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Friday, February 14, 1997

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 14, 1997

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

DIVORCE ACT

Hon. Fred Mifflin (for Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.) moved the second reading of, and concurrence in, amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-41, an act to amend the Divorce Act, the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act, the Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act and the Canada Shipping Act.

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I am before the House to discuss Bill C-41. The bill is before us again to approve the amendments made by the Senate. The bill received third reading in the House of Commons on November 18, 1996 with your support, and I ask all of you in this House to voice your support again today so we may begin working on implementing this legislation—

The Deputy Speaker: I remind the hon. parliamentary secretary that when he uses the word you it is to refer to the Chair rather than to all of his colleagues.

Mr. Kirkby: I ask the House through the Speaker to voice its support again today so that we can begin working on implementing this legislation which will modernize our child support system and protect the needs of children after divorce.

This legislation confirms our promise to put children first, a promise we made when we announced the child support strategy. This strategy was announced in last year's budget by the finance minister. It includes child support guidelines, a change in the tax treatment of child support and the redirecting of all revenues that are generated from such change to poor children. It also improves the enforcement measures. All of these changes are expected to come into force on May 1, 1997.

The child support reforms are a product of six years of collaboration with the provinces and territories through the federal, provincial and territorial family law committee. For six years the provinces and the federal government worked closely together to pool research efforts and moneys to develop a child support formula suited to the Canadian context and based on solid economic research of family expenditures on children.

Bill C-41 is also the product of extensive consultation with all stakeholder groups. At least three separate series of consultations were conducted and hundreds of submissions were received and reviewed. Over 8,000 copies of the federal, provincial and territorial family law committee's original report have been distributed across the country.

All governments and groups have had a significant impact in some way on the guidelines. The result is that no one group is completely satisfied. Each group would have done a number of things differently had it had sole control of the project. However, most of them have put aside their own preferences in favour of the goal of national consistency and co-ordination.

There is a clear recognition that these guidelines are a great improvement over the current system, and it is recognized by the courts and family law practitioners who are already—

An hon. member: A quorum count, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The member is correct. There are not 20 members in the House. Call in the members.

• (1010)

And the bells having rung:

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair sees 20 members now.

Mr. Flis: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. It does not fall within the standing orders or the House rules for a member of the Reform Party to stick his head in, call quorum and sneak out when there is not one Reform member sitting in the House.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will know that we are not supposed to comment on the absence of members of any party from the House for longstanding reasons.

Mr. Kirkby: Mr. Speaker, I will not talk about the absence of members from the House but I will address my comments to the members of the Bloc Quebecois and the Liberal Party present.

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Most of the stakeholders have put aside their own preferences in favour of the goal of national consistency and co-ordination. There is a clear recognition that the guidelines that have been put in place are a great improvement over the current system. That is recognized by the courts and family law practitioners who are already using the draft guidelines on an advisory basis.

Most provinces are now expected to implement these guidelines, learn from the experience and work together to improve them. The province of Quebec is the only province that has already passed legislation to introduce its own guidelines through regulatory process in order to coincide with the May 1 date.

Bill C-41 will allow these guidelines to also apply to orders made under the Divorce Act. Without Bill C-41 there would be in Quebec two different systems for determining child support orders, one for separation and common law relationships and one for divorce.

This bill is about children. It is about ensuring that their needs are met now and in the future. This bill will help parents come to an agreement more quickly on the issue of child support and thereby reduce conflict.

Finally, Bill C-41 also recognizes that some governments need to continue to focus on enforcement of support orders. New measures are introduced to assist the provinces and territories in this regard.

We have also heard that there are issues other than child support on the minds of many Canadians. Custody and access were raised repeatedly throughout the study of the bill by both Houses. We are not ignoring this issue. We are simply completing the task started six years ago by the federal, provincial and territorial governments. The long awaited child support reforms, custody and access, was the subject of public consultation prepared by the department in 1993. The officials of the justice department have already started to work on this issue through the federal, provincial and territorial law committee.

To reaffirm our commitment to addressing this issue, the Minister of Justice has agreed to move that the government establish a joint House and Senate parliamentary review of custody and access. It is my hope that interested Canadians and stakeholders will take the opportunity to voice their concerns to the parliamentary committee.

