidizing those in another. These same producers are now telling us that they want this current arrangement brought to an end. The people have spoken. Change will be happening.

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**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I ask the hon. member, who I think is from rural Manitoba, if grain farmers in his constituency support this change, which will add a cost to their shipping of grain of between \$5 and \$17 a tonne, depending on the grain and which catchment area they fall within.

Although I did not hear it in the member's speech, I would like to comment on his support for invoking closure on C-68 as well.

**Mr. McKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I have no comment to make on any closure at any time on any bill. However, I was most pleasantly surprised by his first question asking my opinion, because he is the recognized economist in the grains business in Alberta. I appreciate the point he is raising.

There has been a strong recognition that Brandon, Manitoba, is one of the highest cost shipping points throughout the grain transportation industry. In order to allow the current farmers to maintain their position as farmers, they are recognizing that some transitions are going to have to be made over a period of time. There will be some shifts, some changes, some partnerships that will have to be struck.

(1315)

My region probably leads western Canada already in diversification thrusts in terms of crop production. If members look into some of the data they will find Brandon—Souris is a strong agricultural area. I am hopeful it will continue to be so in the future.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. member is concerned about the welfare of farmers in his constituency. He said they will have to make some adjustments. They will be paying substantially more freight costs than they are now. That means a lower net price for grain relative to other grain farmers in western Canada, which really puts into place some of the market mechanisms, the natural comparative advantage that should be there.

One of the possible ways farmers in his area could deal with this extra cost is by shipping south into the United States. Unfortunately right now the Canadian Wheat Board restricts movement into the United States. Farmers in his area even more than now will be pushing this minister to allow competition with the wheat board into the United States or to allow farmers to sell directly to markets in the United States.

Does the member believe farmers in his area will be lobbying in every way they can to get these changes made to the wheat board so they can make up for some of the losses they have incurred, from the loss of the WGTA and the extra costs through Bill C-92?

**Mr. McKinnon:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

My comment is a little historical and futuristic in perspective. The closer one lives to the U.S. border the greater the desire to access that market by producers. As one moves further north from the border there is less and less thrust by the producers to access the market because of the geographical distance produce has to be hauled and depending on what product they are trying to ship.

I concur that new processes and regulations need to be examined. Realistically there is a market. American industries using Canadian grain still want our product for let us say the protein content in our product and not available in their own.

I agree with my colleague that it needs to be examined. It also needs to be accessed by Canadian producers in the long term.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I was rather anxious to speak on this subject today when my colleague from Vegreville asked me if I would be willing to address a bill on the Wheat Board. I certainly am willing. It gives me an opportunity to express the views of what I hear when I am in my riding talking to the farmers on which these bills have such a direct effect.

It must be funny to some people in the gallery who come to listen to what we call a debate and they see all the empty chairs. They sometimes must wonder if we are debating with the security guards.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Bakopanos):** I do not think the hon. member should make mention of the absence of members in the House.

(1320)

**Mr. Thompson:** I guess I am not used to hearing myself so much in here; there is an echo.

It is neat to come into a debate on this subject. I hope some day we truly can get into some good honest hard debates about issues rather than some of the examples of what I am seeing this morning where we are bringing in closure on certain things. I like to have debates like we are attempting to do with this bill.

The ideas the agricultural minister is bringing forward in this bill certainly have merit. They are things we have been looking for in the Reform Party. They are things some farmers have been looking for but they are only little tinkering, a start.

I am sure we will not have any difficulty in supporting this but I draw the attention of members of the House that we need to really get into a serious debate about these issues regarding the Wheat Board, especially when we go across the country.

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I am talking about not just my riding, but Vegreville and other ridings in other provinces. When we hear people saying scrap the wheat board, farmers are saying this and others are on the other extreme, that is why it deserves such a good debate. It is time viewpoints were brought forward and discussed so that we can come up with some ideas which will genuinely answer the causes of all the farmers across the country.

I echo once again what I had hoped to see in a bill when it came down regarding the wheat board. It would be more than just the pooling points and the minor change regarding the shipping calculations.

I would like to see some changes indicating the House was interested in having an elected, democratic board in the wheat board. It would be elected by farmers who then would have more input into what happens at the wheat board level. The board should be more relevant to the problems facing producers, changes the producers so much need that they would be able to seek help in getting those changes. The wheat board should be a producer oriented operation rather than another patronage appointment haven for the friends of the Liberal Party.

Upsetting farmers is that their input is so small. Then we see bills brought before the House, not too long ago something to do with access of information, which would require the wheat board and other organizations of that nature to open the books for examination, to see how they are operating and what they are doing. We would get a little more information that people who are paying the bill are entitled to.

Unfortunately it seems we are getting further away from that instead of being more accountable to the people who pay the bills, in this case the farmers who support all the funding for our wheat board.

It is only sensible that we should pick up a bill and hopefully see some positive changes that would give farmers more input, more say and certainly some knowledge about where their money is spent. No, when we suggested that, when we put it in the form of a motion, it was soundly defeated by our colleagues across the way.

It makes me sometimes wonder what is so secretive that they cannot open the books of a government body to the people paying the bills. I have a hard time understanding that.

**An hon. member:** Ask the auditor general.

**Mr. Thompson:** I hear members across the way hollering about the auditor general. I am surprised they even know who he is. They never pay attention to what he says. We can name lots of things there, but I will not get on that topic.

(1325)

I get a little concerned when I hear my colleague talking about things that have happened in the wheat board regarding changes from orders in council. Once again there are a selected few,

usually the ones on the front row here, who decide for all of Canadian farmers what is best for them.

It does not matter if it is best for them but if they think it is best for them, that is what counts. We have a history of 30 or 40 years of this happening; we know what is best for the people, we will make the decisions and you just never mind. That is the attitude people are beginning to think we have.

The ability to have an open debate and throw things out on the floor the farmers would like us to do regarding the wheat board only makes sense. The trouble is we spend a lot of time and many of these things could be resolved. I hope a lot of these things are talked about in the agriculture standing committee. I know from serving on the justice committee there are hours talking with witnesses.

I assume the same thing happens in the agriculture committee where its members get the feelings of people, giving them an opportunity to reflect those feelings in the form of a bill and bring it before the House for a good debate; unless they decide there is no reason to debate and they should put closure on it, shut it down to six hours or in the case of pensions four hours and forget the whole thing. They may feel the information fed to them by 60 or 70 witnesses is not important enough to bring in here, after all they are only the taxpayers.

It is the attitude that bothers me and I think it needs to change. We have been asking, hoping and watching for that possibility but instead we get more of the same, an example of which we saw this morning.

Regarding changing the shipping point calculations, when Wild Rose business tells us it cannot ship its product, there are some things we need to talk about with regard to bills. Compressed timothy producers tell me they cannot get containers to ship their product. Why is the government not addressing shipping problems to help Canada's balance of trade? Why is it not assisting a cash crop market instead of maintaining a narrow view of one issue?

It is willing to help grain producers adjust to the new reality of shipping costs when the Crow is repealed. Farmers who have practised sound crop rotation principles and at the same time have developed a new cash crop market for Canadian produce are being abandoned. Compressed timothy and forage crop producers are far more sensitive to shipping costs than grain producers but the government has punished them for growing a crop that is not marketed through the wheat board. Then it wonders why some farmers get upset at the way the board operates.

Not too long ago this body of people declared an open barley market, the continental barley market. Suddenly there were many farmers doing a good job of moving their produce, getting good prices. They were quite pleased they had an opportunity as producers to market their goods without having to go through a

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monopoly. That was quickly shut down. We sometimes wonder why.

Maybe it was because they were so successful, maybe they were proving they had the ability to do these things without the assistance of some great government appointed body. Maybe it was not the bureaucrats who had the ability to do these things; maybe the farmers could do this. At least they proved it for a while but the Liberal government cannot let that go on. So it was shut down. It simply tells people out there that if they grow certain crops they will go through this body by way of the arm's length setup of the wheat board to sell produce. That is the way it has to be done.

(1330)

Some farmers agree with it and I give them credit for it. However a pile of them say that the wheat board should be scrapped. We need to talk to all of them and start asking exactly what we can do to make the situation a lot better than it is.

The bill is another example of half measures by government trying to convince Canadian farm producers that it is doing something when I am not so sure it might be making things worse. The Liberal government seems intent on abandoning farmers who have already adjusted to the global marketplace. I am talking particularly about forage and timothy hay growers who are doing very well.

It is certainly strange when we meet with farmers in our communities. We tell cattlemen in a joking way what is coming down the tube, that we are setting up a cattle marketing board. Talk about shock and fear, the whole idea another system of that nature would interfere with their ability to access free markets such as they have now really frightens them.

Why did the government arbitrarily decide that 1994 would be the cutoff year for support when producers were adjusting to the new global trading reality and when they went into forage and timothy to enhance their individual viability in the world trading market? Does the government have a problem with farmer initiative? Is it because the government wants to keep the Canadian Wheat Board as a closed shop, a patronage haven? It also wants to dictate to western producers what crops will be acceptable for them to grow. Exactly what is behind that?

Why cannot the government assist western producers? Showing this initiative would not only help them to maintain their farms. It would also help Canada's balance of trade and make Canada a stronger trading nation.

The European community and the United States realize that their treasuries cannot continue their farm subsidies and they will be cutting back. In the meantime, Canadian timothy and forage producers will face the full rate expenditure while European and American producers will have support.

We do not have any problem with this half hearted attempt at modifying the Canadian Wheat Board. The shipping cost adjustment is a step that recognizes the reality of modern times and the global marketplace. However, merely readjusting who pays for the cost of shipping through the St. Lawrence seaway does nothing to tackle the real and dangerous problems facing Canadian producers and the inadequacies of the wheat board. It is a minor thing when there are so many major things we need to look at.

Changing cost pooling so that western Saskatchewan and Alberta producers will no longer share the cost of shipping eastern Saskatchewan and Manitoba grain from Thunder Bay through the St. Lawrence seaway is acceptable. Why not continue and address the real issue of the needed fundamental changes to the wheat board?

Members will say all the farmers want it. They must have a short memory. It was not too long ago that there were two rallies going on in Regina at the same time: one pro and one con, the one the agriculture minister would not attend.

Why is the government so afraid to face the reality of the nineties and beyond? Why is its policies still stuck in the sixties? Why did the government not use the bill to give producers an opportunity to elect the board of directors? What is wrong with an elected board of directors? Is that too democratic? Is that the problem?

It could be. I base that on things I have seen, such as what happened this morning. Why was the government so fearful of allowing those who know the business to run it? Why does it not allow producers who know the business the best to be in charge? Why does the government always feel it has to get involved in everything? Why does it feel that it will not be done right if it is not done from this place?

(1335)

The whole thing will change. People will insist that it change rather quickly. If the government believes that will not be the case then it has a very short memory.

I wonder if it would stop to think for a moment, when it looks at operations such as the wheat board and others, why the Reform Party is here. It should stop to analyse why the Reform Party needs to exist if for the last 30 years so-called Liberals and so-called Conservatives had done their jobs. We would not need to be here. Why did all western provinces, particularly rural farmers, decide enough was enough and to send Reformers who had presented to them an idea that made a lot more sense than the status quo?

Once again we have a government bill that pretends to address issues of concern for western producers but in reality is an attempt to hide the failures. This half measure deals with an important issue but it is only a half measure.

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When will the government finally face reality and deal with the real problems that exist with the wheat board and the board's inability to accept that producers know what is best, not appointed bureaucrats? The producers, believe it or not, know what is best. Why do we not give them an opportunity to express what they know?

I doubt very seriously whether the bureaucrats making the decisions have half the real experience or knowledge facing most western producers, particularly those in the riding of Wild Rose.

I support Bill C-92. It is a little step in the right direction to which we are getting accustomed. With all their bills we are getting a little tinker here and a little tinker there. The Liberals think they will be the next government, which I doubt seriously. However we will support the bill.

I ask the government and the agriculture minister to go beyond Tinker Bell stuff. There are serious problems out there. For a change the government should try listening to the people instead of dictating to them what will take place.

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member has been talking about matters such as the federal government abandoning farmers. In his second breath he talked about the federal involvement being too great in the farm community, that we should get out of wheat boards and let farmers decide everything on their own in those matters instead of the representatives of farmers who have been sent to the House.

The Reform talks about abandonment and how the Liberals and Conservatives have not done their jobs and that is why the Reform are here now.

I have a question for the hon. member. Last year we had a rail strike and farmers were suffering greatly because they could not get their products to market. The whole Canadian economy was losing \$200 million per day.

Could the hon. member indicate to us why only six representatives of his party showed up in the House to vote?

**Mr. Thompson:** Madam Speaker, we had a private member's bill that would have prevented all that. It was soundly defeated by our Liberal friends across the way. My hon. colleague from Lethbridge brought forward a bill that would have taken care of the problem, and Liberals know that very well.

In terms of the strike they have a short memory. I do not think he was here to see that the first person to rise in the House seeking an emergency debate regarding the strike was the member standing right now. I stood in the Chamber and demanded an emergency debate on the strike and the Liberals did not want it. To them it was a big joke that a Reformer rose to his

feet and dared to ask for an emergency debate on the strike in Vancouver.

(1340)

The next morning our wonderful new labour minister came up with the good idea to have an emergency debate on the strike in Vancouver. Wham, overnight a miracle happened. The Liberals discovered they had an answer for a problem. They had a chance to do it 48 hours before that but they do not want to listen to anybody but themselves. One day they will pay for that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** I remind hon. members that we do not refer to the absence or the presence of any member of the Chamber.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I find it interesting that a Liberal member would have the nerve to suggest Reformers never did their part in ending the strike. Our legislation would have prevented it from ever happening and should have been passed. It was legislation that would allow the collective bargaining process to go ahead. It is good legislation that has to be put in place somewhere along the way.

Does the member believe farmers in his constituency would support an elected board of directors replacing the present commissioners appointed by the minister to the wheat board?

**Mr. Thompson:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Recently I included a questionnaire in a householder that asked farmers to respond to what they wanted to do with the wheat board. Fifty-four per cent came back saying that the wheat board should be scrapped. Another high percentage said to change it drastically to a democratic process. A few others wanted to keep the status quo.

We need to take a look at the whole situation. If only we did not have a government that says it can do it behind closed doors, that it does not need good, open, solid debate about what should be done with some of these bodies, and that it knows best. We remember good old Trudeauism when the metric system was brought in. The government gave us the metric system and said we did not know what was good for us. There were a few more items like it. The Conservatives said gave us the GST and said we did not know what was good for us.

Canadians know what is best for them and will start expressing it.

**Mr. Allan Kerpan (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, obviously a discussion has arisen in debate in the House about some problems we have seen with regard to labour tie-ups, strikes and backups that have occurred in Canada over the past many years.

I can speak quite simply and quite plainly as a farmer. I have been involved in the farm business for some 15 to 18 years in Saskatchewan. I know firsthand the problems when there is a

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labour disruption. The innocent third party always gets hurt. In this case it is the farmers, the shippers or the dehy plant people.

My colleague from Wild Rose hit the nail on the head when he said that we had a plan to prevent labour disruptions. The government across the way saw fit in its wisdom, if I may call it that, not to support the legislation.

**Mr. Thompson:** You use the term loosely.

**Mr. Kerpan:** I use the term loosely. That is absolutely right.

My colleague from Saskatoon—Dundurn has indicated on numerous occasions that Reformers were not in the House on that particular Sunday to vote. Whether or not that is the truth is irrelevant. Less than a week before that, we had put before this House private members' legislation that would have prevented this. There would have been no need for anyone to be here on that Sunday. It is ludicrous. It is a ridiculous argument and I am ashamed that someone would bring that up before this House.

(1345)

I want to get to the business before the House today, Bill C-92, an act to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act. It aims to change the pooling system of the Canadian Wheat Board in order to respond to new market conditions.

Rapidly changing market conditions is the greatest factor affecting the agricultural sector today. There is no question about that. The reality is we live in a modern knowledge based, technologically equipped and economically linked world. This presents many new opportunities for farmers and agri-businesses. It presents opportunities for policy makers and legislators. It presents opportunities for grain companies, farm groups and transportation companies as well. Coupled with the rapidly changing new world of markets, there are two other factors.

The agriculture industry is unique in that we produce a basic and unchanging product for which there will always be a demand, that is food. With a growing world population that is expected to reach 10 billion people by the year 2050, the demand for our products will expand tremendously. This commodity of food that we produce is essential to the life and health of all of us. Our daily bread is the most basic need we have. We have a product for which there will always be a market.

The agriculture industry therefore is a primary resource industry in full transition attempting to keep up with an expanding market and hoping to take full advantage of the opportunities that it presents. We have a good product and we have a market. We must adjust to and take full advantage of these new opportunities. We must be prepared to do this quickly. We must

learn to anticipate what the future holds for us and seek to prepare ourselves for it.

All of the stakeholders, the farmers, the processors, the transporters, the marketers, the policy makers, must work in a co-operative way to ensure that we make the transition from the old realities to the new realities in as an effective and efficient way as is humanly possible.

I am pleased this bill is before us today. It is essentially tabled as a response to an expanding and changing market. We will no doubt get into the details of this bill but basically the bill is in response to the fact that our grain products are moving to new markets. When this happens, we need to change our system and our policies in order to respond to those new markets.

More specifically, this bill responds to the fact that in recent times our grain has become more in demand in the Pacific rim countries; more is therefore having to be transported across the Pacific instead of the Atlantic. This change in international market patterns has a direct effect upon our internal shipping ports and our internal transportation system.

Historically western Canadian grain producers have shared some of the costs of shipping grain to our ports. We call this a pooling system. It was established as a simple attempt to distribute the benefits and the costs of our grain industry as equally as possible among all the producers. I want to comment on this principle of benefit and cost sharing in a moment but first, let me speak briefly about the changes in our current pooling system that the new world of markets is causing.

The ports western grain farmers have traditionally used for overseas shipments are Vancouver and Thunder Bay. This is because the world market value of grain in store at these two locations, one going east and the other going west, was effectively the very same. The market demand on the other side of both oceans was about equal, but with larger markets emerging on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, the world market value of grain in Vancouver has increased beyond that which is in Thunder Bay.

To adjust to this new market reality and to keep our grain pooling system intact and fair, it is necessary to move the eastern point of departure from Thunder Bay to ports further east, those along the lower St. Lawrence River. In practical terms, this means that the farmers in Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan who ship their grain east to an export position at Thunder Bay will now have to absorb the cost of getting their grain to the further eastern ports along the lower St. Lawrence.

(1350)

For years now farmers in the western prairies have seen the use of Thunder Bay as the Canadian Wheat Board's eastern point

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of departure for export sales as adding unfairly to their share of the cost of pooling. Farmers in the eastern part of the prairies have recognized this. In other words, it has been apparent that there was some anomaly and some unfairness in the pooling system.

Eastern prairie farmers under Bill C-92 will now have to pay the higher costs of the movement of their grain to the further eastern ports. They have asked for transition assistance to offset these higher costs. The government announced that partial compensation will be provided to these farmers from the \$300 million WGTA adjustment fund. It is meant to facilitate the transition to a deregulated system after August 1, 1995.

There are many specifics to be worked out regarding the changes in the pooling points proposed by the bill. My colleagues and I will be commenting on the specifics of those throughout committee debate, report stage and third reading debate.

How do we as farmers best respond to the changing marketplace? This has to be the basic question. Our markets are changing. Our systems that we set up to deal with old markets must be examined to see if they are adequate to take full advantage of the new markets. Are they helping or are they hindering farmers?

My colleagues and I maintain that when there are such dramatic and far reaching changes at the middle and end points of the industry process, we must go right back to the beginning of the process and examine the principles upon which we are building. This is the area of discussion that presents the most difficulty for large and old organizations such as government and government agencies. The Canadian Wheat Board definitely falls into that category.

Old governments, old parties, old agencies and institutions have difficulty with change. Large and old enterprises can become very inflexible. They take a long time to change, if they can ever change at all. Sometimes it is easier for an old institution to die rather than to change and to be reformed.

In the process of governing a country or managing a grain marketing process, that is why new parties and new institutions arise. If the older parties and institutions cannot change or are unwilling to change, if they are unwilling to re-examine themselves to see if they are doing things the best way, then they will be replaced by new enterprises and new ways of doing things. This has happened throughout the history of government in this country and in other institutions, as surely as day follows night and a new century follows an old one.

Reformers are saying that in order to meet the market challenges of a new world and a 21st century, we must talk about the underlying principles. There are two principles we believe should be the foundation for any changes that we make in our marketing and transportation systems.

Reformers believe that producer organizations, including marketing boards, commissions and co-operatives, should receive their direction from producers who should structure their organizations in any manner which they believe will best serve their interests. In consultation with producers, Reformers will seek to provide for a viable, self-reliant and market driven industry to create an environment in which producers make their own decisions as to how products are marketed.

Specifically this principle means there needs to be some changes to the Canadian Wheat Board. If we are to take full advantage of the new markets, if we are to adjust quickly to them, then we need to, we have to, it is imperative to allow for the democratization of the Canadian Wheat Board.

The present government appointment of Canadian Wheat Board commissioners must be changed to an elected board of directors chosen by producers in a fair and open election process. It is simply the only way we will move from these old dying institutions I talked about a few minutes ago to a new reformed system that is responsive to farmers, to transportation, to the markets and to the new way of doing things. At that point in time, grain producers will be asked to examine their organizational and jurisdictional options, including but not limited to introducing domestic market competition, permitting the Canadian Wheat Board to trade in grains and oilseeds currently excluded from its jurisdiction.

(1355)

I can think of examples in my own riding. There is a small private flour mill. I was in to see the gentleman at Viscount about three months ago and asked him how his business was. He said it was terrible. He said he had to pay a buy back fee to the Canadian Wheat Board to buy wheat so he can make flour and sell it locally. He is not allowed to go to a neighbour or a friend to contract wheat on an individual basis. It is simply not allowed.

**Mr. Penson:** It is the same with organic grain.

**Mr. Kerpan:** It is the very same with organic grain.

I think about these examples and wonder where the common sense is in this organization. I see none. Those are the things that have to change if we are going to move into the next century.

Farmers must be allowed to decide on the purchase of wheat and other grains on either a cash basis or a pooled initial final price basis, implementing special opting out provisions for entrepreneurs interested in developing niche export markets. Again, I relate to what I said before about the small town flour mills and also extending fixed price and guaranteed delivery producer contracts.

The second principle on which we must build our new marketing system is transportation reform. Canadian agricultural products should move to market by any expeditious mode, on any route and in any form or state of processing based exclu-

sively on the principle of cost effectiveness and with the best interests of the customer in mind.

As I mentioned at the outset of my remarks, there has been some debate in this Chamber today about labour problems, labour tie-ups and transportation problems of all types for agricultural products certainly from my province of Saskatchewan. I think back to alternate methods of transportation and routes. If there are the types of labour disputes and tie-ups we have seen over the past number of years and if it is feasible in a cost effective way, what is wrong with hauling our products somewhere else, perhaps through the United States?

We believe major reforms are still needed in the Canadian Wheat Board system of marketing our very most valuable product, food. Bill C-92 does not go anywhere near far enough. Comparative advantage must be the primary principle behind decisions about what farmers produce, how they market and how they transport.

I assure members we on this side of the House will keep working toward this end.

**The Speaker:** It being 2 p.m., we will now proceed to Statements by Members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### ENVIRONMENT WEEK

**Mr. John Finlay (Oxford, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the theme for Environment Week this year is the automobile's impact on air quality. Car emissions are a major cause of smog and climate change. Smog and air pollution not only threaten a healthy environment but also the health of all Canadians.

Maintaining vehicles in good working order will reduce the impact of emissions. Therefore, Environment Canada is holding emission clinics across the country. The national capital region clinic is on June 7, 8 and 9 at Carlingwood mall.

[*Translation*]

This week gives Canadians an opportunity to find better ways to keep their environment healthy for present and future generations. According to this year's theme, instead of driving we should opt for walking, cycling, car pooling, and using public transportation.

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### SUMMIT ON PRIVATE FORESTS

**Mr. Gilbert Fillion (Chicoutimi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bloc members wish to draw the attention of the House to the excellent dialogue that took place during the summit on private forests chaired by Quebec's Minister of Natural Resources, François Gendron.

The conference provided an opportunity for exchange and consensus on future policy directions. Indeed, representatives showed an exemplary sense of responsibility.

They agreed on the way funds to be contributed by the Quebec government and other stakeholders would be distributed under Quebec's private forest development plan.

The parties also agreed that the federal government must compensate the Quebec workers who are hard hit by its withdrawal from the sector. Here again, through their dynamism and their solidarity, Quebecers in the various regions must make up for the failure of the federal government to honour its commitments.

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[*English*]

### GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, information meetings at Tara, Ontario, on May 31 and at Shelburne on June 3 drew 2,740 Ontarians eager to learn more about Bill C-68.

Herculean efforts by the organizers failed to produce any speakers favouring gun control, so statements by the justice minister and other opponents of civil liberty were read to the crowd.

Anti-control speeches were so logical and convincing that formal, independently audited balloting yielded 2,716 votes against more bureaucracy, 19 in favour, and five spoiled ballots.

I have the ballots and will deliver them to the justice minister. I hope that he will at least acknowledge the dedicated efforts of the organizers.

The MPs for Bruce—Grey and Wellington—Grey—Dufferin—Simcoe did not bother to attend these major gatherings. If they like their present line of work, they should take note of the results when voting on Bill C-68. Closure will not stop the people from remembering.

Vive la démocratie!

\* \* \*

### TRANSPORT

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Transport Canada is now in the process of watering down the

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regulations governing the number of flight attendants required on commercial flights. The plan is to go from the current Canadian ratio of one for every 40 passengers to the American ratio of one for every 50.

Even before bringing forward new regulations in the House, the government has acted unilaterally by using ministerial exemptions to reduce the number of attendants required on certain aircraft.

I ask the Minister of Transport to listen to the advice of Canadian flight attendants, who have been telling him that the weakening of regulations will have a serious impact on the safety of the travelling public. The American standards are based on tests that are highly artificial and underestimate the need to have safety personnel on board in real life accidents.

The only benefits of harmonizing our standards downward to the American standards will appear on the bottom line of the airline industry, whose costs will be cut at the expense of safety.

I hope the minister will let the airline attendants' reasoned advice penetrate his remarkable fetish for American style deregulation and reconsider the direction of this policy.

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**TRANSPORT**

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this week is national transportation week and an excellent opportunity for me to remark on the importance of marine transportation in my riding.

The Strait of Canso is one of the largest deep water ports in eastern North America. It is ice free and allows year round access to Canadian and international markets. It is an important gateway for the shipping of many products. This natural asset has already proven its economic importance. Several successful businesses operate on its shores, serving the petroleum, forestry, gypsum, and energy sectors, to name only a few.

The Minister of Transport is currently developing a new marine strategy. I would urge him to keep in mind the importance of the Strait of Canso to our transportation network and the bright economic potential it holds for this region.

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[Translation]

**OCEAN DAY**

**Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the objective of Ocean Day, which is today, is to raise the public's awareness of the danger in which the negligence of the world's governments has put the planet.

There is no direct link between the ocean and the people in a riding like mine, Gatineau—La Lièvre. However, oceans are

necessary for our survival, for they produce more oxygen than rain forests and are the planet's biggest water supply. They provide us with an incredible quantity of protein and remedies for certain illnesses.

We can all help clean up our oceans. If we do not, we will be destroying our planet. On this day, it would be a good start for each of us to identify one habit that we could change in order to contribute to saving our oceans and Canada. Limiting fishing activities is a good start.

\* \* \*

[English]

**GORDON AND DIANE DAVIDSON**

**Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of two Winnipeg St. James constituents, Gordon Davidson and his wife Diane. They recently travelled as volunteer advisers to the Czech Republic to assist the Sternberk town council with a long term tourist development plan. Mr. Davidson worked with a community committee to draft a plan to create tourist trade opportunities in the town and set up advertising and promotional programs.

(1405)

The Davidsons were able to embark on this adventure and share their expertise as volunteer advisers with the Canadian Executive Search Organization, which provides advisers to business and organizations in Canada's aboriginal communities, developing nations, and emerging market economies in central and eastern Europe. CESO volunteers are skilled Canadian men and women who willingly share their lifetime of practical experience with those who need it.

Again I congratulate all CESO volunteers, and especially my constituents, Gordon and Diane Davidson, on a job well done.

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[Translation]

**CRTC**

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, today, the Minister of Industry revealed a new facet of federalism: courtroom federalism. According to him, the federal government is prepared to take legal action against the CRTC, an organization established by an act of Parliament.

By threatening to embark upon a legal battle with the CRTC, the government is only confirming that it will stop at nothing in its quest to justify the unjustifiable: its decision to give Power DirecTV the edge in satellite broadcasting.

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The Minister of Industry says he is confident that he will be able to settle out of court with the CRTC. Just imagine the pressure that Mr. Spicer will be under to do so, especially because the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who is responsible for the CRTC, will not lift a finger to help him. This minister has shown in the past that he cannot stand up to anybody.

\* \* \*

[English]

**BILL C-41**

**Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, today the government arrogantly invoked closure on Bill C-41, flaunting the wishes of thousands and thousands of grassroots Canadians.

Yesterday I and some of my colleagues tried in vain to present to the justice minister over 10,000 letters in opposition to the sentencing bill collected from our own offices in recent weeks. These letters are from mainstream and small town Canadians from across Canada. Their concern centres on the contents of section 718.2. Over 600 petitions have been tabled in the House, represented by over 70,000 signatures. In addition, reports from within the justice department indicate that the justice minister himself has received over 70,000 letters in opposition to this bill.

The minister is fond of trotting out polls and statistics, but in the case of C-41 he has simply ignored the clear expression of Canadians. Arrogance in governing can prove fatal. Even at this late date, I call on the justice minister to respond positively to the clear expression of Canadians.

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**WYE MARSH WILDLIFE CENTRE**

**Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, June 5 marked the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre in Midland, Ontario, in my riding of Simcoe North. The centre was opened by the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien, then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

[Translation]

Over the 25 years it has existed, Wye Marsh has overcome many obstacles and has established itself as a world leader in the area of heightening awareness of the importance of ecology, wetlands and wildlife.

In 1984, when the government of the time cut its funding, the Friends of Wye Marsh took over the operation of the centre. This organization was able to rally an entire community and to encourage that community to sacrifice time and money for the purpose of conserving this national treasure.

[English]

In the past few years the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre has been instrumental in the fight to implement a ban on lead shot and sinkers and more importantly to preserve the trumpeter swan.

Congratulations to the friends of Wye Marsh for continuing these important environmental programs. Canadians everywhere benefit from your conservation and education work. We wish you every success in the future.

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**PARLIAMENTARY BASKETBALL**

**Mr. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal (Vancouver South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am compelled to report, although some of my colleagues wanted to keep this matter quiet, that on Tuesday evening at the Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa the MPs and pages clashed in their annual basketball game.

The Dhaliwal Dunkers, a multi-party team, were looking to extend the MP winning streak against the lowly pages. However, the pages, fighting like warrior poets of old, jumped out to an early lead and never looked back. Despite a comeback effort led by the member for Souris—Moose Mountain and his seven points, the pages hung on for a 40 to 35 victory.

Congratulations to the pages, who not only displayed superior skills and solid grasp of the fundamentals of the game, but also adhered to the principle of gender equality, as half of the team was made up of female pages.

(1410)

The pages have once again proven that age and experience are no match for youth and robust health.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GUN CONTROL**

**Mr. Nick Discepolo (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since the Bloc Québécois announced its latest change of heart on gun control, there has been a storm of protest and criticism in Quebec. Some more recent instances include what was said by the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec, and I quote: "We wish to express our profound disagreement with the position of the Bloc on decriminalization. We hope that the Bloc's position will be adjusted to give serious consideration to the views of chiefs of police, police officers, the Canadian and Quebec Bar associations, public health experts, municipalities, the CEQ and the FCE".

The Bloc Québécois, which has changed its mind before, should give its unqualified support to the passage of Bill C-68, as requested by the CEQ and other organizations in Quebec.

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**MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec—Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Canadian Heritage continues his blunders and unethical behaviour on an impressive scale, another government minister has been doing some political maneuvering with taxpayers' money. It seems the Minister of Public Works redirected \$26 million earmarked for repairs to a dangerous

*S. O. 31*

highway to developing a nature trail in Cape Breton—East Richmond, his riding in Nova Scotia.

The Minister of Defence also chided him for arbitrarily cutting \$10 million from the budget envelope to be used to help Maritime communities affected by the closing of military bases. The same Minister of Public Works also appointed his official agent as head of the Cape Breton Development Corporation in his riding and wants to redirect funds from the budget of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to the corporation.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### FEDERAL OFFICE OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Cliff Breitzkreuz (Yellowhead, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Federal Office of Regional Development covers all bases. For example, taxpayers can enjoy a beer courtesy of their \$46,000 grant to a beer manufacturer. After they quaff a couple of cool ones, they can go to the Quebec City horse show and watch 20,000 of their hard earned tax dollars spent on horse jumping. Before taxpayers take in the subsidized grand finale, I suggest they go back for more libations. They will need it before they travel to Jean's World, the ultimate in taxpayer abuse.

Yes, Canada's Prime Minister has a nice little theme park going up in his riding, with \$3.5 million coming right from FORD-Q. The only problem is, experts say this little pork barrel gem will cost taxpayers millions annually. I could almost swear the members across the way are a bunch of Tory hacks in Liberal clothing.

To top it all off, Liberal and Bloc members join hands and invoke closure to ensure their gold plated pension plans. Shame, shame.

\* \* \*

#### PEACEKEEPING

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, June 10, at the Petawawa civic centre grounds, a very important ceremony called the "Celebration of Peace" will take place. A memorial will be dedicated to all UN peacekeepers who participated in United Nations duties during the last 50 years.

This memorial, which honours all Canadian and international peacekeepers, has been totally paid for by donations. The flag poles and the United Nations flags are already in place. The celebration of peace memorial is not only being dedicated to those who have served as peacekeepers but will also honour those who are now serving and who will serve in the future.

It is time that the more than 90,000 Canadians who served in peacekeeping roles around the world receive their recognition in Canadian history. It is time that all of us in this great country of ours say thank you to the men and women in the Canadian Forces who have served Canada so well over the years.

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#### SAFE BOATING WEEK

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to mark safe boating week in Canada, which runs June 4 to 10.

The week marks the kick off to a summer long public awareness campaign designed to encourage responsible boating. Boating safety is an issue of particular concern to the constituents of my riding, especially now with the summer tourist season upon us. There have been far too many boating accidents and fatalities in our waterways in the past. These tragedies affect us all and we must do all we can to prevent them.

(1415)

Last year the Minister of Justice assured my constituents that boating regulations would be enforced on our waterways this summer. Last week in the House the minister re-emphasized his commitment to the implementation of a system to improve the safety of boaters on our waters in Ontario.

I urge Canadians everywhere to enjoy their time on the lakes this summer and to make safe boating practices standard with their families.

\* \* \*

#### GOVERNMENT FUNDING

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to address a concern being expressed by many Canadians regarding the Prime Minister's national priorities.

Until he invoked closure three times today the Prime Minister thought he enjoyed considerable popularity. Soon that will only be among canoe makers. After all, there has never been a Prime Minister in Canadian history who ever reached deep enough into the pork barrel to fund a canoe museum. This action occurs at the same time the Prime Minister cuts spending grants to the museum assistance program, the main support for the country's public museums and galleries.

We have a Prime Minister who yanks money from museums and galleries across the country and dumps that money into Shawinigan to build a canoe factory virtually guaranteed to draw nothing but dust and flies and perhaps the odd Liberal seeking employment as a canoe museum curator.

We wonder after today's election if it is the Prime Minister's intention to fund a museum for extinct Liberals in Ontario.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD***[Translation]***MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister continued to defend his Minister of Canadian Heritage and insisted the opposition provide new facts on the minister's \$2,000 supper. The official opposition has learned that Richard Gervais is not only the Minister of Canadian Heritage's political organizer and fundraiser and the recipient of untendered contracts from him, but Mr. Gervais also lobbies for various associations and businesses.

It seems to me that my preamble speaks for itself. I therefore ask my question. Would the Minister of Canadian Heritage tell us whether he informed the Prime Minister that Mr. Gervais was not only his fundraiser and friend and the recipient of his contracts, but that he also lobbied the minister on behalf of a number of associations including the Canadian Tennis Association and Planetary Sports Television?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have already had occasion to say in this House, if there is one well-known firm in Quebec, it is Gervais-Gagnon, which has worked for many governments. Its activities are very well known. It does not keep its clientele a secret. There is therefore absolutely nothing mysterious or secretive in this situation. Everybody knows the facts.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we understand the minister's familiarity with Gervais-Gagnon, because this is the firm that does his fundraising, does him favours and lobbies him.

Would the Minister of Canadian Heritage tell us whether he took the precaution—the question is a simple one—of informing the Prime Minister that this gentleman was not only his friend and his fundraiser, but that he was also a lobbyist representing associations such as the Canadian Tennis Association, which last year received \$500,000 in funding from the Minister of Canadian Heritage?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when a fundraising event is organized in compliance with the rules, the first to be involved are the party financial officials.

I have said in this House that we followed the rules and procedures. I certainly have done nothing that the party was not aware of.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that one of the functions of Mr. Gervais's firm is to organize meetings between the minister or senior officials of his

department and the people it lobbies for, does the Minister of Canadian Heritage realize the situation he puts his senior officials in when they are questioned by a lobbyist who is a friend of the minister, his fundraiser and the recipient of untendered contracts from him? Does he realize that he thus makes it impossible for his officials to say no to anything?

(1420)

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, never, to my knowledge, have any of the sports or cultural associations wishing to speak to me or to my officials used the services of Gervais-Gagnon. I can therefore say that the allegation by the hon. member has fallen flat—as a pancake.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Clearly, the Minister of Canadian Heritage has put himself in a totally unacceptable situation by becoming indebted to a lobbyist whose firm represents a number of groups dealing with his department.

In light of the new developments, can the Minister of Canadian Heritage tell us whether he discussed his case with the government's ethics counsellor?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that the Prime Minister himself rose in this House to say that he had raised the issue with his ethics counsellor. That is all I know. But, if there are other statements to be made, they will be made by those responsible.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Given the incredible situation in which the Minister of Canadian Heritage has unfortunately put himself and the delicate situation in which his carelessness has put his officials, does the Minister of Canadian Heritage not think that the best way to rehabilitate his department is, unfortunately for him, to resign immediately?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when one obeys the rules, does what everyone in this House does, that is, attend fundraisers, and observes the rules established by Elections Canada, one does not harm one's department.

*[English]*

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I thank the leaders of the Liberal-Bloc coalition for excluding question period from their deal to muzzle Parliament today. This is truly appreciated by members on this side of the House.

*Oral Questions*

Yesterday the Prime Minister told the House that all the facts are known about the names and money contributed by guests at the heritage minister's last supper. Now we learn the amount of money raised will not be made public by Elections Canada until July. We learned the official tally could well exceed the \$12,000 disclosed thus far and we learned that the identity of many of the guests and the exact number in attendance at the dinner remain a mystery.

How does the Deputy Prime Minister explain the contradiction between these facts and what the House was told yesterday?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member would be very happy to provide the complete list of the people who participated in the dinner. Last year the Reform Party, which took a public position before the royal commission on electoral financing that it did not support public donations and tax credits for political parties, saw no problem in accepting donations of \$10,000 from Rogers Communication, \$15,000 from John Labatt, \$6,000 from Pulp and Timber LTD., \$10,000 from Imperial Oil, and \$4,000 from PanCanadian Petroleum.

(1425)

I could go on but obviously the Reform Party sees absolutely no problem in fundraising when for itself. Obviously it should not see a problem for any political party that has an open and transparent process of fundraising, which is what we have done in this case.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, not only are there contradictions between what the Prime Minister told the House and the facts, but the Minister of Canadian Heritage cannot keep his story straight on this subject either.

The minister said most of the department contracts were doled out before his dinner for dollars. The fact is only two came before the dinner; the rest were awarded after the contractors coughed up \$2,000 each. The minister also said his private dinner was a fundraiser for the Liberal Party of Canada when in fact the money went to pay off his campaign debts.

How does the heritage minister explain the contradiction between these facts and the things he has told the House?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate the interest of our colleagues in knowing what is happening when I give a fundraising event or when I participate. Next time I will invite them so they will be there if they want to have more knowledge of it.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister neglected to say what contract I might get if I attended the dinner.

We have here a real double standard. The chair of the justice committee sticks to his principles and his reward is to be removed from his position. Three Liberal MPs stick to the principle of representing their constituents' interests and their reward is to be removed from their positions.

The heritage minister on the other hand repeatedly violates the principles of ethical behaviour and he not only keeps his seat at the cabinet table, he is staunchly supported and defended by the Prime Minister. It appears the only principle the Prime Minister is prepared to defend in the House is loyalty to party.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister abandon this double standard, place ethics before loyalty and urge the Prime Minister to demand the resignation of the heritage minister?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member raised the issue of double standards. I ask the member how he can stand there attacking the government for having—

**The Speaker:** I am sure all hon. members want to hear the answer.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party accepted \$75,000 in donations from Sabre Energy Limited, \$25,000 from Burns Fry Limited, \$25,000 from Canadian Pacific Limited, and \$15,000 from Company 135482.

When the Reform Party asked the Parliament of Canada to revise the standing orders to remove the justice critic of the Reform Party, I did not hear a lot of talk about double standard then.

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[Translation]

**G-7 SUMMIT**

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

This week, a leaked communiqué revealed that the topics on the G-7 summit agenda included obstacles to employment, social programs, education reform, occupational training, flexibility on the job market, and elimination of redundant regulations.

(1430)

How does the Deputy Prime Minister explain that the government did not invite the provinces, when the topics it is about to discuss with its G-7 counterparts come under their jurisdiction and concern them directly?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we would love to invite them. In fact, provincial environment ministers were invited to participate in a meeting last month in the Yukon.

Unfortunately, the Government of Quebec chose not to be represented.

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that, on the whole issue of manpower, the HRD minister, who is directly responsible for such issues, has never convened the provinces since he took office.

What credibility will the Prime Minister of Canada have with his G-7 colleagues when discussing and making commitments in areas over which he has no jurisdiction?

[English]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the hon. member stated, last Friday I had a meeting with all the ministers of the provincial governments of the Atlantic region to talk about a wide variety of issues relating to unemployment insurance and modernization.

We talked about how we could combine efforts to deal with youth employment issues and how we could begin to work together to provide some joint initiatives to deal with problems of poverty.

Some 48 hours ago we were meeting with provincial ministers as we have been doing over the past year. I tried to tell the hon. member this but it does not seem to quite sink in. I have written to my counterpart in Quebec. I have offered to have meetings. I have yet to have a response.

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#### MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the previous response of the Deputy Prime Minister illustrates exactly what the government's problem is. It is the inability to discern between legitimate political fundraising and influence peddling or at least the appearance of it.