We will be making an important first step in finding solutions if we all work together. Two amendments were made to Bill C-41 by the standing Senate committee on social affairs, science and technology. That is why we have the bill before the House again today. I would like to comment on the impact of these amendments to the Divorce Act.

First, some committee members had expressed concerns about the definition of child of the marriage in Bill C-41 which was

introduced for the first time in explicit reference to the pursuits of reasonable education—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver North.

Mr. White (North Vancouver): Mr. Speaker, I ask for a quorum count, please.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, that is one of the joys of the Speaker's job.

And the count having been taken:

The Deputy Speaker: There now appears to be a quorum. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

• (1015)

Mr. Kirkby: Our intention in adding these words was to codify the existing case law which currently allows for child support to be ordered where children are over the age of majority, pursuing post-secondary education and where the parents have the ability to support them.

However there were some concerns expressed by the senators that the addition of these new words could have been interpreted more broadly than the current case law. This was not acceptable to some people. As a compromise, the Minister of Justice agreed to remove the words "pursuit of reasonable education" so that the current case law will continue to apply. Through the words "or other cause" the courts will continue to have the discretion to award support for post-secondary education where the children have reached the age of majority and where parents have the financial ability.

Second, Bill C-41 through the introduction of child support guidelines reaffirms the objective that both parents have a joint financial obligation to support their children. However the minister understood the concerns raised by some members of the committee that this objective was no longer apparent since it was removed from the act along with the other provisions which were part of the concept of broad discretion which is currently used in the determination of child support. This broad discretion concept defeated the objectives of the guidelines and as such we needed to remove it from the act.

The minister has always supported the objective that both parents are financially responsible for the needs of their children. This obligation is included in the guidelines but to give it more importance the minister agreed that it be reintegrated in the act to ensure that any guidelines will respect that principle.

The child support guidelines are not in this bill but will be introduced through the regulatory process. The provision on shared custody drew some attention of some senate committee members. They were concerned that it only applied to situations where both parents equally shared the custody of their children. Committee members suggested that the courts should be able to depart from

the table of awards where both parents shared custody of children for 40 per cent of the time.

It should be noted that this was the family law committee's original recommendation which had been changed at the request of many legal organizations across the country who were concerned that this would increase litigation on the more difficult issue of custody and access. We agreed to introduce the provision in the guidelines but we will monitor it closely as with any other provision in the guidelines.

This legislation calls for a review by the Department of Justice to be placed before each House of Parliament within five years. Until then the Department of Justice will closely monitor the implementation of every provision with the provinces and territories through the implementation task force. It will also be seconded by an advisory committee which will provide specialized advice on issues as they arise. If changes to the guidelines are required, we will be able to bring them through relatively quickly given that the guidelines will be introduced through the regulatory process.

We are still aiming to have this bill in effect by May 1, 1997 to coincide with the tax change. I urge all members of this House to again support this bill which will bring such improvement to the area of family law. For over 50 years the current system has been in place and it is time for a change. Six years of study and extensive review by the provinces and by all stakeholders working within the family law system have brought about the proposals that are being brought forward by the minister today.

I wish to thank all of those who have been involved in improving this legislation and making it what it is. That being said, as was indicated, there will be a chance as the changes are implemented to review the bill on a continuous basis so that changes where appropriate can be made. But this is one step forward and another bit of progress by the Minister of Justice. We thank him for his efforts and we thank all those who have participated in this process.

• (1020)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to Bill C-41, an opportunity we have had several times before. We are having a debate this morning because the Senate or should I say the other place, in parliamentary terms, wanted to introduce amendments. This means discussing the bill again.

For the benefit of the public, I may recall that we went through the usual procedure: first reading, second reading, referral to the justice committee which considered the bill, and then third reading. Now once again, the other place wants to put in its two cents' worth and thus delay the proceedings.

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As a result, the Minister of Justice was obliged to suggest a compromise. Why? Because he hopes to see this entirely legitimate bill, which is basically sound and pursues entirely valid objectives, passed and implemented before the next election.

This again raises the question of the usefulness and relevance of the other place. As we know, it is always one step behind. These people are not elected but appointed by the government when vacancies occur. Often at the beginning of a government's mandate, we have a situation where the former government's party has a majority in the other place. In this case, a few months ago the Conservative Party had a majority. And since the other place pursued the interests of the Conservative Party, this tended to delay the parliamentary process.