Every contributor to this event who has been made known to us has received a contribution from the minister, these being taxpayers' dollars through grants and contracts. That is a fact.

The minister and the Prime Minister have stated that all information is public, yet the minister's office refuses to make public the names of those who attended.

Will the Minister of Canadian Heritage table in the House today a list of who was invited to the dinner, who actually attended the dinner, who contributed to the dinner and all the contracts they received from the minister and the department? Yes or no?

#### Oral Questions

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the allegations and the questions our colleague has been putting for several days raises an important issue.

The Canadian political system calls for each party and each parliamentarian to take part in fundraising. That is how our democracy works. It is done to avoid an undue burden to the taxpayers.

I would like to know whether the Reform Party is suggesting that there should be no fundraisers and whether the whole bill should be borne by the taxpayers.

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, let us be clear about what the issue is. It is not about contributions made to political parties. It is about the misuse of a cabinet minister's position to reward those who contribute to his election debts and to the Liberal Party.

It has been reported that this is not the only dinner that Mr. Gervais has organized involving client interest of the department.

Will the minister confirm that other dinners were organized for similar purposes, one prior to September 18, 1994 and one recently this year?

(1435)

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker, there was no other dinner.

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[Translation]

#### KANESATAKE

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. On Saturday, June 10, an election will be held in Kanesatake. The Indian Act provides a procedure for the election process.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us if her government received the necessary guarantees to ensure compliance with that procedure during Saturday's election?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that all Canadians, including those who live in Kanesatake, must comply with the laws that govern them.

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Indian Act includes a process which specifically applies to elections held by aboriginal people. These rules are not necessarily the same as the ones which apply to all Canadians.

Considering that she is responsible for aboriginal rights, how can the Deputy Prime Minister claim to protect those rights when, two days before the election, she cannot even guarantee the legality of the election process? There is not much time left.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said quite clearly that the laws that govern the people of Canada are applicable in every part of Canada including Kanesatake.

The member says it is not the same law. Just as Jacques Rose has the capacity to elect his membership according to the rules that he establishes, so there are different mechanisms in place in different parts of the country.

*[Translation]*

We are complying with the request for distinct status regarding this election.

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*[English]***GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS**

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the failure of the government lawyer in a high profile drug case in Nanaimo, B. C. is a classic example of the government putting the appointment of friends before competence.

Yesterday the parliamentary secretary unbelievably said that we should allow a representative of the attorney general to prosecute even though he or she might not have had previous case experience under that particular section of the Criminal Code.

Will the justice minister stop supporting these patronage appointments or is he to continue his policy of amateur hour?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first, I ask the hon. member to bear in mind that he is dealing with the professional reputation of a lawyer who took a case into court in good faith on behalf of the Government of Canada. We ought to be careful, in my respectful submission, how we deal with that professional reputation.

The case to which the hon. member refers is one that may be appealed and I will not speak to that case. In this instance, as in every other, we send lawyers into courtrooms because we are satisfied with their competence to do the job.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the justice minister's comment certainly is reflective of his comment also on June 5 at which time he said that these agents were appointed because they are competent to do the work they are asked to do.

The failure of the appointed agent in Nanaimo and the comments by law enforcement officials clearly indicate that simply is not the case.

This patronage issue relates specifically to public safety. Will the minister undertake a complete review of all appointments of justice legal agents?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a very real sense I already have. I have already agreed to provide my hon. friend with a list of the agents we appointed as a result of that review which took place since we came to office.

That review also resulted in the imposition of new terms and conditions for all agents: the imposition of a conflict code for the very first time, express terms saying that if they do not practise to the high standards we expect they can be relieved of their responsibility, new training and supervision requirements, and a reduction in the overall number of agents throughout Canada so we can get better value for the dollar for taxpayers.

I will furnish all of that information to the hon. member.

\* \* \*

(1440)

*[Translation]***CANADA LABOUR CODE**

**Mr. Bernard St-Laurent (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Tuesday, the Minister of Labour claimed that her actions in the labour conflict at Ogilvie were consistent with all of the workers' demands. But, at the same time, the workers were demonstrating in Montreal to have the government pass a law against strikebreakers. Remember, this conflict has dragged on for one year and that calling in strikebreakers interferes with negotiations.

How can the minister continue to claim that what is happening with the negotiations is normal, as she claimed Tuesday, while the unionized workers at the Ogilvie mill blame the length of the conflict on the absence of a law against strikebreakers in Canada?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I said, and will repeat today, is that the two parties, including the union, decided to resume mediation in the month of May. There was mutual consent to hold a mediation session on June 20 and 21, this month, therefore. I drew the conclusion that both parties are willing to sort things out at the negotiating table, which is my true wish.

As I have already said, we are dealing with the issue of replacement workers in our overall review of part I of the Canada Labour Code.

**Mr. Bernard St-Laurent (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, at every opportunity lately, the minister has been trying to water down her original commitment to bring in a law against strikebreakers in Canada.

*Oral Questions*

How can the Minister of Labour go back on her word and refuse to officially commit to tabling a law against strikebreakers when she knows quite well the positive effects that such a law would have in Quebec?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have always said that this issue is being reviewed, which is true. This issue, as well as everything else covered in part I of the Canada Labour Code, is under review.

The Canada Labour Code had not been thoroughly reviewed for at least 20 years, so it is high time we update it. I guarantee the members of this House that the issue of replacement workers is included in the ongoing review.

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[English]

**ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Gary Pillitteri (Niagara Falls, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment.

On Tuesday, June 6, I took part in the kick off event of the Niagara River remedial action plan, stage two, the cleanup of the Niagara River.

Can the minister tell us what support the federal government is providing to the remedial action plan?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very appreciative that the member participated in the stage one response to the remedial action plan in Niagara Falls on my behalf only a couple of days ago. I know the mayor would have liked to have had me there, and I am sorry I could not attend. I know the work that has been done by the member on the Niagara River is key to moving the remedial action plan forward. I would like to pass along my apologies to the mayor as I was unable to be there.

We have a targeted phase for stage two. We intend to begin the implementation of stage two by the end of this year. We are looking for strong support from our American friends and neighbours because, as members know, most of the pollution in the Niagara River comes from the American side. We want to work with them to make sure that this gets off the list as one of North America's hot spots and returns to its original state which was the heart of the Niagara peninsula.

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**HIGHWAYS**

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this highway 104 scandal reminds me of the old chicken jokes

like: "Why did the chicken cross highway 104?" The answer is: "To avoid the toll booth".

Now I find the Liberal member for Cumberland—Colchester is publicly proposing that a toll booth be put on the New Brunswick border of highway 104, a move that will surely start a toll booth war on the Trans-Canada highway between two provinces. This is very strange behaviour from a government, in fact a Prime Minister, who said this week it was a provincial jurisdictional matter.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister make an attempt to restore faith in the ethics of the Liberal cabinet by asking the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to at least step down until we hear from the auditor general about the minister's inappropriate activities regarding highway 104?

(1445)

**Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member should know, tolls and highways are in the provincial jurisdiction. While the member has been going across Atlantic Canada suggesting the Reform Party is against tolls, perhaps he should check with his boss, who in New York City on May 25 indicated he is in favour of tolls and user fees for public infrastructure.

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, at least we have somebody answering for that fellow over there.

What we have across the room today is a government that has a lack of ethics, a lack of honesty and a lack of accountability, but there is no shortage of arrogance across there at all.

I have an anniversary present for the minister of public works. I will share a significant quote from our current illustrious minister of public works from *Hansard* exactly six years ago today, which proves just how adaptable these Liberals are. The quote reads:

I am opposed to pork barreling schemes which only benefit friends of Tories. That is what I am against.

He said that when he was in opposition.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister if the minister of public works opposes pork barreling in principle, or just for Tories.

**Mr. Joe Fontana (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me also give the hon. member a quote: "Instead of tax based financing, he suggested privatizing current public infrastructure tolls, public and private joint ventures". That was said by Preston Manning on May 26, 1995.

**The Speaker:** I will permit the parliamentary secretary to finish his answer, but we refer to each other by our constituencies rather than our names.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Fontana:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize for using the name of the leader of the Reform Party, but it was the leader of the Reform Party who said that. It was on the CP news wire that he was in favour of tolls.

Highways are in the provincial jurisdiction and tolls are in the provincial jurisdiction. The Government of Nova Scotia decided that was where it wanted to spend the money to ensure safety and good transportation in Nova Scotia. That is where the decision lies, in Nova Scotia, not in the House.

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[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Immigration officers at the Canadian embassy in Paris have once again refused to issue a visitor's visa to Algerians, in this case two grandmothers, Mrs. Quartz and Mrs. Sebbar. The House will recall the case of Mrs. Koudil, a filmmaker, and three Algerian actors who were denied visas at the embassy in Paris, although they had tickets for their return flight.

Would the minister agree that his officials at the embassy in Paris behaved deplorably, considering the way they handled legitimate requests for visas from people of Algerian origin, and why is nothing being done to correct procedures that obviously led to this unfair treatment?

[English]

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am unaware of the two cases involving the two grandmothers' applications for visitor visas. I hope the hon. member understands that I cannot be on top of every one of the one million applications that are made worldwide to visit Canada. I will certainly look into the cases.

However, I think the hon. member should check his language when he attributes motives to our visa officers. He comes from the province of Quebec, which essentially controls independent migration. The province of Quebec also has visa officers around the world. Is he suggesting for one moment that those officers are approving every single applicant, and if they do not, for legitimate reasons, that somehow those Quebec officers are doing the right thing?

What I believe we should be doing with respect to Algeria is not solving some of the problems those people are facing through our visitor visa program. That is precisely why my officials have been discussing with the officials of the Quebec ministry of immigration with respect to independent migration to see if we can help some of those Algerians legitimately, rather than trying to utilize the visitor visa program for things it was not intended for.

(1450)

[Translation]

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the visa officers I referred to work for your department.

**The Speaker:** I may remind the hon. member that he should always speak to the Chair.

**Mr. Nunez:** Excuse me, Mr. Speaker.

Since these two Algerian grandmothers, both over 65, have already been to Canada several times, when does the minister intend to admit his officials made a mistake and when are they going to issue visas to these women who want to come here to visit their children and their grandchildren?

[English]

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I informed the member I would look into the two cases.

I know that officers who are looking at the visitor visa program are federal. What I was trying to draw to the attention of the member is that I do not hear him very often criticizing officials of the Quebec government when they refuse individuals.

I hope the member is not turning this into a political issue. He could also have stood in the House today and thanked the federal government for allowing the Garda family to go to New York City to make an application and not deport it to Romania, which allowed it to be accepted as independents, with the co-operation of the Government of Quebec.

I do not need any grandstanding from this member.

\* \* \*

**CODE OF ETHICS**

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, whether it is the heritage minister's cash for contracts dinner in Montreal, the pork for pavement highway deal in Cape Breton, or the revenue minister's legal cases for cronies on the west coast, the ethics counsellor always seems to be the last one to know. Mr. Wilson is becoming more a political scapegoat than an ethics watchdog.

My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister. When was the ethics counsellor contacted about any of these violations of ethics, and why was he not consulted beforehand rather than after?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member is assuming that there was a violation of ethics.

We have made it quite clear that the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister support public participation in the fundraising process. We have no problem with the fact that MacMillan Bloedel gave the Reform Party \$10,000 last year. We would never suggest that a donation from MacMillan Bloedel or

Canadian Pacific or Imperial Oil had an influence on their policies.

It is a very open and transparent process. We support it. We think the public across the country believes that there should be public participation in fundraising. We do not accept that as a violation of any ethical standard.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is ironic then that the Prime Minister said yesterday on page 13370 of *Hansard*, "I discussed this with the ethics counsellor yesterday morning". Why would that be necessary then?

It clearly states on page 95 of the Liberal red book that the government will appoint an independent ethics counsellor who will report directly to Parliament. Instead what we have is an ethics counsellor who rules on ethical issues after the fact and who reports only to the Prime Minister. It is yet another red book broken promise.

Given the ethics watchdog's obvious lack of teeth, will the Prime Minister honour the red book commitment and make the ethics counsellor responsible directly to Parliament, not to himself?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the ultimate person responsible for the ethics of the government is the Prime Minister of Canada.

\* \* \*

#### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Winnipeg South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as Canada adjusts to the new knowledge based economy, those organizations who are the major producers of knowledge are struggling to find the resources to meet these new challenges.

The second largest commitment in the red book was the \$1 billion commitment to research and development.

(1455)

My question is for the finance minister. Why has there been a delay in implementing this promise?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, science and technology remains a very important priority for this government. It is the reason why very quickly after we were elected we did implement a number of our obligations: the technology partnerships program, the Canadian technology network.

This is why we look forward to receiving from the secretary of state and the Minister of Industry the science and technology review, which I understand we will be receiving within a matter of weeks.

#### Oral Questions

There were in the budget a number of cuts. If we were to deal with our fiscal problem we had to deal with it frugally. Nonetheless, if we take a look at fisheries, agriculture, NRCan and industry, we will see that to the greatest extent possible we did preserve the research and development capacity of the government. There is a question—

**Mr. Silye:** Speech.

**Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard):** Wait a minute. If the Reform Party is interested in the future of the country instead of in gutter tactics, it may well want to ask this kind of question.

There are some very important questions we should be asking. Should the government be funding those things that the private sector should do? Should the government in its R and D policy be operating fundamentally or at the margins? Should the private sector be counting constantly on the government? These are the future questions this country has to answer. Why is it that the Reform Party cannot deal with the real future of the country?

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FORESTRY WORKERS

**Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

Next year, the federal government will make more than \$20 million in cuts affecting private forestry in Quebec, thus penalizing thousands of forestry workers in the Lower St. Lawrence, Gaspé and North Shore regions. Participants in the private forestry summit held in Quebec last month demand that the federal government compensate producers.

I would like the Minister of Natural Resources to tell us what kind of compensation this government intends to give forestry workers?

[English]

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find it only slightly strange that the hon. member and his party, who argue so strenuously for exclusive provincial jurisdiction in the area of forestry, should now suggest that the federal government pick up the tab for forestry.

Having said that, let me reassure the hon. member that my department and this government continue to wish to work co-operatively with my colleague, the minister of natural resources in the province of Quebec. I have written to the gentleman three times. I have offered to meet with him on a number of occasions. The door is always open to further co-operative ventures between our two governments. I await his call.

*Speaker's Ruling***ETHICS**

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, for a second there I thought the finance minister was running for the leadership again.

The Liberal red book is beginning to read like Mulroney, the next generation. Patronage, pork barrelling, pensions, and punishment are the same buzzwords that live on with this Liberal government.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister explain how she and her government can claim to have any integrity when cabinet ministers are untouchables and backbenchers are treated like kindergarten kids when they step out of line?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on December 20, 1994, a decision was made by the Reform Party to remove as their justice critic the member for New Westminster—Burnaby. At that time, the hon. whip who has just posed the question came to the government and asked us if we would sign the appropriate papers. We did so because we felt that was a decision of his party and we respect democracy.

\* \* \*

(1500)

**GASOLINE PRICES**

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

I listened with interest to her comments about ethics when she related to the House all these contributions the Reform Party received. I have some figures for the Deputy Prime Minister. The Liberals received substantial contributions from major oil companies: \$14,000 from Husky Oil; \$27,000 from Amoco; and \$47,000 from Imperial Oil.

After repeated unjustified gas price increases, the Liberal government refuses to act to conduct a gas price inquiry. Canadians want to know: Is the government's refusal to conduct an inquiry based on these huge contributions by the oil companies, or is it because it wants more from the oil companies?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the member is asking whether or not we have the courage to move on issues based on what is best for the country, he should ask why as Minister of the Environment I am moving to ban MMT, something that governments for 15 years have not had the guts to do.

We are moving to ban MMT despite concerted lobbies by people in the petrochemical industry. If the member thinks a single contribution by a single party will move this government, he is dead wrong.

\* \* \*

**PRESENCE IN GALLERY**

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I would like to call your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Oscar Arias-Sanchez, former president of Costa Rica from 1986 to 1990. This same person is a Nobel peace prize winner, which he earned for his peace efforts in Central America.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## BILL C-68—SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Earlier today the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster rose on a point of order concerning the report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs on Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons.

The hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster contended that amendments made in committee to clauses 98, 99, 100, 101 and 101.1 require a royal recommendation and that they should have been ruled out of order in committee.

The argument made by the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster was based on a comment made in committee by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice that new inspectors would have to be hired and trained to fulfil the role instead of adding additional tasks to the duties of police officers.

I have now had an opportunity to review the committee report and Bill C-68 as read a first time and as reprinted by the committee. I am now ready to rule on this matter.

Bill C-68 received first reading on February 14, 1995 with the proper royal recommendation attached thereto.

Clause 98 is the key clause as it relates to this point of order. It was amended by the committee and now reads as follows:

In section 99 to 101.1 "inspector" means a firearm officer and includes in respect of a province a member of a class of individuals designated by the provincial minister.

(1505)

In the opinion of the Chair, while clause 98 was amended in committee, the amendment brought to it does not fundamentally alter the financial responsibility of either the federal or the provincial ministers involved.

Clause 98 as introduced in the House had the concept of "police officer" for which the concept of "inspector" has been substituted by the committee. It still remains a provincial ministerial responsibility as to which class of individuals shall

be so designated. It may well be that a provincial minister decides to recruit an entirely new class of individuals for the purpose of clause 98, but it clearly remains the decision of the provincial authority to do so. Whether the class of individuals are called inspectors or police officers has no direct impact on the royal recommendation attached to the bill.

The other amendments brought to clauses 99, 100, 101 and 101.1 deal with the powers and duties of the inspectors. The Chair has come to the same conclusion in respect to those amendments.

Therefore I rule that the amendments do not alter the objects, purposes, conditions and qualifications of the royal recommendation and that the report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs tabled in the House on June 7, 1995 is in order. Bill C-68 can consequently proceed to report stage.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government what is on the legislative agenda for the next few days?

[English]

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Secretary of State (Parliamentary Affairs) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will proceed with the report stage of Bill C-85, the retiring allowances legislation and we will continue with it tomorrow morning.

During routine proceedings tomorrow the government will propose a motion as it does every year at this time to provide for additional sitting hours during the last two weeks before the scheduled summer adjournment. If there is time left after this motion is disposed of, we will return to Bill C-85.

On Monday we will proceed with Bill C-68, the firearms legislation, followed by Bill C-41, the sentencing legislation, followed by Bill C-85. Each day next week we will deal as far as we can with these bills in order. We will go on to the next one in order when the stage at which we are considering the first one has been completed.

If at some point during the week we find ourselves finished with all these bills or unable for the time being to proceed with any of them, we would call Bill C-89, the CNR legislation; Bill C-92, regarding the wheat board; Bill C-70, concerning income tax; Motion No. 24, concerning a committee examination of conflict of interest; Bill C-87, the chemical weapons legislation; Bill C-88, regarding international trade; and Bill C-94, the MMT legislation.

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If any priority items such as Bill C-22, Bill C-69, Bill C-82, Bill C-86, Bill C-91 are reported from committee or sent back from the Senate for further consideration, we will insert them into the list.

As additional backup items we would like put before the House are Bill C-54, Bill C-65, Bill C-52, Bill C-62, Bill C-88 and Bill C-85.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### POINT OF ORDER

##### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

During oral question period, I referred to Jacques Rose, but I meant and I should have said Gérald Larose. There is a major difference.

(1510)

[English]

##### TABLING OF DOCUMENT

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to have unanimous consent to table the list of people who attended the fundraising dinner to which many of the questions during question period were addressed.

**The Speaker:** Members have heard the request. Is there unanimous consent to table this list?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

#### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT RETIRING ALLOWANCES ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act and to provide for the continuation of a certain provision, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

##### SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I will share with the House the ruling by the Speaker on Bill C-85.

There are 40 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act and to provide for the continuation of a certain provision.

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Motions Nos. 1 to 7 will be grouped for debate but voted on as follows: Motion No. 1 will be voted on separately. A vote on Motion No. 2 applies to Motion No. 3. Motions Nos. 4 to 7 will be voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

Motions Nos. 8, 9, 10, 36, 37 and 38 will be grouped for debate but voted on as follows:

- a) A vote on motion No. 8 applies to motion No. 36.
  - b) An affirmative vote on motion No. 8 obviates the necessity of the question being put on motions Nos. 9 and 37.
- (1515)
- c) On the other hand, a negative vote on motion No. 8 necessitates the question being put on motion No. 9.
  - d) A vote on motion No. 9 applies to motion No. 37.
  - e) A vote on motion No. 10 applies to motion No. 38.

[*English*]

Motions Nos. 11 to 35 will be grouped for debate but voted on as follows. (a) A vote on Motion No. 11 applies to Motions Nos. 12 to 34. (b) Motion No. 35 will be voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

Motion No. 39 will be debated and voted on separately.

[*English*]

Motion No. 40 will be debated and voted on separately.

[*Translation*]

I shall now propose motions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 to the House.

**Mr. Plamondon:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Could you clarify the procedure for me? You grouped motions numbered 1 to 7 if I am not mistaken. Then, you said something about separate votes. Can you confirm to me that motion No. 1 will be voted on separately, and more importantly motion No. 4? It is really important to us that motion No. 4 be voted on separately.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Dear colleagues, I wish to make it clear that motion No. 1 will be voted on separately.

Also, motions numbered 4 to 7 will be voted on separately.

**Mr. Plamondon:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

## MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.)** moved:

Motion No. 1

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing lines 5 and 6, on page 2, with the following:

“the House of Commons may, within sixty days after the”.

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing line 23, on page 2, with the following:

“before doing so is deemed not to have elected”.

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing line 30, on page 2, with the following:

“before doing so is deemed to have not elected”.

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing line 37, on page 2, with the following:

“tion 2.1 for as long as that person is a Canadian citizen.”

Motion No. 5

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by deleting lines 11 to 17, on page 3.

Motion No. 6

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by replacing lines 27 to 34, on page 3, with the following:

“2.4 A member referred to in subsection 2.3(1) who ceases to be a member and subsequently becomes a member in the thirty-sixth or any subsequent Parliament may not elect under subsection 10(1) or 32(1) to contribute in respect of any session”.

Motion No. 7

That Bill C-85, in Clause 2, be amended by deleting lines 37 to 45, on page 3 and lines 1 to 5, on page 4.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the MP pension bill of the government. I cannot believe how fast government members want to get it through. No wonder people in the country are calling them pot lickers and accusing them of being at the trough and pork barrelling. All these phrases arise from the fact that they will not come clean with citizens and tell them exactly what they are receiving in terms of the gold plated pension plan.

(1520)

We have made a number of motions in amendment to try to improve it. Our overall objective—and it is the reason we object to it—is to bring the pension plan for MPs and senators into line with those in the private sector. We would like to see MPs in this Parliament and all future parliaments fully opt out. We would also like to see a Canadian citizenship requirement for all members of the plan and to see members pensions subjected to the same clawback conditions as the old age security.

I will address Motions Nos. 1 to 7, the first grouping. The effect of Motions Nos. 1 and 6 is to change the opting out provisions so that members of future parliaments can make a one-time decision to opt in or opt out of the plan during the first 60 days the House sits after they are elected.

Clearly the Liberals are trying to prevent it from being an election issue in the next election by only allowing members of this Parliament to opt out of the trough light plan. However, as we can see from the Ontario election, it is and will be an issue in the next election. I predict members of Parliament who do not

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opt out in this session will be voted out in the next, should they choose to run again.

We would have liked to participate in a fair pension plan but in good conscience could not and cannot participate in a plan such as the one offered in Bill C-85. All 52 members of the Reform Party, along with a few Liberals, have already indicated they will not accept the pension because it is too generous. How many members have to opt out before the government gets the message that its trough light plan needs some work?

By opting out Reform Party members save \$38 million to the taxpayers. It would not take long to figure how much the Liberal government could save. Over 450 members of Parliament belong to the plan already. If current members opted out, the minister of immigration alone could save taxpayers \$3 million and the Deputy Prime Minister could save the country a lot of money as well.

Motions Nos. 2 and 3 would have the effect of changing the bill so that a member who dies before the expiry of the 60-day decision period is assumed to have done the right thing and not opted in. The bill does exactly the opposite. It automatically opts these people in. How dare the government try to taint the reputation of a deceased member this way. It is ridiculous.

Motions Nos. 5 and 7 would change the bill to allow all members to opt out completely. Under Bill C-85 MPs who as of October 1993 already had six years of service could only opt out of benefits earned from October 1993 onward, thus creating the trough regular and the trough light scenario.

All members, even Liberal cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister, should be given the opportunity to do the right thing. The inability for longer serving MPs to completely opt out under Bill C-85 creates a two tier system among MPs. The biggest issue is that the bill through its generosity creates a two-tier system for MPs and the public.

Mr. Brian Corbishley, a CA and former assistant to the Auditor General of Canada, is head of KPMG management consulting and author of reports on legislature compensation for the Alberta government. He testified before the committee as one of the few witnesses allowed to appear in one day so the Liberals could fast track the bill. He said that the proposed pension under Bill C-85 was seven times more generous than the typical public sector plan and was four times more generous than the typical private sector plan.

Paraphrasing Mr. Corbishley again, to compare pension plans we combine all the elements into a single measure: the value of the pension earned in one year of service from the employer's contributions; in other words the amount that would have to be set aside to invest each year to pay for the pension. The value of the pension earned from the employer's contribution in one year

of service for this member is about \$43,000 under the current plan. Under the proposed plan it falls to about \$34,000. In the private sector for a person of the same age and same income it would only be \$9,000.

The maximum pension for MPs under this plan is 75 per cent of earnings in the best years. For others it is 70 per cent but it takes 35 years to earn it compared to this plan which allows MPs to earn their full pension, 5 per cent higher than the private sector, in only 19 years.

(1525)

Another witness, actuary and former MP Paul McCrossan, said that the bill entrenched the benefits at a level higher than those available to general taxpayers. I believe the compensation for MPs should be brought into line with modern private sector practice.

Motion No. 4 imposes a Canadian citizenship requirement on all members of the plan so that if a province separated, MPs from the province would not draw a pension from the Canadian government. I have heard comments from members of the separatist party in the House that they do not care what is going on in the House because they will not be here next fall anyway. I think they are wrong. They will still be here and Quebec will still be part of Canada.

If any Bloc members opt into the plan it will be a clear sign that they realize they will still be in the House and in the country long past the fall.

I ask all members of Parliament whether it makes more sense to give us a readily definable salary rather than keep a convoluted pay scheme and a pension plan that is no better than those in the private sector, a transparent and taxable remuneration package. Under the current format Canadians do not even know or have a precise picture of an MP's total compensation package. The scale has tipped so far toward big pensions at the end of the rainbow that for many politicians re-election becomes a top priority because to qualify they have to get elected for a second term.

Are members running a second term to qualify for a million dollar pension, or are they running a second term to serve the country for the salary they will be receiving? It generates more survival mode thinking and less commitment to tackle the tough issues facing Canada and Canadians. Canadians should be able to have a say through an arm's length agency what politicians should be paid.

Let us make compensation upfront. Let us make pension plans upfront, straightforward and out in the open. How difficult is that? Why is it that MPs are setting their own standards? Why is it that MPs set their own pensions? Why can they not hire an arm's length independent body to set a pension plan equal to and no better than the private sector? I will tell the House why. It is

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self-serving. They feel they deserve it and cannot justify it outside the House, and the paying public is now aware of it.

As the witness from KPMG management consulting told the committee reviewing the legislation, if the objective is to achieve fair and equitable compensation for MPs, the pension component should be considered in conjunction with other components.

After eliminating the gold plated pension plan, which the bill clearly does not do, the House could agree to a proper balanced package that would be more palatable and compatible with Canadian taxpayers. The proposed Liberal pension plan should be no better than that in the private sector but it is. Politicians must realize that they are no better than those who voted for them. For some reason they think they are.

When I was a businessman two years ago in the private sector I had benefits given to me by my company. They were taxable benefits. What I received in terms of pension was nowhere near what it is here. The double standard in the House is pathetic and I am here to say that it is pathetic. I am now a politician. I am paid as one and I am paid to be one. We have a double standard. We have tax free benefits the public does not even know about. It should not be that way but the government will not do anything about it and I think the Canadian public wants something done.

Politicians should never forget who pays their salaries. Unfortunately it appears that by supporting Bill C-85 the Liberals, the Bloc, the Tories and the NDP have forgotten. In the name of justice and fairness we urge the government with our amendments to go further than it has with Bill C-85.

A lot of MPs have served in the House. A lot of MPs have had the opportunity to fix the situation. In the House today there are 205 rookies and I cannot believe they have allowed the veterans to scoop them. These veterans are finished. Some of them will not even run again but they will retire with the old pension plan that gave six to one in contributions, not this one that gives 3.5 to one.

If the government ran on a platform in its red book based on integrity and restoring integrity to politicians, it would not be forcing time allocation on a pension bill. The Liberals would not be bringing in closure on the gun control bill. The things they are doing to speed things through so the Canadian public is unaware of what is being thrust on it will come back to haunt them at election time two years from now. It will be the Reform Party that the Canadian public will have to vote for in order to correct the wrongs and put right what the government is failing to do.

(1530)

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I remind those

in the House and Canadians who are listening that the government promised to ensure there was an age of eligibility, which has been done. Before this legislation came forward members could collect a pension at any age after six years of service. Now there is an age of eligibility. The government also promised to eliminate double dipping. This has been done.

The government honoured its promises and went further. It ensured the contributions of taxpayers to the MP pension plan would be reduced by over 33 per cent. It ensured the accrual rate, the rate by which credits are accumulated for pensions, would be reduced by 5 per cent to 4 per cent, a reduction of 20 per cent. At the request of the Reform Party it granted this legislation which will permit members to opt out of the MP pension plan. The government has honoured its first two promises and has gone beyond with three other initiatives.

I am amazed at the boldness of my Reform colleague who has just spoken. He used the terms *trough regular* and *trough light*, which his leader so effectively used to try to denigrate what was happening. He ought to be referred to as the MP who introduced *trough heavy duty*. On May 4 he suggested MPs should be paid \$150,000 a year and get regular pensions. If that were to happen it would cost the Canadian taxpayer a lot more. *Trough heavy duty* has been suggested by the member who had the gall to stand up in the House and try to pretend he would fix things. I am really amazed.

The hon. member quoted testimony. I am surprised he did not quote testimony from C.E.S. Franks, a witness when we examined the bill:

If MPs pensions are looked at solely in comparison with the pensions and pension schemes of other professionals, then the pensions of parliamentarians seem excessive. And that is the comparison normally made.

When these proposals for reform of the pensions of members of Parliament were first made public the media was filled with reports comparing the pension an MP would make after fifteen or twenty years of service with what a school teacher or civil servant would receive after the same period.

Not surprisingly, by comparison the MPs' pensions looked very advantageous. What these reports and experts failed to note is that less than ten per cent of MPs serve in the House for fifteen years or more, and that, after most elections (1993 was an exception) the majority of ex-*MPs* have served too short a time, less than the required six years, to receive any parliamentary pension whatsoever. In fact, a great many ex-members not only do not have a pension but have a difficult time in finding employment and in re-establishing themselves after serving as a member.

If my colleague is to be selective, I assure the House I will bring some balance into the debate.

I agree the MP pension plan is generous. I will not deny that. However, we must look at it in the total context. If we look at the international scene, France, England, Germany and any number of others, and if we look at the major components such as eligibility, the amount contributed by government, the age a person can collect a pension, number of years of service, et cetera, some countries have provisions equal to or better than

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the provisions we have in this plan as it stood and even more so today because of the changes the government has brought about.

(1535)

If we look at provincial and territorial standards we find the same thing. In other words, in certain provinces one works less than six years. In certain provinces one can collect a pension before age 55. I could go on but I will not. The point is we have to look at it within the total context, which my colleague and his colleagues will obviously refuse to do.

These motions are unacceptable to us for any number of reasons, some which I have mentioned, some which I find extremely misleading, some which do not deal with the topic whatsoever. I am shocked and disappointed it was done so early in the debate.

There is a commitment to allow optional participation for this Parliament only. That was at the request of the Reform Party. The bill extends optional coverage to persons not vested six years so that small amounts of money from the previous Parliament would not remain in the account until a member retires.

Members with more than six years on October 25, 1993 are able to opt out for this Parliament and return their pension as a gift for the crown if they do not want to receive it when they leave office. The deeming provision protects survivor benefits if necessary for members who die before opting in. The requirement to be a Canadian citizen ignores the fact that a pension is deferred compensation for which members have contributed.

For all of the above reasons obviously we cannot be supportive.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I also wish to participate in this debate, and especially in the debate on the amendments put forward by the Reform Party in Motions Nos. 1 through 7. I must say that we agree with Motion No. 1, which provides that members of the next Parliament should be free to opt out of the plan.

We disagree with Motion No. 2, according to which a member who has not chosen one of the two plans is deemed to have opted out. We feel that all workers hope to receive a pension some day and want to deserve it.

Motion No. 4 is a big trap. We are a little taken aback to see that a democratically elected political party can dismiss the relevance of another existing political party and seek to punish the democratically elected members of a recognized political party for defending ideas.

Motion No. 4 would deny pensions to members who renounce their Canadian citizenship. This is obviously a direct attack

against the Bloc Quebecois. The Reform Party must have reasoned that if Quebec ever achieves sovereignty, Bloc members will no longer be Canadian citizens and will therefore no longer qualify for the MPs' pension plan.

I strongly denounce this kind of amendment to a bill. The Reform Party must be seriously misinformed to issue such a statement. May I remind you that, in Canadian history, we are what is called a sovereignist party, a party that hopes to make Quebec a distinct country enjoying a very friendly relation with the rest of Canada as well as economic ties that are as close as they are today.

Let us keep in mind that Quebec is Canada's second trading partner after the U.S. As for Ontario, trade between the two provinces exceeds \$68 billion, and more than 100,000 Ontario jobs depend on trade with Quebec.

(1540)

We are very pleased with the services and economic agreements that we have with the rest of Canada. These arrangements reflect our concept of sovereignty, which is the recognition of the two founding nations, based on the existence of two strong governments which have economic ties.

I want to remind the Reform Party that, when it tables an amendment challenging the legitimacy of the Bloc's presence in this House, it is completely out of line with the history of this country, the Charter of rights and freedoms, and the Constitution. Let us not forget that, when the first Canadian government was elected, out of the 17 members representing Nova Scotia, 16 or 17—I believe it was 17—were sovereignists who wanted their province out of Confederation.

After four or eight years in Parliament, were these members subjected to punitive measures, on the grounds that they had a vision of Nova Scotia's future which differed from that of the rest of the country? Of course not. If the Western Party—I believe it is the correct name—which was in favour of pulling the west out to annex it to the U.S. or create a new country, had managed to get 30 or so democratically elected members here, would we have tabled motions saying that these people, even though they were democratically elected, have no right to sit here and should be punished by not getting any pension once they leave? That would be totally absurd.

Some communist members also sat in this House. Were they told that, because they were communists, they would not be eligible for a pension later on? Would an extreme right wing government, which could be a Reform government, tell NDP members that, since they represent the extreme left, they will be punished by not getting their pensions? Are we here to discuss ideas or make arbitrary and dictatorial judgments?

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In that sense, clause 4 is in total contradiction with the democratic process which Quebec and Canada are proud to share. That process provides that the people can choose its representatives among the various political parties and decide to elect Bloc members if it wishes to do so. However, will these Bloc members later be punished by being deprived of their rights because of the ideas that they defend? This is unacceptable. The left would not do that to the right, nor would the right do it to the left.

I also want to make it clear to Reform members that the fact that we are sovereignists does not mean that we want to break up Canada. That was never our intention. Sovereignists want to build a new relationship with Canada based on the two founding peoples. This would entail a very strong, central government in Quebec, a very strong, central government in Ottawa, and economic links between the two. However, Quebecers would pay their taxes to Quebec only and Quebec and Canada would only jointly buy the services that are deemed necessary to have in common.

For example, you may want to have a Senate, but we Quebecers may not, so you can have it and pay for it yourselves. If we both decide we want to maintain the St. Lawrence Seaway, we can do so together. If we decided to share an army, we could work out arrangements. The expression “based on the two founding peoples” simply means that. Currently, approximately 50 per cent of all people in Quebec—we had 49 per cent of the vote—share the Bloc’s vision and the other 50 per cent have a different vision. Some people are still undecided, but a good 40 per cent of all people still share the vision that Quebecers can have everything they ever wanted within the federal system.

Therefore, we have two options. There is nothing wrong with being a sovereignist, it is not a punishable offence, it is not a terrorist movement or a movement bent on ruining things; it is a movement, a political party with a philosophy and a vision for the future of Quebec and if its vision prevails, even better. However, there is still another vision in Quebec, the vision of federalism. It is therefore a debate on the issues based on mutual respect which people must choose. It must be up to the people to decide.

(1545)

And if the people choose sovereignty in the referendum, Bloc members, who worked here in Ottawa to bring sovereignty to pass, should under no circumstances be denied certain services or compensation for the years in which they democratically held seats and defended their vision against others. And if their vision prevails, they should not be penalized for having served Quebec, and indirectly Canada because I think that Canada would be in much better shape if we were two separate countries. They should in no way be penalized regarding their pension plans or other plans for having had this vision.

It is quite regrettable that a recently elected party which calls itself democratic, the Reform Party, would dare to table a motion of the kind. It is unworthy of a democratic party. It is an attack on the very act of democracy and the faith in it that all

Canadians and Quebecers have. It is an insult to our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is an insult to our Constitution.

It is also an insult to western democracy to have to say in a motion that people are judged by their ideas and that their rights will be adjusted accordingly. No democracy can tolerate this. That is the kind of thing we would expect from dictatorships from the extreme right or extreme left and it has no place, it seems to me, in this noble assembly, the House of Commons, which has always been preoccupied with respecting democracy and above all respecting the hon. members who were mandated by their own electorate to sit in the House.

I think that clause 4 should be voted down or even dropped before the vote.

[English]

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I engage in debate on Bill C-85 and the motions to amend certain clauses of that bill.

The time has come for everyone to recognize that the current pension plan, which is the privilege of MPs of the House, is obscenely generous. Even if the changes proposed in Bill C-85 were implemented, they would still be obscenely generous.

I want to make reference to the Prime Minister’s statement suggesting that perhaps MPs do not think they should be paid that much. An MP does not take a vow of poverty. Canadian citizens want their MPs to earn decent incomes. They want them to have decent pensions. They want to reward them for the work that they do. However, it should not be disproportionate to the benefits and salaries they receive.

Therefore, some fairness and equity has to be placed into this whole business. As MPs we recognize our worth. Canadians recognize our worth, but we do not believe that we should become some kind of elite component of society that receives benefits that are over and above those given to other members of society.

The right balance must be struck between a reasonable, personal income and a public rip off. The current plan is a public rip off as is the way it is conceived to be in Bill C-85.

This spring a number of changes were proposed. However, one change that I want to draw particular attention to is the chance to opt out of the pension plan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like you and all the rest of the members of the House to know that I have chosen to opt out of the plan. I take very strong exception to the statement that the President of the Treasury Board made when he said: “Reform members are all being forced to opt out”.

**Mr. Strahl:** Nonsense.

**An hon. member:** Nonsense in spades.

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**Mr. Schmidt:** That is absolutely a misstatement of the truth. Mr. Speaker, I want you and everybody else to know it was a very conscious and deliberate decision on my part. If any forcing took place it was the minister who would not change the present pension plan so that we could opt into it with reasonable assurance that it was fair and equitable with regard to the taxpayers of Canada.

(1550)

If any forcing took place it was the lack of decision making on the part of government members. It did not introduce the kind of amendments that ought to have been introduced into the pension plan so it would be fair and so it would be generous in the same way that other pension plans are generous for all other citizens.

If any forcing is taking place that is where it is taking place. With respect to my decision I do not feel any compulsion whatsoever from my party or anyone else, but simply my allegiance to my constituents. My constituents have told me loudly and clearly that I do not deserve a pension any larger than the one that is normal and acceptable for all Canadians, and they are prepared to pay for that.

The other aspect is that the proposed changes are not retroactive.

**An hon. member:** Excuse me, I have to make a phone call.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Good, make the call. I hope you do. The other point we need to recognize is—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order. I might have missed something. Try to keep that to a bare minimum. I would ask the co-operation of all colleagues to make their interventions through the Chair.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, phone calls should be done that way as well.

The present proposal introduced a two tiered pension system, those who were elected before 1993 and those who were elected in the 1993 election. Two kinds of pension plans are operating. That is an unfairness in itself. Why should one group of MPs be treated differently from those who are coming up?

I want to illustrate exactly how obscene the benefits of this plan are. Here is a list of the top 10 takers under the new plan as proposed by Bill C-85 so everyone recognizes what we are talking about here. The figures are estimated on nine years as ministers and living to age 75. These are the people who qualify under those categories, assuming also a 5 per cent inflation rate per year.

The hon. member for Sherbrooke will collect \$4.5 million. It so happens that this individual is also the leader of the Progress-

sive Conservative Party. The member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte will get \$3.9 million. He happens also to be the minister of fisheries. The member for Cape Breton—East Richmond will get \$3.6 million. The member for Burnaby—Kingsway will get \$3.5 million. The member for Winnipeg Transcona will get \$3.3 million. The member for York West, who happens to be the minister of immigration, will get \$3.1 million. The member for York South—Weston will get \$2.7 million. The member for Hamilton East, the Deputy Prime Minister, will get \$2.5 million. The member for Papineau—Saint Michel will get \$2.6 million and the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell will get \$2.1 million.

Where is any other Canadian with a normal income and the usual kinds of productivity going to get that kind of pension? I submit to the House that the witnesses who appeared before the committee stated that it is not going to happen.

The President of the Treasury Board said that this is a significant change and reduction, which is a lot of baffle-gab and clever but very misleading words. It is hypocrisy under the guise of an election promise.

I could not help, as I was preparing some of my notes, to think about a nursery rhyme that I learned. It goes something like this. It fits this hypocrisy beautifully. It says: "Little Jack Horner sat in the corner, eating his pudding and pie, he stuck in his thumb, pulled out a plum and said what a good boy am I". I could not help but think about the Liberals sitting in their places, looking and revising their pension plan. They stick in their hand and they pull out a gold plum and say what a good Liberal am I.

That is not all. In the final analysis it is the victory of greed and self-interest over common sense and responsible leadership. That is the saddest part of it all. Where is the leadership? Where is the example for our young people? Where is the example of responsible expenditure of public funds?

(1555)

We are supposed to be the guardians and to treat taxpayers' money as funds kept in trust on their behalf and to expend them in their best interest. However, what do some MPs do? They say: "Please cut back and be responsible, but not us as MPs. We are just fine and should be given a little more. Our pensions should be cut a little but not too much. We have to make a lot of money after all we gave up".