It has been like this since the beginning of Confederation. When government is replaced, the party that was in power before is still able to delay implementation of legislation by resorting to all kinds of stratagems in the other place.

Mind you, these people are not elected. In my riding, I always ask people the same question: "Do you know the senator who represents you in Ottawa?" I know who it is now. I do not think we can mention names, but she is getting to be known.

Some hon. members: Yes we can.

Mr. Dubé: We can? I am referring to Mrs. Bacon. She does not live in the riding, but she bought a piece of property in the riding of Lévis to be eligible for an appointment to the Senate. Does anyone ever hear about this senator? This is par for the course in the other place.

Even since the Bloc Québécois came here, we have said that reforms are necessary. It just does not make sense. First, it costs a lot of money, more than \$40 million annually, and second, it is increasingly obvious that this institution tries to delay the legislative process. Occasionally, but such cases are few and far between, we get some new legislation from the other place. But more often than not, as in this case, people who are opposed to a bill use the other place to delay its implementation, although because of the usual majority in Parliament, the bill is passed in any case, so the delay is only temporary.

So duplication is at work here. I say that right away, because the compromise proposal is to have a joint committee of senators and members of the House of Commons consider the bill's provisions on child custody and visiting rights. I have nothing against the principle. But it is not, in our view, sufficient reason to vote against this bill. Members of the official opposition were among those who supported the bill because of its objectives. One of the main provisions of the bill is to exempt support payments from existing tax provisions.

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• (1025)

As we know, this led to a war of almost historical proportions. The spouse who received the support payments was required to pay tax, while the one who made them did not. Often the children were the victims of this war of court orders and legal wranglings.

I would like to call to mind a situation known to everyone, that Canada now has more poor children than when the Liberals came to power, and the numbers are still rising. One child in five is living under the poverty line. In 80 per cent or more of cases, the children living in extreme poverty are in single parent families. In most cases—and this must be said, though as a man I do not want to start a war of the sexes over this—women are the single parents who have to provide for their children. More and more often, unfortunately, these women have to do so under extremely difficult conditions. This is something that cannot be repeated too often.

This bill makes it possible to avoid crises when taxation time comes around, but it does create some rather special situations. The bill is not entirely perfect because, under the Constitution, divorce comes under federal jurisdiction while, under the civil code, marriage in Quebec is a provincial matter under the Napoleonic code. That is one of the dimensions of the distinct society no one wants to recognize.

So, people get married under provincial law and divorced under federal. This is a strange situation, a sort of complicated maze. In today's society, many couples decide not to marry but to live together as common-law couples, and there are various laws recognizing this situation. This is a very good thing, except that, in such cases, the matter of divorce and the guidelines suggested by the bill are under federal jurisdiction. If we take the case of individuals who are living common-law and have children, when problems involving separation arise, application of the guidelines is a purely provincial matter. You can see how things get very complicated at that point.

I have just described the situations of two couples with children, one a married couple for whom the guidelines on support payments apply, the other a case of separation after the divorce, where the federal guidelines apply. In the case of a break up of a common law relationship where children are involved, support is exclusively a provincial matter, in the case of Quebec.

Under an imperfect system like federalism, responsibilities are rather haphazardly distributed. I am not saying this because I am a sovereignist. It is a fact. The Quebec Civil Code governs questions of separation outside marriage.

We could talk at length on this, but an analogy is called for. This is not the only case where this sort of situation prevails. The federal

government has the annoying tendency to use the system's ambiguity whenever it can to impose its guidelines in all sorts of areas on the provinces.

• (1030)

By way of example, and only to illustrate the case and not to talk about it, let us consider the bill on tobacco. This bill concerns health, a provincial matter, but the federal government justifies its intervention in the field by pointing to infractions and sentences, which come under the Criminal Code.

Bill C-41 concerns support, family law and other related matters. There is good reason the bill was introduced by the Minister of Justice. Once again the federal government is using the Criminal Code to justify its intervention. The Criminal Code is federal, but the Civil Code is provincial.

It is a bit strange. We must admit that we should never have legislated in the area of support, separation or divorce. Ideally, in a society, there should be no need to legislate people into paying support. They should be able to do so themselves, because, if their children are involved, it is their responsibility.