I do not think there is a single MP in the House who did not calculate very carefully what the cost to come here would be. Some looked at the pension plan and said: "Wait a minute. That is a freebie. That would be great for me to have". That has

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become the issue and is not a measure of productivity. It happens after years of productivity here.

There is a serious lack of leadership. We need to get our leadership back into focus. We must become examples to young people and to other citizens.

Let us examine some of the great and wonderful benefits. I return to the point I made earlier about the President of the Treasury Board saying that we have been forced into it. He said that we should look after the interests of our families for the future.

If anybody in the House is looking after family members, it is some of our people. I look at one of my colleagues who has a young family at home. If there is anyone here whom I know personally who cares about his family, it is this man. He is saying: "I am opting out of the pension plan". The issue is that we have calculated the cost. We know the cost and have said that we want to pay the cost as all other Canadian citizens have to pay a cost to retire.

I commend my colleagues who have decided to opt out of this overly generous plan and who are prepared to put their reputations, their leadership and their imagination on the line. There is another vision for Canada, a vision of responsibility, a vision of leading the country into a moral position that says we will treat taxpayers' money as a public trust with the same jealousy and with the same concern as we have for our own.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Caron (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to what the hon. member for Richelieu had to say. He expressed his surprise at the wording of Motion No. 4 which says that members who want to make an election concerning their pension will be able to receive the pension or make that election only if they are Canadian citizens.

I am astonished, surprised and disappointed to see this kind of proposal because, like the hon. member for Richelieu, I see this as an attack on the members Quebec sent to Ottawa, an attack on Bloc members. The message is that Bloc members are sovereignists who are trying to get Quebec to separate and should be punished by being deprived of their pensions.

When they were elected in October 1993, the Bloc members were well aware that their term in Ottawa would not be long enough to entitle them to a pension. However, I would like to point out two things about Motion No. 4. First, I think it is unfair to sovereignist members who work in Ottawa and represent their constituents. Sovereignist members from Quebec received a mandate from the people. They are proud to sit in the House of Commons and do the job they promised to do, which is to defend the interests of Quebec and promote Quebec's sovereignty.

(1600)

Incidentally, this motion attacks not just Quebec sovereignists but any Quebecer sitting in the House of Commons who, after Quebec becomes sovereign, decides to give up his Canadian citizenship, because the motion says: "As long as that person is a Canadian citizen".

So are the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Labour, the President of the Privy Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the members for Sherbrooke, Pierrefonds—Dollard, Verdun—Saint—Paul, Outremont, Gatineau—Labelle, and the member for Notre—Dame—de—Grâce who has been in this House for 30 years, are they all going to be forced to choose between their pension and their citizenship after Quebec becomes sovereign?

Are you going to tell the Prime Minister who, if I am not mistaken, has been a member of the House of Commons for 30 or 33 years and who has represented the people of Quebec to the best of his ability: "Mr. Prime Minister, if you do not give up your Canadian citizenship, you will be entitled to your pension, but otherwise, if you take out Quebec citizenship, you will give up the pension entitlements you had under Canadian law"?

I consider this motion unfair for the membership of the Bloc Québécois because it smells like punishment. It is also unfair for federalist members of Parliament from Quebec, who will be asked to choose between their pension and their citizenship.

It also makes a mockery of the whole Quebec sovereignty debate in which it has been made clear that Quebec would assume its responsibilities in the event of sovereignty. Quebec will not ask people living there to give up their citizenship or anything else in order to obtain Quebec citizenship. Quebec will not, for example, ask federal public servants entitled to a pension to give up their Canadian citizenship in order to receive a pension paid by Quebec, because Quebec has announced it will assume the responsibilities it inherits from the Government of Canada in the area of federal public service pensions.

I think that a motion like this one complicates matters ahead of time for the Quebec and Canadian negotiators who will be trying to reach an amicable agreement after Quebec achieves sovereignty.

I think it is a very bad thing and does not augur well for the future to have Parliament adopt this sort of motion. It is a disgraceful way to behave and it will hinder future negotiations.

I think we will need all our democratic and justice wits about us to ensure that the negotiations following sovereignty are conducted in the best possible manner. It is not acceptable for the Government of Canada to adopt a motion like this one, which

will prejudice discussions and make it harder for Canada and Quebec to reach an agreement before they even start.

[*English*]

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to think it is a pleasure to speak to this motion today and if I begin to speak rather quickly during my presentation it is because the government has invoked closure; I must hurry as usual to get through before something else happens on the other side.

This is not the first time I have spoken on the bill. It is a very important bill. The three most substantial bills for my office as far as public interest especially in this spring sitting of Parliament are the MP pension plan, Bill C-41, the sentencing bill, and Bill C-68, the gun control bill. Those three have invoked more interest in Canadian papers and in my riding than any other legislation the government has talked about or has brought in.

(1605)

The Canadian public should know that today closure was invoked on those three bills to stifle debate in the House. Those three bills the Canadian people think are most important have now been allocated only a few hours of debate before they have been passed and rammed through Parliament.

Before I get to the substance of the bill, people may think these bills could be dealt with in committee. Maybe that would be a good place to air them and put forward amendments.

On first reading of Bill C-64, the employment equity bill, I was not allowed to bring amendments because they were in English only and could not be accepted. Then only five minutes of debate was allowed per amendment, which meant often I was not allowed to speak. When it was brought to the House, closure was invoked like it was done with the three bills. When the committee has a bill as controversial as the pension bill, it does not have to invoke closure, it just will not let any witnesses appear. That will take care of the debate.

Perhaps a private members' bill would be a good way to get democracy to the forefront and on to the front burner. People should have been in committee the other day to see the look on the face of the member for Hamilton-Wentworth when Bill C-224 was deep sixed by the Liberal majority on the committee, never again to see the light of day because it did not want to see it there.

It is very difficult to get a point of view across and it is disappointing to see the government, which campaigned on open government, more access for the Canadian people, invoking different types of closure in different ways to stifle meaningful debate. It is very discouraging.

In speaking to this block of motions before us on the bill, I want to reiterate concerns of my constituents. I could read from

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endless supplies of letters I have received from people concerned about the bill, about the previous pension plan and so on. They are very angry.

Of the three bills I mentioned earlier this bill is the one that really peaks their interest. Because we cannot have meaningful debate in here the government will not allow it to go on as it should.

The last time I was on my feet speaking to this bill on previous reading I offered to debate any member of the House anywhere in Canada at any time in a public forum on pension plans. We cannot seem to get Liberal members to debate it here. They are not very proud of it. There are not many speakers from the government side. No one accepted the challenge because they realize the amount of gas to keep their cars running out behind the theatre to make their quick getaway would cause some kind of global warming.

No one will debate. No one wants to debate in a public forum. No one on the Liberal side is proud of this legislation. They will hang their heads and pass it later on. It is really too bad. I believe the government is running scared on Bill C-41, Bill C-68, the pension bill, Bill C-64, the employment equity bill. It does not want to debate any of those. It does not want to debate anything like that because it realizes those are the things Canadians will get upset about. It hopes to slide these through and somehow keep people from knowing the truth about this pension plan.

I want to make perfectly clear for my constituents that I will have to opt out of the pension plan. It is a shame really. I sent out 40,000 questionnaires earlier this year and 85 per cent of the people who responded on this issue said they think members of Parliament should have a pension plan. There is nothing wrong with a pension plan, only make it the same as the pension plan in the private sector. They supported me. A pension plan for MPs is not a bad deal, but they said I should not dare support the pension plan proposed by the government.

That is too bad. Most members on both sides of the House have families. I have a wife and four kids. I like to support them and do my part in family finances. However, when the Liberals deliberately put together a package they know no fair minded person can support, it is a shame. They will force people out of the pension plan to make sure there is nothing available. This shows their motive, especially when speaking to Motions Nos. 1 and 6, the idea of opting in or opting out of this plan for future parliamentarians.

(1610)

In a sense the Liberals are hoping to invoke closure on this issue even into the next election. They do not want to talk about this. It is a fait accompli. One must be part of this pension plan to run for Parliament next time. They are even trying to stifle the debate on the next round of parliamentarians, which is really disgusting.

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The next time around Canadians do not need to worry because if they vote for a Reform government this pension plan, regardless of what the bill says, will be gone, deep sixed as it should be. We will have a fair pension plan in which we match funds one for one, not this ridiculous four to one, gold plated plan we see have today.

Let me read one or two letters. It is almost sad to have to read a letter like this, but I will read a little to show what constituents think about MP pension plans. This letter came to my Chilliwack office:

In 1950 as a young nineteen year old man I was working as an apprentice making one dollar an hour. When Canada asked for volunteers to go to Korea I volunteered. I spent two years in the trenches and many times did not know if I would see the sunrise the next morning. Many of my comrades did not.

I continued to serve my country for another 15 years until I became a diabetic and was forced to retire from the armed forces. For all my dedicated service I received \$142 a month.

Three years ago I lost my leg and could not work any more. Now my pension is indexed and I receive \$580 a month.

A member of Parliament serves six years in office, receiving a good salary and many fringe benefits. If he is not re-elected after this time he receives a pension—

—this is under the old plan which many people on the front benches will qualify for—

—of \$40,000 a year which is already indexed. How can they justify this? My wife and I have worked hard all of our lives to raise six children and help build a way of life for ourselves and our fellow Canadians.

Why are my 16 years of service worth only \$142 a month and an MP's six years of service worth over \$3,000 a month?

If I were to be challenged on this idea of debating in public and I brought forward this letter what would be the response from the Liberal members? That is why they will not debate it outside of this place. It is a sad thing. How can one look in the eye of a veteran like this, a guy who has now lost his leg and is unable to work, and tell him: "Survive on \$500 a month and then pay my pension with your taxes?" I have said enough.

**Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am deeply troubled as I rise today to speak to the issue of MP pensions. My opposition to the pension plan and that of my colleagues is well known and our refusal to accept it is well known.

What especially troubles me today is the way the government is using time allocation to ram this and other bills through the House without proper debate. This is an abuse of our parliamentary system.

In speaking to the pension scheme, as I often do when I am speaking on bills in the House, I always refer back to the auditor general's observations about what government spending should be about. There should always be accountability. There should always be a designated goal and a measurement for whether those goals are being achieved by the expenditure. What is the purpose of this pension plan? What is it meant to do? Is it achieving that?

When the American government was instituted some two centuries ago there was actually a spirited public debate as to whether legislators should be paid at all. Some said they had to be because otherwise only the wealthy could engage in politics. Others said they should not because politics should not attract people who thought they could make a comfortable living if they were good at it.

(1615)

The decision that they should be paid seems obvious, but back then politics was not a full time occupation. Legislatures sat less often for less time and they did a whole lot less legislating. Maybe that is something we could enjoy as Canadians. By the way, back in 1867 Canadian MPs were paid \$6 a day. Things are a little different today. Now we have professional politicians. That is the consequence of the decision to pay them well.

That has both good and bad aspects. On the bad side, too many people in the House have never had real jobs. I do not say that political expertise is always bad. We do need people who understand how to get things done and how to work within the parliamentary system. I suppose it is good that some people can do politics full time as a career, but we can have too much of a good thing.

In any case, the decision was made to pay politicians so that financial barriers to holding public office would not exist. That is defensible, and it produced predictable results. MPs are also paid fairly well today. We are not paid as well as some people may think, although as my colleague from Calgary Centre recently pointed out, we are paid more than is apparent. We are paid reasonably so that we can afford to devote ourselves full time to the job and, to be quite honest, so we will be harder to corrupt. Frankly, that is money well spent. MPs who are struggling to survive and to keep the wolf away from the door are obviously more susceptible to improper approaches. So we have good reason for paying politicians and for paying them reasonably well.

What about the pension scheme? What is the reason for having this pension plan in the first place, and why is it so generous? It is obvious that the purpose of the pension is to enable people to stay with a career, knowing that when it is over they will be provided for. Private sector companies have pensions for that reason, and it is quite reasonable.

No one doubts the desirability of having pensions for MPs, as my colleague just pointed out. The real question before us today is do we have a good reason for having an outrageously generous pension system for MPs compared to their salaries and compared to the private sector and compared to other Canadians? Put another way, is there a good reason for structuring the rewards for politics so that MPs get less now and more later, that is, if they survive six years or longer? Is there a good reason for

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creating a system where the reward for being an MP depends very heavily on getting re-elected again and again? Do we have a system that rewards MPs for making the right choice here and now, or one that encourages them to promise and promise to deficit spend, to go along with their leadership even when they know it is wrong, all in the desperate hope of being re-elected and becoming a 20-year man or woman and walking off with a huge pension? That is what the pension plan is doing right now.

Mr. Speaker, the other day you found it necessary to remind my colleagues on the opposite bench that this is a debating chamber and not a barnyard. The problem that time was chicken sounds from the other side, but it is also inappropriate to hear snorts and grunts.

I do not expect my colleagues opposite to agree that we are, all things considered, overpaid. Perhaps they will agree that the current system is dishonest because it conceals the real compensation MPs receive. Perhaps they will also agree that it is poorly designed, in that instead of rewarding courage and sound decisions in the present it rewards survival at any cost.

I think my colleagues opposite would be wise to go home and speak to their constituents before they make decisions on how they will vote on the pension bill, decisions that may haunt them in the next election. I also think they would be wise to take some time during the recess, if we wait to pass the bill, and before the recess if we do not, to consider the following questions.

If we are going to reward MPs at a certain level, does it make sense to put the money primarily into salaries or primarily into pensions? If we are going to reward MPs at a certain level, does it make sense to pay all of them more or less equally or to give far greater rewards to those who have been here the longest?

I want to repeat that I thoroughly understand the importance of having expertise available. I am no career politician, and I understand that this is not, in proper numbers, a bad thing. However, I also believe that a system that rewards survival in politics above all else will attract to politics precisely those people most adept at surviving election after election. Too often these are also people skilled at sacrificing the future to the present in their public policy decisions. Our national debt has essentially accumulated in the last 20 years.

(1620)

Last night the member for Durham said: "I have often wondered coming to the House how it is possible that Canada created the debt it has today. I have often wondered who was controlling the cheque books." Perhaps he should ask the Prime Minister, a consummate political survivor, a former finance minister, and a master of promise now and pay later. Such politicians have proven very skilful at convincing Canadians

they can have their cake and eat it too, which has been ruinous for the country. It has been very lucrative for them, however.

Our national debt has accumulated under politicians who made promises and presented bills later and were re-elected for doing so. Our national debt has accumulated under politicians with very generous pensions. I am afraid our national debt is so huge that the only people who can shoulder the burden in the future will be MPs on their pensions. Frankly, I do not believe the hon. member for York Centre will wind up in a cardboard box collecting pogeys if we reform MP pensions. I do believe the current system rewards wrong behaviour, which is very bad and ill considered.

Let us by all means adopt an honest system of paying MPs. And whatever we decide to pay them, let us put most of it into salaries, with a pension system no more generous than the private sector. Let us not reward the political survivor above the one who does what is right, who tells the truth, and who sometimes must pay the price for doing so.

Proposed changes to the MP pension plan are totally inappropriate. The members opposite imposed closure. They have heard countless complaints about the generosity of the plan. They have excluded witnesses critical of the pension plan from committee hearings, but they cannot exclude the Canadian public.

I look forward to going to all of their ridings in the next election to remind their constituents of how they behaved today. Because of their votes today, they are going to need their pensions after the next election, because I am convinced they are not going to be here.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on the bill, but I think members have raised a number of issues that bear commenting on and require me to remind the members of what is being proposed in the bill.

I would like to address the general feeling of many of the speakers that the pensions of members of Parliament should have the same provisions as those applicable to the private sector.

One of the aspects of private sector pension plans the members have not given any consideration to whatsoever is the vesting differential. Vesting is the point at which the contributions of the employer become the property of the employee. Consider a corporation with a pension plan that contributes  $x$  dollars to a plan, which is matched by the employee. Let us say they contributed \$1,000 each. There would be \$2,000 in that plan. That accumulated amount starts to accumulate to the benefit of the employee following a two-year tenure of employment. After two years of employment an employee who is a

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member of a normal private sector pension plan automatically starts to accrue and accumulate benefits.

If the members really wanted to provide all of the details they would have to take into account the differential in the vesting being imposed upon members of Parliament and the vesting benefit that is available in the private sector.

(1625)

If we were to go to a system where vesting in the private sector was applicable to members of Parliament, that means each and every member of Parliament would automatically at the end of two years of service start to accrue and be entitled to a pension. That means that the vast majority of members of Parliament who never did reach six years of service would automatically be included. In fact the cost of the pension plan would more than double. In a quick calculation I did here on my laptop computer, I find that it would almost triple the cost of pensions to the House of Commons simply by changing the vesting benefits.

I honestly believe that the government has come forward with certain provisions that are absolutely necessary. The government, in its election platform, said that members' pensions should be reformed. There were two specific commitments, as the hon. parliamentary secretary outlined to the House. First, there was the eligibility. Under the current plan, members of Parliament would be eligible to be entitled to a pension if they served six years in aggregate in this House.

Under our Constitution a House must turn over at least every five years, so the six years is actually a very critical period. It means that a member of Parliament has to be elected at least twice, and in some cases in our history it has been more than twice. It could be three and sometimes four times that members have had to run simply to accumulate six years simply because of Houses collapsing before their five-year mandate might be available.

The six years really is a critical period, and it does, as all members know, eliminate a vast majority of members of Parliament from ever qualifying for pension benefits. Those are the differences that I think would have to be rationalized if the hon. members of the Reform Party would like to somehow move this to a system compatible with the private sector.

The second item the government committed to in its red book was to end double dipping. I am very proud to say that the Prime Minister did not wait until this legislation came forward to bring in effectively the end of double dipping. The first example was with regard to the newly appointed governor general, who was a member of the Senate and entitled to receive a pension. The governor general was asked and accepted to reduce his salary

otherwise payable as the governor general by the amount of pension. The double dipping is eliminated.

There are other examples in which the double dipping has effectively been eliminated even before this legislation has come forward. Those are the kinds of things the government has committed to and is doing, even in the absence of the legislation. That is important to point out.

Finally, as was pointed out earlier, in response to the need to demonstrate to the public that there was a goodwill effort to deal with this issue, the Prime Minister went further than his commitment in the election. He went further by proposing that the rate of accumulation of pension was going to be reduced. It is called the accrual rate and it has been reduced from 5 per cent to 4 per cent.

With the changes that have been made in addition to the commitments in the red book, the cost of the pension plan is going to be reduced by some one-third. Changes that have been made have been very significant changes.

For some hon. members and I know for many of my own constituents and Canadians across the land, there is a compensation question here they would like to have resolved.

The Reform Party whip has suggested we eliminate perks, pensions, and everything and simply pay members \$150,000 a year. The member has determined, based on the work and research his party has done, that \$150,000 a year is the salary we should be paid to compensate us for the contribution we make in this place.

(1630)

I do not want to debate with any hon. members what the value of my work is to the House. Certainly under any criteria I would never suggest that \$150,000 a year would be appropriate for this job. It is an absolute ludicrous suggestion. I do not think that the Canadian people, if they really knew what the Reform Party had in mind, would consider any of this rhetoric as being in any way credible.

Very often in debate members have raised certain examples where a person is going to get a pension which by the time he or she reaches age 75 will have accumulated in value to \$3 million, \$4 million, \$6 million and so on. Let us get the facts right. They are working with numbers and people have to be cautious about numbers. Let me give an example of what this pension plan would mean to me, the member for Mississauga South.

If I should serve six years I will be entitled to a pension which will accrue at 4 per cent a year or 24 per cent of my salary. My salary is \$64,400 a year. That means I will get approximately

\$15,000 a year in pension but it will not be payable to me until I reach age 55, some seven or eight years from now.

I think members have been using age 75 as a period to which we would be getting the pension on average. Therefore, between the ages of 55 and 75 getting paid that \$15,000, the net present value of those payments is \$460,000. That is also a big number but it is a number which is made up of a \$15,000 annual payment over 20 years with an assumed rate of interest of some 4 per cent which is the rate we get if we should not make our six years and we get our funds back.

The most important point I wanted to raise is the point I raised initially with regard to the vesting. Members really must consider the differential in the vesting provisions available to private sector pension plans and those that are imposed on the members of Parliament. It does have a significant impact on the calculations and it also has a significant impact on the rationale as to eligibility.

If those members believe that every member of Parliament, and I stress every member of Parliament who serves two years, should get a pension when they reach age 55, my figures show that the cost to the House of Commons would triple.

**Mr. Strahl:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member for Mississauga South. Was he challenging me to a debate in his own riding? Is that what he was doing?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** That might be a matter of debate the members may want to further look into at some other time and some other place. Respectfully, the member does not have a point of order.

**Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, most of the time when I get an opportunity to rise and speak regarding a bill, I usually say it is a privilege and an honour to speak to it. However today I am going to have to get up and say I cannot believe I would have to rise in this place to speak on such a bill and that such a bill even exists.

Surely there are enough people here who realize that such a lucrative plan is not acceptable to Canadians. They should take the time to find out, Even the Liberal whip might just check with his constituents and see what they have to say. I would be interested in the results.

(1635)

I quote a former parliamentarian and an actuary. This is what he said about why this pension plan is wrong:

I believe that compensation for MPs should be brought into line with modern private sector practice. My conclusion is that this bill is bad for you as members, bad for Parliament as an institution and bad for Canada. It entrenches your benefits at a level higher than those available to general taxpayers. It is my opinion that as long as

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your pension benefits exceed the levels available to taxpayers, there will be a strong public opinion to the effect that MPs are overpaid. More and more, the public's attitude to politicians is that they are all crooks. Some of this has to do with actual scandals, but in my view, the underlying cause is a view that politicians set one set of rules for themselves and set another for the general public.