I will always find it, I would not say abnormal, but strange that, after living a period of time together—years—a couple breaks up and turns to the law to resolve their problems, because they are incapable of doing so themselves. It is too bad, really. It is a real shame to end up in this sort of situation. The ideal would be to have people recognize their responsibilities toward their children.

It is sad for me to see people, mostly women but men also, walk into my riding office and complain about having been treated unfairly by the justice system on support issues. Sometimes they cannot afford to pay. It is a shame when, as is often the case, there is hatred where there used to be love and people seek revenge. I always find this unfortunate. The children who are brought into this world did not ask for it, but once there are here, we should provide for them.

While we support the bill, I take this opportunity to deplore how little compassion this government has shown so far for the poor in our society. It is unfortunate that, this week again, the federal Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister commented on how good things are in Canada.

No doubt, on Tuesday, the Minister of Finance will repeat again and again that his government successfully exceeded its federal deficit reduction targets. It has done so at the expense of the disadvantaged and the unemployed, and by cutting transfer payments to the provinces.

When cuts are made in transfer payments, one has to know what that means. The cuts occur mainly in services to the children,

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because they reduce transfers for social assistance, health and postsecondary education. In so doing, they are attacking our future.

The Standing Committee on Health spent several weeks this fall reviewing the whole issue of children's health. Experts told us repeatedly that the first three years of a child's life are crucial to the child's mental and physical development. Some even contended with great conviction that, often, juvenile delinquency problems encountered later in life stem from trouble at home in early childhood. Insecurity causes tension which promotes aggressiveness in these young people whose feeling of revolt is often expressed in aggressive ways. So, this is very important.

• (1035)

Repeated cuts in social programs will lead to a grim future. In spite of our concerns about Bill C-41, in spite of the federal government's paternalistic attitude in interfering in areas that should be under the authority of the provinces, in spite of the fact that guidelines were imposed that should normally be under provincial jurisdiction, and because this bill deals with the health of children and bettering their lives, children being the future of Quebec and Canada, this bill is an important bill. For these reasons, we from the Bloc, being the responsible members that we are, will be voting for this helpful bill, as imperfect as it may be.

[English]

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the changes to the Divorce Act particularly as they impact the care and nurturing of children are important parts of a piece of legislation that affects all of society.

Even if we as individuals are not touched directly by the terrible stresses and strains caused in a relationship by divorce, we in the greater society are affected profoundly by it. We are affected if people who have children do not look after their responsibilities as parents. We are affected because we as the greater society then have to step in to look after and nurture those children.

We are affected by the consequences of divorce even if we are not involved in divorce ourselves because we know statistically that children who are nurtured in a two parent home do better. That does not necessarily mean that single parents cannot nurture children, but the ideal is a two parent home where the children are nurtured in an environment that is conducive to love, respect, a sense of family and a sense of community responsibility.

That is not to say that there are not circumstances in which people will be raised in a single parent home where single parents, female or male, are heroic in their responsibilities and in their ability to raise children to become citizens of the first order.

Having said that, we know statistically that children who are reared in a two parent home have far less propensity to get involved in crime and do better in school.

Our legislation should speak to two particular objectives. It should speak to what we can do as a society to encourage families to stay together. Then, if in the unfortunate circumstance we find ourselves, myself included, in the throes of divorce, how can we make divorce least disruptive? How can we keep as many lawyers as possible out of it? How can we ensure that both parents, even though they have divorced, do not divorce the kids? How can we make the best of a bad situation?

The first objective is what we can do as a society to ensure the problems do not happen in the first place. We know that many divorces result from family distress brought on by financial problems. Obviously there are other reasons but we all know that a family under financial stress is far more likely to have other problems crop up than a family not under financial stress. What can we do as a government to address this problem? The first we can do is nurture families. We can make it possible for families to look after and nurture their own children. The way we can do that is to provide tax relief to families initially. We can say as a society that our future is encompassed in our children, our grandchildren and their children. Everything we do as legislators should be focused to that end.

• (1040)

We will be talking about the seniors benefit later today. I am absolutely amazed that as a nation we have decided to have a guaranteed annual income for seniors. That is what the seniors benefit is all about. All seniors will have tax free annual income after the year 2000 of \$11,430 whether or not they need it. Then it will be taxed back very quickly for those who do not need it. That is another story.

If we as a society can afford to have a guaranteed annual income for seniors, why can we not have a guaranteed annual income or a negative income tax for children? Children are the future of the country. We as a society will get a far better bang for the buck and a return on our investment if we do everything we possibly can to nurture children. That means we should do what we can to take the financial load off families and to keep the stresses in families to an absolute minimum to make it possible for them to nurture their children.

We know that is the ideal and we know that is not the circumstance. We know families take in a whole spectrum of different models. Whether or not one person likes it does not have anything to do with it. As a society we must firmly focus our interests on children.

How do we go about protecting children in the case of divorce and the circumstances that lead up to divorce? We say in our legislation that when a couple decides to divorce it might be in society's best interest to get involved in conflict resolution right off

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the bat. Rather than each party going to their lawyers and having a couple of barracudas working at it to see who is going to get more from the other, we could have some conflict resolution. They have made the decision to split up and on how they can best achieve this with the least possible damage to the children. The part of the legislation that envisions this is highly laudable and highly supportable.

We appreciate there are cases that involve spousal abuse. There is no reason whatsoever for a spouse who is being abused to stick around for a split second. This raises a whole new set of questions. Why is it always the female and the children, the abused, who have to leave the domicile and go to a shelter? It does not make any sense to me.

The reason is that we have to protect the rights of the abuser. Again the victims are being penalized and the abuser is not. We cannot just haul the abuser off to jail, keep him there and tell him that he cannot go anywhere near those people or abuse them. We usually have to take the mother and the children and put them in a safe spot, hopefully.

We are now in a situation where we as legislators have determined that we will do everything we can to prevent the break-up from happening in the first place. We know this is the ideal. We know it will not happen in every circumstance but we should be working toward the ideal.

That means we have to take financial pressure off families through tax relief focused directly at them. How on earth can we be concerned about tax relief and subsidizing Bombardier and other major corporations when we do not subsidize and nurture our children and make it possible for them to have a future? It does not make any sense. It is so completely wrongheaded that it defies reality.

Now we come to the point where families are splitting up come hell or high water; it is going to happen. This is not a holier than thou speech. I have been in the middle of it. I know about what I speak. Whose responsibility is it to look after the children who are involved? Is it the state's responsibility or is it the parents' responsibility?

When any of us decide to have children those children become our responsibility, our family responsibility, period. The only time the state should be involved is when the parents are unable to look after their responsibilities.

• (1045)

How do we go about making it easier or palatable for families to look after their responsibilities? First, we do not say that one person is right and the other is wrong. We do not say that either the male is 100 per cent wrong or the female is 100 per cent wrong and

we will put one or the other into debtor's prison. We will make it impossible for one or the other ever to have another life.

It seems to me that we should go right into a position of joint custody and joint responsibility. We know there are situations where we will not have that. We know there are situations where one partner, usually it is men, flee from whatever the responsibilities are.

Again, we are addressing this legislation to the ideal. Our society has inculcated a culture where people intuitively know and automatically understand that, when they get married, when divorce or separation is envisioned down the road, their further responsibility is to nurture, protect and look after their children in a manner that is harmonious as it can possibly be. They know they should put marital problems behind them so that their children do not suffer further.

In my experience the number one problem that people have brought to me relates to access to children. It is not paying maintenance. It is paying maintenance and not having access to the children. That is what drives people crazy. It is kind of the chicken or egg situation.

Fathers or mothers who are non-custodial should have access to their children in a default co-parenting situation even if they split up. It cannot be said that maintenance and access are not inextricably linked because they are. If I or anyone else has a commitment to make a maintenance payment to his ex and does not do it, then obviously the ex will be enraged. The ex will be figuring out how to can get back at me.

The only way to get back is through the children. Situations come up where maintenance payments are made, but for whatever reason, the custodial spouse makes it impossible for the non-custodial spouse to have his or her regular visitation. It breaks the link with those children. Somehow we need to ensure that, when maintenance payments are to be made, they are made but it does not exacerbate the already difficult situation caused by the divorce.

It can be done in many ways. However, if the state has an involvement, it seems to me that when a custody or maintenance payment is made, it could be put into the general revenue and come back from the federal treasury to the individual who will receive it. If it can be done for GST rebates, why can it not be done for other things?

The whole idea is to somehow mitigate or lower the potential avenues for distress, for disharmony and fighting between the two. Remember, our eye is on nurturing the children. It is not getting even.