I put it to you that if one of the last acts of Parliament before the summer recess is to pass legislation entrenching pension benefits for MPs at levels well beyond those possible to the citizenry—I believe that Parliament will have lost the moral authority to proceed as the country needs.

You may be faced with immense public outrage for protecting your privileged position just before you skewer Canadians. In that case, you deserve the public's contempt.

He did not even know about closure at the time he made that statement. I could not agree with him more.

I picked up some other quotes that were mentioned at various times around the Hill. I am not even sure when they were said, but apparently a member from Mississauga said: "We have no option because the salaries are not generous enough to enrich our pensions ourselves. Therefore, the government has to provide for us". What a bunch of hogwash.

I know full well and if they do not they should stay close to their phones once in a while. I doubt very seriously that we could find a member who has not received a phone call from some senior citizen or some other individual who is having a really tough time making it.

I received one from a pensioner this week who said: "Mr. Thompson, I make \$714 a month. My husband is not well. We are having an extremely difficult time even paying rent. We had to give up our home not too long ago and we are asked to make it on that kind of money. What can you do for us?" I work at trying to do something for those people but then I think how can I with any conscience at all tell her I will do all I can for her, that I will work so hard for her but I will accept a pension that will pay four to one.

**Mrs. Brushett:** Give her some of your pension.

**Mr. Thompson:** I would be more than pleased to. In fact, I probably have. I do not know how anybody with any conscience at all could listen to situations like that and then accept something like this pension.

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I understand there are some very strongly held views on this subject matter, but I certainly would like to have the benefit of hearing each and every intervention.

**Mr. Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, there is one thing about it. When I go to my grave I will never say I ever took anything that was not deserving from anyone. I will not accept the pension. I will opt out or I will not opt in, whichever it is.

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(1640)

I could not go to my grave with a good conscience knowing I had done that, especially when we have people in this House who have brought the government practically to its knees. If they have not done that yet, they soon will with a \$600 billion deficit. People are crying because they cannot get unemployment insurance. Seniors cannot make it because of their pensions. I cannot believe what I am hearing. They would not give an inch. Not an inch.

During the 1993 campaign, boy were things going to be different. Were they ever going to be different. I stood on the same platform with people who agreed with me that things had to change with the pension. If the Liberals could agree with the Reformers on one thing, it was to fix the pension plan. This is not even a band-aid.

We ought to be ashamed of ourselves for even considering such a thing when we are asking everybody in the country to tighten their belts. There will be no more UI money. There will not be any more old age security money. No more CPP. We have to cut our health care. We have to cut education. But boy, we are going to keep those fat pensions coming. What a bunch of hypocritical nonsense.

I hope in the next election, on this issue alone, if they do not pay the price for what they have done today that they will wish they had.

**Mr. Duhamel:** What is your pension?

**Mr. Thompson:** My pension, just in case hon. members want to know, is about \$914 a month as a school teacher. I paid into it for nearly 40 years and it was not matched dollar for dollar until about the last five years of my work. It took a long, long time. That is called a private sector pension.

**Mrs. Brushett:** Double dipping.

**Mr. Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, they can call it anything they want but it is not double dipping.

I also issue the challenge to my friend from Fraser Valley in British Columbia. If any one of you suckers wants to take me to your ridings, let us go.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order, please. I want to take a moment to remind all members that interventions must be directed through the Chair. I think it becomes apparent on a day like today with subject matter on which there are strongly held views, that if the debate is not maintained in the traditional parliamentary fashion with interventions being made through the Chair that some rather unexpected and possibly unparliamentary statements might be made. I urge members on both sides of the House to be judicious and respectful in the normal practice of the Chamber.

**Mr. Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, no doubt a person is going to get a little riled up over this kind of an issue. I apologize for not speaking through the Chair. I lost it, but I will repeat what I said.

Any one of my hon. colleagues across the way who would like to take me into their ridings to debate the pension and my personal pension which I earned after many hard years of work at less than a dollar for a dollar, then I would be more than pleased to accept the invitation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you because I am sure you are the only one who really listened at heart.

(1645)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I do want to take a moment to express my gratitude to the hon. member for Wild Rose for the manner in which he completed his remarks and particularly in reference to an earlier statement made which I think bordered on the questionable side of debate. I certainly compliment and thank him for the manner in which he handled that issue.

**Mrs. Sharon Hayes (Port Moody—Coquitlam, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting to follow my hon. colleague. Much of what he said and much of what he feels is what I feel.

I do want to speak today at report stage on Bill C-85, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act. I spoke on this bill last month at which time I expressed my concerns and reasons for vehemently opposing this piece of government legislation.

My opposition to this bill is based on certain principles that I as a member of Parliament for the Reform Party hold and advocate. I would like to state these two principles from our blue book:

We believe in public service—that governments, civil servants, politicians and political parties exist to serve the people, and that they should demonstrate this service commitment at all times.

We believe that public money should be regarded by governments as “funds held in trust”, and that governments should practise fiscal responsibility to balance expenditures and revenues.

I mention those principles to the House today because they show us a government that has distorted this process and has flaunted the trust of the Canadian people. Reformers want a fair hearing on this issue.

Today, as we come to this place in which the government has invoked closure on this bill we come with the same outrage that Canadians must feel.

I put to the House as did a witness in the committee the other day the intervention that this bill is bad for the members who sit in this House, it is bad for Parliament and it is bad for the Canadian people.

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I will say why I think it is bad for the members who sit in the House. As with many of my colleagues I see around me, we came to the House to help set a new course in government. We came here with the best interests of our fellow Canadians in mind. We came here to bring integrity to the House.

I know many of us work very hard and diligently in this place, but I must say that today that I am ashamed of the pretence of my colleagues on the other side. I see arrogant initiatives that presumably are done in the name of change yet they change very little.

For instance, we see a program with three levels. We have a level of participation in this pension program which is virtually unchanged for those who sat in the House before the last election. I want to remind people particularly in my riding of some of the numbers that would be applied to these members of Parliament. The figures I have are based on nine year terms as ministers, assuming that these people live to age 75.

The hon. member for Sherbrooke, the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party may gain from this legislation a pension of \$4.5 million. The neighbour to my constituency, the member for Burnaby—Kingsway, would gain from this legislation a pension of \$3.5 million. The Deputy Prime Minister, the member for Hamilton East, would have a pension at age 75 of \$2.5 million. This is done by this government in the name of change. Shame on the government.

Then there are the newer members. If they become retreads in the next election, there is still a very wide gulf between them and the Canadians they purport to represent.

According to one of the witnesses in the committee, even as this plan now stands, it is seven times greater than what would be expected in a public sector plan and four times greater than what would be expected in a private sector plan. The government calls this change.

This is bad for members as well who came here with the real belief in change, who wanted to make a difference and to raise the public attitude for this place. Those who decided to reject what has been given to us here are treated purposely with contempt in the sense that we are given the option that all pension benefits are lost to those who choose to reject this proposal.

(1650)

Once again I am amazed at the arrogance of the members sitting on the other side of the House. I am amazed even in this discussion at their self-righteous indignation when we point out the duplicity of what they are saying.

This bill is also bad for Parliament. As we look at this bill and other bills that have come to this place, we see procedural nightmares and shoddy treatment of the democratic process. It is

true that when the original bill which brought in parliamentary allowances came in years ago, all stages of that bill were brought through the House in one day, including committee of the whole. At that time there was no written bill for consideration by the members. It simply was brought in and shoved through. We have not changed much. Is this a place of change? Is this the change promised by the red book?

What do we have with Bill C-85? Last week in committee, a committee that was dominated by government members, we had witnesses who represented real Canadians. We had witnesses who represented professionals in this field who were refused entrance to that committee. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation gained entry to the committee only by presenting itself to the committee and insisting on a hearing.

In that committee there was a lack of notice of the government's intent to proceed to clause by clause after a full day of witnesses. Even after the witnesses said there were many flaws in the bill, it took the government 12 minutes to complete its consideration of that piece of legislation. Over 28 detailed and complex clauses were covered in 12 minutes by the government.

It reminds me of what we experienced in the human rights and status of the disabled persons committee when we were considering Bill C-64 recently. In that circumstance, government once again invoked closure on the clause by clause portion with a five minute limit on each clause. Only four out of the 50 witnesses brought before that committee were from the Reform list of recommendations.

Then the government comes to the House and says there was an overwhelming support for employment equity of all things. Employment equity is the bane of the Canadian people. They do not accept it but this government tries to claim otherwise because the witnesses brought before the committee supported it. I call that a flouting disrespect for this place as Parliament.

Then when this bill came to the House earlier today, what do we get? Government invoked closure along with other bills so that we have a four hour maximum to discuss each of the two stages, report stage and third reading. In that time, we have 40 motions to be considered. Is that not bad for Parliament?

Finally, this bill is bad for Canadians. Underlying this whole debate is a moral imperative. All members, including the members on the other side have received phone calls and letters about this. I have received many. I am sure I have heard from the cousin of the constituent the member for Wild Rose mentioned. Pensioners in distress look at this legislation and say it is morally wrong for government to do this.

How can MP pensions continue to be gold plated under this bill when it is far above and beyond what ordinary Canadians can expect from their private or public sector pension plans? How can this government justify tinkering with the MP pension

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plan when the future of the CPP and old age security are at very real risk?

The Canada pension plan is actuarially unsound. The pay as you go system now in place is completely unsustainable. The security of Canadian pensioners is threatened at this moment, yet the politicians in the House have endowed upon themselves security and golden retirement years.

(1655)

The approach of government security programs for ordinary Canadians has not worked. They are no longer consistent with demographics, expectations, fiscal realities. Canadians know this. They seek to secure their own security.

Reformers have confidence and faith in Canadians. We want to empower them with the resources and tools to plan for their retirement. We reject government bureaucracy, waste and arrogance, especially as we see it in this kind of legislation today.

Government insists that it knows best. Yet it continues to pretend that the debt and deficit have to be shouldered by ordinary Canadians but not the leadership of this country. It continues to let the debt grow by \$100 billion in its mandate which will indeed put greater stress on social programs, pension plans, every part of Canadians' lives.

It is true the interest on our debt is probably the biggest threat to the security of Canadians. This government in the meantime continues to outdo the Mulroney legacy with its patronage, with its arrogant closure and with its arrogant pension plan. The arrogance of the government is the biggest threat to Canadians.

**Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I recently learned that the Liberal Party, having decided that Parliament is irrelevant and that parliamentary debate is of no particular value to our society, is also working on a project to redesign the Canadian coat of arms. It will remove the lion and the unicorn and replace them with two fat pigs which will illustrate the triumph of greed over rationality in this country.

This country did not have an aristocracy. People came to Canada to get away from the aristocracies in the old world. However, we have willy-nilly created our own right here in Canada, the political elite, the professional politicians. This is the aristocracy we have voluntarily burdened ourselves with. It is a shame and a scandal.

The hon. Marie Antoinette, the president of the treasury board, tells us that this is the normal thing. This is Canada. This is the future for Canada. There will be this little group of very special people, many of whom have never had a real job in their lives, who somehow or other got elected to Parliament. When

they leave this place, through their own machinations they will be allowed to carry away a suitcase full of money. This is wrong. Several hon. members opposite have engaged in the most convoluted rationalizations I have ever heard to justify this massive dip into the public trough.

**Mr. Hermanson:** And it is not a skinny dip.

**Mr. Morrison:** Mr. Speaker, do I have to provide my own hecklers? I know there are not many people on the other side.

The rules of the House do not permit me to name the individuals who will be the top troughers in the new scheme as it is being developed. However, I can read the names of their ridings and the total sums to which each of them will be entitled, and I use the word entitled very loosely.

If the hon. member for Sherbrooke lives to the age of 75, he will receive \$4.25 million courtesy of the taxpayer. The hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte will receive \$3.86 million. The hon. member for Hamilton East will receive \$2.8 million. The hon. member for York South—Weston will receive \$2.75 million. The list goes on and on.

(1700)

No other class of Canadians has a deal like that; no corporate employee, no self-employed person, no farmer. Who on earth aside from our new aristocracy could ever hope to take home a paycheque like that?

One of the major sources of my case work is disabled veterans, pensioners in this, the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. I am dealing with one constituent now who participated in poison gas experiments at the Suffield, Alberta base. He is now paying the price of that in ruined health. He has a lot of problems. His doctor says there is no question that can be traced to the poison gas experiments. He and his wife draw the magnificent sum of \$102 a month for his partial disability—shame, shame, shame.

Hon. members opposite say that for their little bits of service here they are entitled to millions of dollars at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer. I am disgusted to the point of regurgitation.

Surely people who pretend they are competent to run a country should be competent to arrange for their own retirement. They make a reasonable salary, as do we. Some of that could be invested to their own benefit. They do not have to take \$4 from the public purse for every \$1 they put in.

Reformers have put our money where our mouth is, so to speak. We are opting out of this plan. It will cost the hon. member for Beaver River, a school teacher and by no means a wealthy woman, \$1.8 million which she would have received if she had agreed to stay in the trough with the hogs.

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I opted out of the pension plan the day I signed up with pay and services. I gave a written statement to the effect that I did not want and would not accept it because I felt the old plan was unconscionable. The new plan, the new improved trough, is equally unconscionable. It is time to see a little honour among hon. members.

Why are we here? Did we come here to benefit ourselves? I used to live in the Philippines. I remember a famous remark by one of the senators there when he was tweaked for having his hand a little too deep in the cookie jar. He said what are we in power for if not to enrich ourselves. He must have been a Liberal.

Old line politicians maintain perks are necessary to attract good members. What it has attracted is a bunch of professional politicians, people who have systematically over the last 30 years bankrupt the country and now are expecting a massive payout for their services—some reward.

I hope when the bill goes to the other place there will be some sober second thought, although I do not expect it. Some sober second thought could even have helped here; it could have been killed in committee. Committee was not even allowed to handle it properly. It was whisked through committee with indecent haste. No one had a chance to make serious amendments or to work on it at the time. We will make some amendments in the House, to what purpose I do not know. We know what will happen here, the cabinet has decided. The whip will be lashed and everything will happen according to plan and all the Liberals will go home happy and fat with their suitcases full of money.

(1705)

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am truly sad to have to speak to legislation as deplorable as Bill C-85, the pension bill.

It could be described with many words. I could use the words ignorant, arrogant, indefensible. I think those words probably describe the authors of this legislation as well but they do not even adequately describe how terrible it is. The words it takes to describe the legislation are unparliamentary; I cannot use them. What really troubles me is the government is embarrassed about the legislation and will not even allow a proper debate.

I sat across the table from the Solicitor General of Canada, the government House leader, and he looked me in the eye and said the government will very rarely use closure. He gave me his word we would see the government use time allocation and closure far less than its predecessor, the arrogant Mulroney regime.

Being a new and maybe idealistic member of Parliament, I took the solicitor general's statement to heart that perhaps we

were to see a new era in Canadian politics. Perhaps we were to see some progress in this place where we could work together and build a country worthy of the people we are supposed to represent. I was wrong, terribly disappointed.

The government has introduced time allocation and closure far more than the Mulroney government which it vigorously criticized for that undemocratic procedure. The government has introduced in only 19 months a far greater percentage of closure motions regarding bills than the Mulroney administration. That is deplorable and disappointing.

It is particularly disappointing that the government would use such a draconian measure on a bill that gives us personal gain. It is unconscionable, it is wrong. I cannot think of words I can use in the House to adequately describe how troubled I am by the measures the government is taking and the lengths it will go to impose its will on me as a member of Parliament vigorously opposed to the legislation and on Canadians who in no uncertain terms told every member of the House, Liberals as well as Block and Reform members, the pension plan needed to be reformed to that of the private sector on a one to one basis or a self-funded pension plan.

The government has introduced a bill in which it will not allow future MPs to opt out and which is illegal under the income tax act. It will have to put special legislation in place to allow the plan to be legal. The draconian measures it is implementing to get the bill through are truly disappointing. I feel bad for Canadians who will receive such bad representation and bad legislation from the Liberal government.

I am not sure if NDP members will accept this plan. I challenge them to go back to their roots. They came of an agrarian movement, the CCF movement in Saskatchewan. I challenge them to go back to those roots of simple, hard working people who believed a dollar gained was a dollar that should have been earned, and they would not stoop to the levels this bill would impose on them if they agreed to opt into the pension plan.

To the hon. members for Mackenzie and Regina—Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, Regina—Lumsden and The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, I challenge them to opt out of the pension plan as the Reform MPs from Saskatchewan are to do.

I will focus my few remaining minutes on the Liberal members from Saskatchewan. At the top of the list is the cabinet representative from Saskatchewan, the hon. member for Regina—Wascana. He was here years ago and has come back. He was put into cabinet. He is a lawyer. I do not think he understands agriculture very well but he certainly knows how to make money on a pension plan because by the age of 75 he will qualify for \$1.64 million. He does not even apologize for that outrageous amount.

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(1710)

Then there is the hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt. It is rather embarrassing this member was even nominated in her constituency. She had to be anointed by the leader of the Liberal Party. She did not even have support in her own constituency. They had to cancel the nomination meeting and bypass the democratic process so she would be the candidate who would run in Saskatoon—Humboldt. She will receive almost \$1 million from the pension plan should she live to the age of 75. That is assuming, and I think it is a fairly safe assumption, she will never become a Cabinet minister. It would certainly be higher if she did.

Then there is the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain—

**Mr. Szabo:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am quite disturbed that the member would make a personal attack on a member who is not here and impugn somehow that she has done something wrong.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** With the greatest of respect, that is not a point of order. I certainly listened to the remarks of the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster and there was no reference to the presence or absence of any member. He was referring to the riding, which is the appropriate way to refer to members in the Chamber.

**Mr. Hermanson:** Mr. Speaker, this is certainly a very personal matter because the pension affects us. I am trying to abide by the rules of the House and I appreciate your consideration of that.

Should Bill C-85 be passed by the House, the hon. member for Souris—Moose Mountain, a somewhat older member, would receive about a quarter of a million dollars.

Then there is the hon. member for Prince Albert—Churchill River who is a much younger member. Should he live to be age 75 he will receive \$.83 million should he remain a backbencher for the rest of his career.

The NDP and the Liberal MPs from Saskatchewan, there are about ten, would have benefits approximating \$1 million each. They would siphon out of the taxpayers' pockets approximately \$10 million.

In Saskatchewan we are hard working, industrious and honest people. We work hard for our money and we are quite proud of what we have received as a result of our labours. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the people of Saskatchewan do not approve of the pension plan. I heard it wherever I went. I had calls and letters from people in my province thanking me for agreeing to opt out of the plan. They said I am doing the right thing. They have been very encouraging. It encourages me to plan the next election campaign not only for Saskatchewan but

for the entire country, whenever the government has the nerve to call an election. We will go out there and bring more Reformers into the House who will reject these types of unreasonable personal gains at the taxpayers' expense.

I challenge Liberals from Saskatchewan to do the right thing and get out of the plan. They can, they have the option, they do not have to stay in the plan, not one of them. If they want to really please their constituents I know beyond a shadow of a doubt they have no choice but to get out of the pension plan. I commit to the House today to do everything in my power to keep them from being re-elected if they do not do the right thing and opt out of the plan.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening for a few hours to the remarks and sometimes even the flights of fancy of Reform members, and I would like to remind this House that the Reform Party is against employment equity, against the fact that this Parliament includes women and treats its members equitably.

[*English*]

**Miss Grey:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to make a comment about the hon. member's remarks that we are against women and looking after retirement—

(1715)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Again respectfully I say to the member for Beaver River that it is not a point of order. Certainly it could be a point of clarification or it could be a matter of debate but it is not a point of order.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Ringuette—Maltais:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The members of this House who have been here for more than a year should be quite familiar with parliamentary procedure. If the hon. member wishes to respond to my comments, she is welcome to do so, but not by rising on a question of privilege, as she just did.

In the old days, members of Parliament belonged to the financial elite of Canadian society. The Canadian people eventually rebelled and decided that those showing leadership in each of their communities—regardless of social and financial status, age and gender—were entitled to adequate compensation for their work so that they could represent the people properly.

In 1987, I was elected to the New Brunswick legislature for the first time at the age of 31. As in all the other legislatures, there is a pension plan for the people's representatives in the legislative assembly. In 1993, one year before having accumulated all the accrued credits for the Government of New Brunswick pension plan, I chose to run in the election to represent the people of Madawaska—Victoria in this Parliament.

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Unlike some Reform members, I do not have an already established provincial pension fund and cheques coming in every month. Neither do I have millions of dollars in the bank or an armed forces pension like certain Reform members. Judging by the hubbub coming from that direction, it sounds as if I hit a very raw nerve in some of my hon. colleagues.

I would also like to remind this House that a Reform member who is a millionaire is rumoured to have said that members of Parliament, in Canada, are not paid what they are worth, and that they should be paid at least \$150,000 per year. Again, whatever the topic of discussion, be it members's pensions, official languages or what not, there is this great flip flop. Name the topic, listen to the speeches, and you will notice this flip flop.

I would like to come back to a very sensitive issue that I am committed to, and that is to ensure that, in any election, the people of Canada, from coast to coast, can vote freely, without social, financial or fiscal status considerations coming into play, for the person who can best represent them proudly and honestly in this place. It is the least we can do, as Canadian parliamentarians, for the people of Canada.

(1720)

I must say in all honesty that, as the member for Madawaska—Victoria, when I look at the work I am doing for the people I represent, I have no qualms of conscience whatsoever about the salary, pension or what not I get from the Parliament of Canada to serve the people of Madawaska—Victoria.

I hope that, even though they are against employment equity, my hon. colleagues from the Reform Party, will be honest and recognize that. I would call upon the hon. member for Lethbridge in particular to rise in this House today and say: "Now that I am no longer a provincial member of Parliament, I relinquish the pension I earned as a MPP. I relinquish this money I am putting in my pocket every month right now". I also call upon him to be true to what he believes in and honest with the people he represents.

*[English]*

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we do not have much time left. I am not sure how much time it will take to try to talk some sense into this false debate.

We have looked at the pension program that has gone on for years in this place. People stand and say: "I have no problem with the pay that I get or with the pension that I am going to get". May they realize that when they say they are worth it that is fine in their estimation; maybe they think they are worth it. We will see what the voters think they are worth at the polls the next time around.

When we look at a pension plan which is simply seven times more generous than any public sector plan and four times more generous than any private sector plan, how in the world can anyone stand in their place and not be ashamed of it? Why are we any more special?

Are we in favour of special status for some? No. That is why the Reform Party came to this place. We do not think groups of people should have special status. Yet we hear people inside this hall saying: "We deserve it. We are worth it because we work hard". It just does not add up.

I see my friend from Edmonton East here. I want to make a comment about that. Is this person going to opt out? The government has allowed members of Parliament elected in 1988 and forward to opt out. Why only some of us get the option to opt out I do not know, unless it is politically motivated. I am challenging her to opt out of the pension plan because she cannot sell it in downtown Edmonton. Our ridings abut. I challenge her to a debate in my riding or in hers. We will take on toe to toe. We will talk about this pension plan. I will bet my pension plan that she will not be able to sell it there.

Not only that. I challenge my friend from Edmonton North as well who thinks that he is able to collect a plan. I am challenging him today, and I have some respect for him, to opt out of the plan because he will never sell it in Edmonton North.

I am challenging my friend from Edmonton Northwest to opt out of the plan too because she has the option to opt out. She does not exactly have a huge healthy majority with which she slipped into this place. I think the last count officially was that it was by 11 votes that she came into this place. I challenge my friend from Edmonton Northwest to a debate, as I do my friends from Edmonton North and Edmonton East, in my riding or theirs. I will be happy to do it. I land in Edmonton every week at the Edmonton airport before I drive three hours home. I challenge her to a debate. I also challenge her to opt out of the plan willy-nilly, just do it. If ever she has a hope of getting re-elected, even with her cabinet money that she is able to throw into it, just do it. She should not just think about it but just do it. I ask her to come to Beaver River and have a debate, or I will go there and have a debate. I guarantee I will get off at the municipal airport. It is right handy there. Let us have a debate toe to toe.

(1725)

The longest serving MP in the House from Alberta is my friend from Edmonton Southeast for whom I have an incredible amount of respect. I am challenging him as well to opt out of the plan. There is no technical way he can do it because of the way the legislation is written. Only members elected in 1988 or beyond are able to do it. Edmonton Southeast, I will be there for a debate on the pension plan, or he can come to my riding, any

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place any time. I will get off the aeroplane in Edmonton. Let us have a debate and see how it goes.

The member who just spoke before me tried somehow to drag in employment equity or the fact that as a woman I am hard done by in this place. There are many women in this place and there is no way they are able to justify the pension plan regardless of gender, race or ethnic background. Absolutely not.

I am being heckled by two rookie female MPs. The third one is not making any comments at this point. However, as I stand here as a woman I tell not only these members but every Canadian woman that I will make it on my own and that as a woman I do not need special treatment—

**Mrs. Ringuette—Maltais:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to say first that I am not a rookie. Second, I have been challenged to—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** With the greatest of respect to all my colleagues, again this is not a point of order. All these matters might be taken up at another time and another place.

**Miss Grey:** Mr. Speaker, try as they might through points of order, through heckling or whatever, let me rephrase my last statement. I am a woman in Canada and I am proud of that fact, but I do not need to claim any extra treatment or special status for the fact that I deserve somehow an MP pension. I do not.

If we talk about employment equity, let me be equal with every other woman in the country who will receive a pension plan that is fair, just the way every other Canadian does it. I do not need that special treatment because I am a woman. Neither do they. It is as simple as that.

Let me just finish by saying that I was disappointed in what I have seen in this debate. When I was listening to the debate as it was going on and when I heard time allocation being invoked today it made me sad. I sat and had coffee in the last Parliament. It was not with these rookies or first term members. You were there too, Mr. Speaker. We visited and said that if the Liberals got into power or if they became government next time we would not see the same arrogance we saw in the Mulroney years.

I see someone standing to get my attention. I appreciate that so much but she is not being recognized. She should sit down and relax. I know this hurts.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I did not hear anyone asking to rise on a point of order. Unless the member for Beaver River has completed her remarks, I would not recognize anyone else on debate. 5:30 is coming up.

**Miss Grey:** Mr. Speaker, 5:30 is coming up and so is the next election. I challenge all these people. I have watched the debate today and saw people trying to defend something which is simply indefensible. The Canadian public is watching today and I bet it is scandalized. Who pays for these pensions anyway? It is the people who are sending in tax money.

They talk about: “the government looking after me because don’t you know I have given service, years, time and energy to this place”. Nobody forced me to do it. I chose to be here as did all of us, which was the best thing we could do. When we think about the people who are sending in every dollar of their tax money and financing this thing it is unbelievable.

After question period this afternoon some farmer from the area—I do not even know who he was—brought a little truck-load of piglets up here and there they were, Liberal MPs right in at the trough. It is terrible to have to denigrate a little piglet that way but that is the way it is.

As I saw those little piglets I said to the interviewer: “How do you feel about this?” When I see Liberal members, because that is who is bringing this bill in and ramming it through, forcing this through, saying they deserve better, they think they are wonderful and it is unanimous; it is a pity to see them squealing and trying to justify this. With that the little piglet let out a squeal. It made me think I was sitting in the House of Commons. It is shameful and a price will be paid in the next election, believe me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** It being 5.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.)** moved that Bill C-301, an act to amend the Criminal Code (violent crimes), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-301 is the culmination of a commitment I made to my constituents in Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca in 1993. I made a commitment to bring the bill forward in the interest of public safety for them and for all Canadians from coast to coast.

I am disappointed the bill was not made votable considering the fact it has a precedent in the United States where it has been passed and enacted in over 26 states. It is commonly called the three strikes, you are out bill to deal with violent offenders, repeat violent offenders.

The hallmarks of justice are the protection of society, restitution to the victim, rehabilitation and protection of the individual. The bill comes as the culmination of the public outrage I hear not only in my riding but from police officers across the land from coast to coast. It is an area where they feel the justice department does not protect them. It does not protect them from individuals who continually fly in the face of the norms of

human behaviour, instead exhibiting extreme human behaviours that show a total disregard for innocent people.

Bill C-301 deals with those individuals who on three separate occasions commit a violent offence that will put them in jail for 25 years without parole. Again, the purpose is to protect innocent civilians. Too often innocent civilians are not protected in society today.

Mr. Speaker, we seem to have two debate going on here which is very intriguing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Order. I wonder if I might seek the co-operation of members to take other business behind the curtains or outside the Chamber.

**Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to read some statistics from the United States. According to the FBI index, this is very interesting—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I have a point of order from the hon. member for Madawaska—Victoria.

\* \* \*

#### POINTS OF ORDER

##### ALLEGED PHYSICAL ASSAULT

**Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to have an apology from a certain member who just came over here, tried to bully me around and actually physically pushed me. That is not the kind of respect we should receive in the House.

(1735)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I am aware a conversation was going on. I say with the greatest respect to the hon. member for Madawaska—Victoria, who raised the point of order, I do not see it as a point of order. I am trying to think of another way that we may be able to deal with this point.

I wonder if the Chair could be given some time to give some thought to the matter. I would encourage the member also to seek the guidance of the Speaker's office. We can return to this matter some other time. At this time, to the best of my knowledge and ability, I say respectfully, that I do not see a point of privilege.

**Mrs. Ringuette—Maltais:** Mr. Speaker, I think that—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Let us just take this very slowly. While I am standing you can speak all you want, but it is not being recorded. If there is something new to be added to the point of order I will listen but I hope we can be somewhat succinct and concise and the matter can be dealt with at the

#### *Private Members' Business*

appropriate time in the appropriate fashion. I firmly believe at this time there is not a point of order.

**Mrs. Ringuette—Maltais:** Mr. Speaker, the member in question was the member for Beaver River and it was an assault on me.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Again, I do not rule that there is a point of privilege at this time. I will give an undertaking to the House that I will seek the guidance of the Speaker's office concerning the matter being raised. I encourage the parties involved to do likewise because I do not feel at this point, as far as I can judge, there is a point of order.

The House will return now to private members' hour.

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#### CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-301, an act to amend the Criminal Code (violent crimes), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I hope I will have the full 20 minutes due to me.

The purpose of my bill is to protect innocent civilians. Too often in our justice system, as we have seen over the last few years, the rights of innocent civilians have often been subjugated to the rights of the criminal. The bill will give firmer sentencing guidelines to the courts because they are not being acted on as they should be.

The definitions of the crimes involved in the bill are such that rape, attempted murder, sexual assault, manslaughter are all to be considered as serious offences committed if they are committed on three separate occasions in order to get a conviction and to have the three strikes and your are out bill applied.

I will state a few facts from the United States and why I thought the bill should be votable and show how effective it has been down there.

According to the FBI index high rate offenders commit almost 18 times as many crimes per year, including two violent offences per year. The typical low rate offender commits one serious crime very two and a half years as compared to seven per year for high rate offenders. Thus, it is easy to see how an enhanced repeat offender law would actually work to the benefit of all citizens in our country. I hope this will be enacted in the future. I will give the House the opportunity to do that.

Again, the benefits are for the protection of society, to deter repeat offenders and yes, to save money. The argument can be put forward in Canada that this is going to cost us more. I will show the House the bill will save the Canadian public a lot of money.

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(1740)

In the United States this bill was passed in over 26 states in various forms. The people have overwhelmingly voted for it, as they requested in my riding. They have shown an extreme cost benefit ratio in the order of \$5 to \$1. In other words, the cost of the bill and the management of it, has a cost saving of \$5 to every \$1 of implementation.

The benefits come from decreasing repeat offences, the lack of victims, the decrease in costs of prosecutions, the decrease in costs of appeals, not to mention the overwhelming humanitarian aspects of saving innocent people from being subjected to violent offences.

To this effect the preliminary reports from California and other states show that there has been a dramatic decrease in violent cases so far. I will give some examples.

Governor Pete Wilson in California signed its bill in early 1994. California has roughly the same number of people as we do in Canada. In the first nine months of its bill, California has shown a dramatic decrease in the number of violent offences.

The argument that it will cost us a lot of money I do not think fares well. These statistics come from the states. It would be a benefit to the justice committee to actually look at this, do an analysis in Canada and determine once and for all whether we are going to derive a cost benefit from enacting this bill.

The three strikes and you are out bill is not the only thing we can do because crime prevention is a multi-factorial endeavour. I will put forward some hard points, one after another. I hope the justice committee and the minister at least take heed of them.

Integral to crime is crime prevention. In my experience working in jails both as a correctional officer and as a physician and those who have worked in jails and who have been in them say that crime prevention does not work.

We have poured a lot of money into crime prevention but it has been ineffective. We have had a few cases when we have been effective in doing this but by and large, we do not get the best bang for our buck through this.

In order for us to build a healthy society in which individuals will not commit crime, our best prevention is building the pillars of a normal psyche to ensure people will not commit crimes in the future. It is not a guarantee, I admit, but it certainly is an insurance.

We have to go back to early childhood education to ensure that children are being informed of what we consider to be normal understanding, what is normal conflict resolution. These things are very important.

They must also learn what drug abuse, sexual abuse and all these things are. It is very important to train these children early because once they get into the teenage years, it is virtually impossible to teach them self-respect, respect for other people and appropriate conflict resolution techniques. These must occur early. We take this for granted but I would submit that many children are not learning this. They are not getting it in the home because many times the parents themselves do not know it.

I hark back to an earlier speech that I made on an experiment performed at Columbia University where the parents were brought in with the children to teach them the building blocks of a normal psyche.

Second, it is work for incarceration. There is no reason why individuals who are incarcerated cannot work for their upkeep. Use this in conjunction with skills training and it would also help decrease the recidivism rate, which is extremely high in our penal institutions.

Third, we have worked in our party for putting capital punishment to a binding national referendum. Give people the choice whether they want capital punishment as a part of our society.

Fourth, I ask every member in the House to support the private members' bill of the member for Surrey—White Rock—South Langley. That bill would enable lawmakers to actually keep individuals incarcerated who are deemed a danger to society on release.

(1745)

Right now I can tell the House from personal experience that there are individuals who are dangerous to society and they are let go because the current laws do not enable the jails to keep them incarcerated if they are mentally competent. They can be deemed a dangerous offender at the time of sentencing, but not subsequent to that. That is what the private member's bill of the hon. member for Surrey—White Rock—South Langley will correct. In the interest of public safety, every member of the House should vote for it.

I will mention some of the frustrations the police forces in the country have. I was speaking to a police officer not long ago and he said they should be telling every police officer who enters the force they have handcuffs and those handcuffs are the charter of rights and freedoms. The charter of rights and freedoms handcuffs our police officers from doing their job. I would ask that the House look at revoking the charter of rights and freedoms. We have a code of human rights, which protects the human rights of every individual, and that is adequate. It worked before the charter, it works now, and it will work in the future.

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The charter of rights and freedoms merely lets criminals and lawyers look for loopholes so that criminals can be released. Justice is somehow lost in the equation. Right and wrong are lost. They are lost and subjugated to legal points of order.

For example, let us look at the Paul Bernardo case, which is now being heard. It never ceases to amaze me that in this case, where we have an individual who on videotape has been shown committing the most heinous of acts, we have to go through a four-month to six-month court case. Why are we doing it? Because the defence is looking for procedural irregularities that will let this individual off. Is that right? If it happens in this case it will happen in other cases.

This murder case is very interesting, because it brings a number of other issues to the fore. I again ask the minister to look at the aspects of the videotapes that have been presented in this case. Was it fair to the families? Was it fair for them to have to fight with their own money to prevent those videotapes from being shown publicly? It is not a right of the public or of the media to have access to those videotapes. They can only be used to hurt and harm the families, who have already been victimized. There is no law to protect them right now.

I ask the minister to look at this case and to enact legislation that would protect the victimized families in the future. We do not want a repeat of the situation being faced by the families of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy.

I would look at revising procedures in the courtroom. Currently justice in our courtrooms grinds to a halt. Part of that has to do with adjournments. Defence and prosecution alike continually put forth adjournments that make court cases so long they are eventually dropped and the accused persons go free because too much time has passed. I ask the minister to look at this and determine how many adjournments are allowed for a person to have a fair case. We could look at limiting adjournments.

Another aspect is disclosure. We need fair and honest disclosure by both the defence and prosecution.

Another aspect is the use of preliminary hearings. They are much abused. Preliminary hearings in cases such as murder trials are not required. All that happens is that the same evidence is repeated. There would be a significant cost saving if preliminary hearings were eliminated in certain cases.

With respect to the Young Offenders Act, we should publish the names of young offenders. I know from working in a young offender penal institution that many of them think it is a joke. There is little or no deterrence to prevent young offenders from continuing to commit acts against innocent victims. There is very little punishment and there is very little deterrence. One

simple thing that can be done is to publish the names of those young offenders who are committing these acts.

(1750)

Another aspect I would like to bring out is that in my experience in working with young offenders the recidivism rate is extremely high. It costs us almost \$100,000 per young offender per year to keep them incarcerated. Yet the recidivism rate is over one-third. That patently speaks for itself. It does not work. We need to look at a different model.

We need to pull young offenders out of these closed custody cases of putting them in for three months or six months. After that they go back to the same environment they were in before. We cannot undo 12, 14, 15 years of being in a situation that is patently self-destructive where they have witnessed sexual abuse or have been a victim of sexual abuse, violence, drugs, alcohol abuse, and expect them to be changed in three months or six months of closed custody. No matter how much counselling you put forth, it simply is not going to work.

Why do we not look at putting them in closed custody camps away from cities? There are some examples in northern British Columbia. We should put them away not for a few months but for a year or two years and focus on them working for their incarceration, focus on education, focus on skills, focus on discipline, focus on them learning the skills necessary for them to work as productive members of society. They are certainly not learning it now in the youth areas we have.

Legal aid is the fastest growing aspect of our justice system now. There are many abuses in it. I ask the justice committee to look at the legal aid situation we have now, look at the abuse that is taking place, and look of ways of changing that. If we are pouring money into this we are taking money away from the other functional aspects of justice.

Gun registration does not work. It has never worked anywhere. It is not going to work in the future. It will take money away from the functional aspects of justice and put it into an area that simply is proven not to work. This will be counter to what the minister intends; it will make our streets less safe than they are. That was not the intent. I plead with the hon. minister to not enact this legislation and please listen to what we have been saying in the Reform Party. Enact the good laws that are to be in that bill against those who are committing criminal acts with firearms, but please do not make our streets less safe by enacting gun registration. It will not work.

In summary, the three strikes and you are out bill is but one arm of what we can do to make our streets safer. The purpose of the bill is to get violent offenders, those individuals who have proven to show a flagrant disregard for innocent civilians, off the streets and protect society.

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We in Parliament have to stand up for the innocent civilians. We have to stand up for their rights. We have to ensure their rights will not be subjugated to the rights of the criminal. That has been going on for too long. It cannot continue to go on. We must ensure innocent people will be protected. That is the purpose of justice now. It is the purpose of justice in the future.

With permission, Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent of the House to make my bill, Bill C-301, votable.

(1755)

**Miss Grey:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I do not want to take up much of the House's time. Earlier I was named by the member for Madawaska—Victoria.

After the pension debate I did go over. I had challenged members to a debate, so I went over and we did have a rather heated discussion, I must confess to that. The member told me that I was not worth what I thought I was worth and that we could have a debate any time. That was fine. Then when we got rather heated she turned around to go back to her seat after she had called me a name and I just grabbed her and said "Come on, be real". I thought she was tripping off the step.

As I was named, I thought I should get up and say that this is ridiculous. Let us move on with the country's business.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I say respectfully to both parties I ruled at the time and continue to rule it is not a point of order.

Let us go back to the matter of the private members' hour and the motion from the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, who at the end of his intervention was asking the House for unanimous consent to make his motion votable.

Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Halifax West.

**Mr. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with some but certainly not all of the comments of the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

We should look at what Bill C-301 does. First, it would apply when an accused has two previous convictions for any of the 15 offences listed in the bill. Bill C-301 eliminates discretion of the court in sentencing the offender for the commission of a serious indictable offence.

I understand that violence in our society is an important problem, and I do not disagree with the intent here, but let us look at this for a moment. This response has some attractive-

ness; it is certainly simple and seems to be a very clear response. Is it the right answer to this problem?

It is true that all human institutions have human failings, so our courts are not perfect. However, by and large, if I read through decisions and look into the depth of the cases, I and most people also would find the same things, that we agree with the sentences if we actually have all the facts before us. One problem is that very often we only have a few very simple and limited facts about the case and the decision. Sometimes it seems the simplest answer is sometimes also the wrong answer.

It is noteworthy that all the offences listed in this bill already carry the maximum sentence of life imprisonment. In other words, the judge already has the power to impose life sentences for any one of these offences, let alone for three. Although he does not have to, he has the authority to do so, and to take into account various factors in deciding on the appropriate sentence. This reflects the basic principle of let the punishment fit the crime. And it should. It means the key decision maker in matching the penalty to the crime is the individual who was there to see the case and all the facts of the case, the judge.

I know we will hear the argument that a pattern of three serious offences is enough to prove that an automatic life sentence does fit the crime, or at least the pattern of crime. To make a life sentence mandatory for offences other than murder or treason is a significant and I think ill-advised departure from our criminal law.

The Criminal Code currently provides for a mandatory life sentence for first or second degree murder or for high treason. There are other mandatory minimum sentences, but they are the exception in our criminal law. Mandatory life sentences are extremely rare.

I refer my colleagues to the report of the Canadian Sentencing Commission, "Sentencing Reform in Canada: The Canadian Approach", chapter eight, in which the commission opposed mandatory minimum sentences on the grounds that they diminish the role of the judge and can therefore result in arbitrary punishment and other inequities.

As an alternative to mandatory minimum sentences, the commission set out a number of sentencing principles, including this statement at page 154 of its report:

The paramount principle governing the determination of a sentence is that the sentence be proportionate to the gravity of the offence and the degree of responsibility of the offender for the offence.

(1800)

It seems to me that is as it should be. From Bill C-41, the sentencing bill now before the House, I refer to section 718(1): "A sentence must be proportionate to the gravity of the offence and the degree of responsibility of the offender". The government is already adding that provision to the law with Bill C-41.

The reason for not removing the court's discretion to determine the sentence length is both sound and straightforward. The court should have the ability to consider both aggravating and mitigating factors that will help the criminal justice process impose the punishment that fits the crime.

The sentencing commission report sets out a long list of such aggravating factors at page 320, including the use of violence in the crime, existence of previous convictions, a manifestation of excessive cruelty toward the victim and other factors. Bill C-41 similarly acknowledges the importance of aggravating and mitigating factors in sentencing.

It is apparent with respect to the offences listed in the bill the court already has the authority to consider past offences as aggravating factors and to impose a life sentence for any of the offences listed in this bill.

The hon. member has tried to confine his three strikes model to a limited number of indictable offences and thereby avoid some of the excesses of the American statutes. He has succeeded only in narrowing the focus of Criminal Code offences that already carry a maximum life sentence.

Supporters of the bill will argue it is the pattern of offending that makes the difference, that requires this drastic change in our approach to sentencing. Let us examine the objectives of sentencing. One of the purposes of criminal law is denunciation through punishment. Nothing is achieved from the point of view of punishment by making a life sentence mandatory for three offences as opposed to allowing the court to consider all relevant factors in imposing sentence which can be life for any of the 15 listed offences. It seems likely such a pattern of repeat offending would lead the court to consider a very long sentence for any of these serious crimes.

The other purposes of sentencing include deterrence and the long term protection of society against criminals likely to reoffend. From this perspective, Bill C-301 casts too wide a net in its indiscriminate approach to patterns of offending. Would it not be better to tailor a law to the actual conduct that shows a likelihood of reoffending violently? Can we not focus on the circumstances of the offence, on the offender's mental state, on the brutality of his actions, all factors that evidence a continuing threat to the community?

We have such a law found in part 24 of the Criminal Code, dangerous offender sections. This part specifically allows the court to impose an indeterminate sentence for a pattern of serious personal injury offences as defined in section 752 as follows:

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An indictable offence, other than high treason, treason, first degree murder or second degree murder, involving, (i) the use or attempted use of violence against another person, or

(ii) conduct endangering or likely to endanger the life or safety of another person or inflicting or likely to inflict psychological damage upon another person, and for which the offender may be sentenced to imprisonment for ten years or more.

A number of particular sexual offences are also included in the definition. This approach to patterns of offending allows the court to link past offences and violent conduct to a prediction that the offender constitutes a threat to the life, safety or physical or mental well-being of other persons.

The court is also required to hear psychiatric evidence and dangerous offender hearings allow both the prosecution and the defence to introduce evidence about the potential threat posed by the offender to the community. Those are good opportunities to hear what threat there is and the reasons for a long sentence. This structured approach contrasts with the automatic life sentence this bill would impose.

I recommend we let the courts do their job. The Criminal Code already provides for life sentences for these 15 crimes and additionally sets out a dangerous offender procedure which targets patterns of violence and links such patterns to predictions of violent reoffending.

(1805)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are back in the jurassic era. The Reform Party, particularly the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, has outdone itself. Did his riding's proximity to California have such a major impact on the hon. member? Bill C-301 is nothing but a substitute for California's "three strikes and you are out" law.

I understand that the professional baseball strike lasted a long time and that fans missed the action. But to introduce professional sports rules into criminal law is something else. This is the figment of a wild, even dangerous imagination.

I asked myself what could possibly have inspired the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Certainly not inmate rehabilitation, crime prevention or community integration programs. What then? The answer is simple. There was no need for me to rack my brains. It is repression. One of the inquisition party's favourite phrases is, "Let us lock up criminals and throw away the key".

If they are to be believed, we have been in a full-blown crisis for a long time. The true crisis is the disinformation crisis which has been in effect since the Reform Party was elected. Its members make questionable comments on crime in this country, manipulate statistics, and engage in scaremongering. Their

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anecdotes are isolated cases that do not reflect the reality around us. They try to make cheap political capital out of tragic situations.

I remember that, just recently, the hon. member for Crowfoot exploited the tragedy that took place here in Ottawa, in which two young children were shot and killed by their father, who used a hunting rifle, as their seven-year old brother looked on helplessly. Imagine that, while talking about gun control, the hon. member from the Reform Party had the gall to say that gun registration could not have prevented that tragedy.

It could certainly be said that the Reform member is a whiz at recycling news, but has no regard for the pain and suffering of survivors. This is how the Reform Party deals with the events affecting us.

The same analogy can be applied to the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca's explanations regarding Bill C-301. The recipe is simple. Take some nice fat jailbirds. Add some spicy tabloid news and a few drops of exaggeration. Brush with empty rhetoric, taking care of never letting any rehabilitation into the mixture. Mix all ingredients together, hoping that your audience is so confused that it might agree with you.

If I am being cynical on such a serious subject, it is because I want to show how distorted the examples used by Reform members are. According to the inquisition member, parole standards should be abolished, and we should treat offenders like cattle by cramming them into correctional institutions that are already overcrowded.

Let us now look at the Reform member's source of inspiration. California's "three strikes" law went into effect last year. This law provides for very harsh sentences against any repeat offender already convicted twice of relatively serious offences.

(1810)

Like Bill C-301, California law requires the judge who convicts a person for the third time to sentence this person to life imprisonment without possibility of parole for 25 years. Think for a moment how outrageous such a legislation would be. The judges will no longer have any latitude, since the act is taking away any discretion they used to have. Sooner or later, this is bound to lead to absurd decisions.

Let me illustrate this with an example. In March, a 27-year old man was prosecuted for stealing a slice of pizza from a group of teenagers and sentenced to life imprisonment. The facts are quite simple: he stole a slice of pizza from a group of young people between the ages of 4 and 14 in a restaurant in Redondo Beach, California.

Because he had a record and was therefore a repeat offender, the offender came under the three strikes act and the judge had no other choice but to sentence him to life imprisonment without any chance of parole for 25 years.

That is the logic behind the proposal made by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Repression and punishment are the only two ways the Reform Party has found to control crime. With legislation like the bill introduced by my

Reform colleague, what happened at Redondo Beach could well happen here; the situation may not be as absurd, but it could be just as dangerous. It is more than likely that a 19-year old offender would be sentenced to life for robbing a convenience store. In fact, robbery is included in the list of offences mentioned in the schedule proposed in Bill C-301.

Let us look at the type of offences for which three convictions would buy a one-way ticket to the pen for a very long time. There is piracy, hijacking, endangering safety of aircraft in flight, using explosives. Whatever my hon. colleague's views on the matter, these offences are already liable to life imprisonment.

I find it hard to imagine that someone would be able to commit this type of offence three times in his or her miserable life, as he or she could have been sentenced to life twice already before committing a third offence.

I have nothing to say about the other offences listed, except maybe to mention that they are generally considered disgusting and reprehensible. I cannot overlook however the case of robbery. This offence is on the fateful schedule. Its inclusion will cause such prison overcrowding that it is hard to predict the implications. Again, this is an offence already liable to life imprisonment. But very few individuals serve full sentences because, objectively, the seriousness of such an offence does not justify life imprisonment.

If the circumstances surrounding the offence did warrant such severe punishment, Bill C-301 would indeed be superfluous, since the offender would already have been sentenced for life. How many life sentences can one serve consecutively? As far as I know, unlike cats, we only have one life.

The schedule of offences provided for under this bill lists 15 or so major offenses. Naturally, I would have no sympathy for any individual sentenced three times for any of them. Quite the contrary, I am of the opinion that repeat offenders do not deserve preferential treatment, but it is a different matter altogether to put them away in penitentiaries under the pretext that this makes our streets safer. Society will always be better served in the end through rehabilitation programs suited to the various offenses. Close supervision is the key.

Too many offenders were paroled before they were ready to reintegrate society and went on to commit a subsequent offence.

(1815)

Increasing the prison population will necessarily increase the related costs. Will the hon. member have the honesty to tell taxpayers how much his bill will cost us? We know that the average cost of keeping an inmate in a maximum security institution in 1992–1993 was as much as \$56,000.

It is my opinion that the three strikes, you are out rule should apply to hon. members in the House: after tabling three bills like the one before us today, an hon. member should automatically be sent home for life.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Dear colleagues, I would like to inform you that the Chair has received notice of a question of privilege. I give the floor to the hon. member for Madawaska—Victoria.

\* \* \*

### PRIVILEGE

MEMBER FOR BEAVER RIVER

**Mrs. Pierrette Ringuette—Maltais (Madawaska—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I raise this question of privilege and would like to inform you that if the Chair determines that this is a *bona fide* question of privilege, I am prepared to table the usual motion to refer the issue to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

[English]

I would like to refer to Erskine May's *Treatise on The Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*, 21st edition, p. 126: molestation, reflections and intimidation.

It is a contempt to molest a member of either House while attending the House, or coming to or going from it. The Commons on 12 April 1733 and the Lords on 17 May 1765, resolved 'That the assaulting, insulting or menacing any member of this House, in his coming to or going from the House, or upon the account of his behaviour in Parliament, is a high infringement of the privilege of this House, a most outrageous and dangerous violation of the rights of Parliament and a high crime and misdemeanour', and on 6 June 1780 the Commons resolved 'That it is a gross breach of the privilege of this House for any person to obstruct and insult the members of this House in the coming to, or the going from the House, and to endeavour to compel members by force to declare themselves in favour of, or against any proposition then depending or expected to be brought before the House'.

It goes on to say in the second paragraph:

To molest members on account of their conduct in Parliament is also a contempt. Correspondence with members of an insulting character in reference to their conduct in Parliament or reflecting on their conduct as members, threatening a member with the possibility of a trial—

Earlier this afternoon after the speech by the member for Beaver River, I went to talk with my colleague from Mississauga South. At that time the member for Beaver River came over and challenged me to a debate in my riding. She wanted to know

### Privilege

when I was available. I said I was probably available all summer, that I would be in my riding. She said she would be contacting my office.

Afterward in the discussions, I reinforced what I had said earlier in my speech that as the federal representative for the population of Madawaska—Victoria in regard to the remuneration, the pension and whatever other compensation Parliament allocates to me, I truly believe that I am worth it. It is her problem if she does not believe that she is worth it. The discussion escalated to a point where, Mr. Speaker, I think you rose.

(1820)

At the same time, the whip from the Reform Party came behind the curtains and told us to bring the level of discussion down. I told the whip to take the member for Beaver River away from where I was standing. I turned to go back to my seat. It was not a question of my falling; I was turning to go back to my seat in order to end that discussion. At that time the member grabbed me by the arm.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a parliamentarian since 1987. I have never, either in the House where I was sitting, outside the House or in my riding, ever received any such physical threat.

I do wish, Mr. Speaker, that you will be ruling on this as soon as possible because I find that absolutely no member in this House, whether a man or a woman, should be assaulted physically. I was sent here to speak my views and the views of my constituents. That is what Parliaments are all about, to speak and to discuss. This is not a boxing match. I do wish that you will rule very soon on this point of privilege.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I do hope we can address this now and clear it up just as quickly as possible.

The member is right. I did go over and we did have a rather heated exchange about whether I would come to her riding. When she told me to get out of here and my whip said to call it off, she told me to get real and to get out of here. She said that she turned around to go back to her seat and she did. However, as it was a heated exchange, she did turn around. I was on one step higher than she was and she whirled around and I grabbed her elbow and said: "Come on, let's be reasonable here".

I do apologize for that. I certainly did not mean any harm or assault. I am twice her size. It is just foolishness to think that. I do apologize if she thought there was any intention of an assault. However, this is now on the floor of the House of Commons. I might just mention that in my short discussion of this afterward, and it seems unfortunate that we have to take up House time with this, the member for Huron—Bruce said: "I was here and this is

*Privilege*

crazy. I cannot support her in this. This is hardly what we would call an assault”.

Mr. Speaker, again I publicly say that is what happened. I absolutely meant no harm or any threat as the member has said. We need to get on with this. Again, I do accept the challenge she has issued to me. I certainly would be willing to go down to her riding and will be in contact with her staff to see if we can get a good political debate going. Or she is certainly welcome to come to Beaver River and we will talk about that.

The issue here is the fact that I did take her arm but it was certainly not a threat. It was something that just happened. When she whirled around in a great hurry I did grab her right elbow and I certainly acknowledge that. I appreciate the fact that we can move forward from this. Certainly when we get into the heat of political debate, it is unfortunate it is the MP pension plan which escalated to this height. However, I trust that we can certainly put this behind us now and move forward.

(1825)

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of privilege, I will make some comments as I was a witness to what occurred in this incident.

I did go over and I noticed you were standing. I asked the two members to lower their voices because it was getting a little bit loud and it was hard for other members to listen to the debate that was going on.

The member for Madawaska—Victoria is going to great lengths to build a case. I believe with all due respect, and I do not want to any way diminish her concerns that she was not treated with respect, but the exchange I heard was on an equal basis. Whatever level it was at, it was on an equal basis.

There was no molestation with respect to her reference from 1780. Also there was no assault. There was no physical threat. The comment I did hear, and I saw what was happening, was to get her out of here and whatever. The member for Beaver River I thought just grabbed her arm and said: “Come on”. Let us smarten up kind of thing is the impression I got from that comment.

The debate did heat up to a high exchange. I think both members have an extremely different point of view on the pension plan. I recommend both members recognize they have a severe difference of opinion and that with respect they basically agree to disagree.

For you, Mr. Speaker, to have to rule on this, I think you should hear from anyone else who wishes to contribute. I do know the member for Huron—Bruce was present as a witness. He can speak for himself as to what he saw.

In my humble opinion, with it being my responsibility to make sure that members do respect each other, I know they disagreed, but in my opinion there was no assault, no physical threat. There was no intent to injure. There was no intent for bodily harm. I really believe it was a war of words and that was it.

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is not a matter of what was being debated. One hon. member as a result of the debate in the House was not satisfied. She had made her points wanted to carry on and did come to this spot. I was sitting here beside where the event took place between the two members.

There is a very important point to clarify. I agree fully with the facts as laid out by the hon. member. Her comment was to the Reform Party whip, not to the member as the member said. The member is incorrect. The member for Madawaska—Victoria had indicated to the Reform Party whip to get her out of here because I had got your attention, Mr. Speaker, to rise because of the sound level of the conversation. The member was clearly aware that it was not going anywhere and tried to leave the conversation. She very calmly tried to leave the conversation, at which point the member for Beaver River in all fairness and with due respect for the member, was not going to allow the matter to finish and wanted to impose her position even further on the member.

I was quite disturbed with the whole incident. Although I am not a lawyer my impression of what went on here was that the member for Beaver River had come to harass and impose herself upon the member who has made this complaint and was not prepared to let it go until she had won and imposed her view. I think that is the issue before us. There was a physical contact. There was an attempt to carry on something the member clearly wanted to just get out of.

(1830)

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if I may, hopefully in order to establish good harmony between members, I would ask if the House could not see the clock for ten minutes or so in order that we can end the conversation. I think it would be helpful for the House as a whole to sit an extra ten minutes to conclude the matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Colleagues, given the seriousness of the matter it certainly would be my intention to hear whatever additional information might ultimately assist the Chair in this matter, and I will not see the clock.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring a few points to the attention of the Chair.

*Private Members' Business*

First, I was in the House some years ago when an incident of molestation was raised. It was a dispute between the member of Parliament for York South—Weston and the then member of Parliament from Winnipeg, the late Mr. Dan McKenzie. The Speaker will perhaps recall that incident, or the records of the House will remind him of it. Essentially, it was a debate that eventually ended in one member physically attempting to do something to another member, which is certainly not in conformity with our usual practices in the House.

There are, not only in Beauchesne but as well in Erskine May, a number of cases of what are referred to as the molestation of members while in the execution of their duties. Not only is there the case of 1780, which has been mentioned, but perhaps more importantly for the Speaker is the following. There is reference in Erskine May's 19th edition at page 149 to cases of punishment of members and others for molestation of members. In other words, these are cases of members against members within the precincts of the House. I could name a series of these cases, but I will name the Franklyn case, the Mompesson case, Holt, Gourlay, and so on, which refer to disputes between hon. members inside the Chamber itself.

The point I am making, without judging this case, is that the Speaker has in the past determined that this kind of an incident, depending on the severity of it, was deemed to be punishable by an action of the House. Therefore, it is, at least *prima facie*, something for the Speaker to consider as being important, and it falls under the general rubric, in Erskine May's 19th edition, not only of breaches of privileges but also under the rubric of contempt of Parliament. I bring this to your attention because of these two important points.

Finally, there is the whole issue of privilege generally, which is what enables us to function, not only as parliamentarians individually, but collectively. This definition of privilege is found on page 67 of Erskine May's 19th edition. In other words, all of us as parliamentarians have a fundamental right and a fundamental expectation that we will all be able to stand in the House and say whatever we feel we must say on behalf of those who sent us here, without fear, worry or concern that anything will stop us, threaten us, or otherwise make it such that we would be hampered in that capacity. That is a fundamental principle, which is necessary for all of us to be able to represent our fellow constituents in this highest court in the land, the Parliament of our country.

(1835)

*[Translation]*

So, if we are to all enjoy this privilege and represent not only properly but without fear of reprisal all that may be said in this House, it goes without saying that the threat cannot be tolerated.

*[English]*

The best case to be made for that is surely the fact that no member of Parliament could ever be brought before a court of law for saying anything in the House. The reason that is there is to ensure that there is no libel chill, to ensure that no one can threaten to sue an MP for something said in the House. The reason that is there is to give any member of Parliament the total freedom from fear of any kind in order to represent constituents.

For the same reason, it is important, and I would argue essential, that we be able to speak not only in the House in a way that does not have in it libel chill, but free of any kind of molestation or retribution on the part of anyone within Parliament as well as coming to and leaving the Parliament. That has been established, as I indicated previously, for centuries.

I do not want to belabour that point. I thought it was an important consideration for the Chair to take into account. I hope it will assist the Speaker in deliberating on this important issue.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Colleagues, certainly the matter raised before the House is a serious matter.

I begin by acknowledging and thanking all those members who participated in the sharing of information and precedents. That will assist the Chair in arriving at a decision.

I will take this matter under advisement. Again, I thank the members for their information and their participation. We will deal with the matter in the most respectful and the most just fashion possible.

I would like now to return to the business of the House during private members' hour. I believe the hon. member for Edmonton Southwest was seeking the floor.

\* \* \*

**CRIMINAL CODE**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-301, an act to amend the Criminal Code (violent crimes), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of those viewers tuning in who thought they had somehow switched into the O.J. trial, we are talking about a private member's bill that would have the effect of saying that for serious violent crimes perpetrators would have three strikes and they are out.

Again for the benefit of those just viewing, it is interesting to see how confrontations brew and exist and happen in life. They can happen right here. They can happen everywhere in life, some more violent than others.

*Private Members' Business*

Here we have a situation of three strikes and you are out. In my view this started in California where people said one day: "We have to do something about this crime situation we have. Perpetrators do not seem to get punished for it. We have to somehow set the stage so that people know there is an ultimate sanction for doing wrong".

People who have spoken against the notion of three strikes say wait a minute, what is wrong with one strike and you are out? Why should we allow three strikes? Why should it not be one strike and you are out?

(1840)

There is a good deal of validity to this because when I agreed to speak to this bill, I refreshed my memory on some of the articles I read about, three strikes and you are out.

One of the things I read was with the three strikes and you are out law in place, very often a perpetrator would have absolutely nothing to lose when making that third offence because the third strike was life.

While I am speaking in support of the bill and in support of my colleague, I do so in the full understanding there is a good deal of reservation among those who support the bill and who do not support the bill but for very different reasons.

The one thing people have in common when they are talking about this is the motivation to get us into a three strikes and you are out bill in the first place. There seems to be a sense of frustration with the criminal justice system in that there does not seem to be the kind of sanctions against wrongdoing which would prevent more wrongdoing.

It is almost as though society has become inured to the fact that there are people who are not good citizens, that we are prepared to accept antisocial behaviour and violent behaviour and say this is a fact of life and we have to accept it.

If we society take that view then the member is right, we will have to accept it because we will get a lot more of it. This bill speaks to that motivation in society at large saying do something about it.

An earlier speaker suggested perhaps incarceration was not the answer but then, what is? If incarceration does not make the perpetrator better, at least it protects citizens.

Our responsibility as legislators is to put the rights of the victims ahead of the rights of the criminals. The balance of doubt has to lie in favour of the innocent victim. The balance of doubt should no longer lie in favour of the perpetrator.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Before the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca can seek the floor again, recognizing he has already spoken to his motion, and before I can consider right of reply I must first seek if anyone else in the House wishes to participate.

Under right of reply the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca will be the last person to speak. No one else will be entitled to speak after his intervention. Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca):** Mr. Speaker, I thank everybody who made an intervention on the bill, wittingly or unwittingly, particularly my friend from Edmonton Southwest who was kind enough to second the bill and speak eloquently on it.

I will address some of the concerns. We hate to admit it but there are people who have a total and utter disrespect for life and other people. They offend and reoffend again and again. The purpose of this three strikes and you are out bill, Bill C-301, was to protect innocent civilians from those individuals who by their actions have shown a complete disregard for society.

These individuals are not rehabilitatable because they have had their chance. The hon. member from the government made some very good points. He said we have in our courts right now sentences for offences in this bill. However, these sentences are not being applied by our courts. That is one of the primary purposes of the bill.

If the courts were enacting these sentences, if they were applying the available sentences to the individuals who were committing these violent acts against innocent civilians, we would not need this bill. We would not have needed in the United States and we would not need it here. The reality of life is we do need it because the courts are failing to enact those laws already there.

Whether we are speaking about these violent offences or the use of firearms in committing offences, they are not being applied. People commit firearms offences and they have those offences plea bargained away to get an expeditious conviction on another offence. That is not law, that is not justice, that is not protecting innocent civilians, which is why I proposed this.

I also put forth reasons the bill is good for Canada why it would be cost effective. I hope the justice minister, members on the committee and members of the House take it upon themselves to look at enacting a three strikes and you are out bill or a modification thereof for the safety of all Canadians.

The member from the Bloc Quebecois mentioned throwing the key away. I ask her and anybody else who disagrees with it to go into jails to speak with individuals who have committed many offences and to speak to the victims of violent offences. They will have a different opinion.

I move:

That this bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and that accordingly the bill be withdrawn.

*Private Members' Business*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The House has heard the terms of the motion by the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 96, the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

It being 6.47 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 6.47 p.m.)

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