If we could, as a society, somehow inculcate the sense of responsibility so that people intuitively say "I know we have broken up, but having broken up, we will be both responsible for nurturing our children", it is really none of the state's business why a marriage breaks up but having broken up, the default position on maintenance is 50:50.

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That means the cost of raising and nurturing the children is 50:50. The tax circumstance is 50:50. I do not know why it has to go all one way or all the other. Why is it not possible, in a maintenance payment, for the person making the payment to pay 50 per cent of the tax and the person who is getting it pays 50 per cent of the tax. They are partners. It took both of them to create those children. It took both of them to get married in the first place and it took both of them to break up the marriage in the second place. Why can they not just go further and automatically have it that the default position is a joint responsibility?

• (1050)

I know that is the ideal. I know there are all kinds of circumstances where that is not necessarily going to happen. However, it does not have to mean that legislation cannot be framed for the ideal and the other problems cannot be dealt with as they arise.

I would like to address one more issue in this debate and that is the role of the Senate. In particular, I would like to recognize the role of Senator Anne Cools in this debate. When this legislation first went through the House Reform members were saying essentially what we are saying now, that the legislation is well intentioned but it certainly has some huge problems and these are of such major consequence that the bill should be changed.

It is government legislation so there are winners and losers. This is legislation that speaks to the future of our country and how we raise and nurture our children and how we accept responsibility for our children.

We were not able to change a comma, a period. As hon. members know, if the government is set on what it is going to do, the opposition has absolutely no role in it. As a matter of fact, I will take it one step further. If the cabinet or the Prime Minister or persons surrounding the Prime Minister want to go in a particular direction, that is way we are going to go. There will be no changes whatsoever.

This is not a democracy. This is really an place where, if you are lucky, you may have some influence and might be able to change something.

When Senator Anne Cools saw the legislation, she was able to do in the Senate, because of the precarious position of its majority, what we could not do in the House of Commons and that was to force the government to make some modifications which will greatly enhance this bill.

It is incumbent on the official opposition, ourselves and other people in opposition to recognize the courage that Senator Anne Cools has shown in standing up to the government machine. It means that she becomes the person in the room from which there

emanates a faint odour. It is not a very comfortable position to be in.

I think democracy is made better when it is tested. Leadership is made better when it is tested. On this and other legislation Senator Anne Cools has shown the resolve and the fortitude to test the government when it needed to be tested and when it was impossible because of the way this House works for the opposition to be able to test it. It has had to come through one of its own members in the Senate who has the strength of character to stand up against the government machine.

This legislation will come back. The deal is done. It will be debated here. It will become law in its somewhat redefined and changed form. It is better than it was but it still does not recognize the primary problem in family law and that is that family law should not be of an adversarial nature. The family court should be unified. It is not the same as criminal law. It should not be adversarial. We should be going into conflict resolution and doing everything we possibly can to nurture the children of the future in as harmonious a circumstance as we can.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to direct some comments to the my hon. colleague's brief remarks on such important legislation.

• (1055)

Having met with a lot of parents who have gone through a divorce where children were involved, I have often equated that unfortunate development in people's lives to the loss of a child. However, our court system today promotes a very adversarial environment and it affects the children of divorce. I believe the hon. member said that the primary focus has to be on the well-being of the children, the unintended victims of marriage breakdown and divorce.

I have endeavoured to address this issue and the greater issue of co-parenting and access to children. It is assumed that while a marriage is intact that both parents are good parents. That is the assumption of society. It is the assumption that both parents are worthy of raising their children. However, on the breakdown of a marriage somehow that assumption is thrown out the window.

I have introduced private member's Bill C-242 which calls on the government to introduce a system of joint custody in all cases, except where it can be shown that it is not in the best interests of the child or in the case of documented evidence of abuse or neglect which would preclude joint custody. I believe this would go a long way toward removing the adversarial approach in our court system. I would like my hon. colleague to comment on that.

The Deputy Speaker: The member may finish after Statements by Members.

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STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

ORDER OF MILITARY MERIT

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that today I congratulate the 52 members of the Canadian forces who were recently honoured by the Governor General of Canada with the Order of Military Merit. This order was established in 1972 to recognize the exceptional service of men and women in both the regular and the reserve forces.

I believe these 52 honoured members of the Canadian forces are truly representative of the kind of people who make up our Canadian forces today. These individuals demonstrate the dedication, honour and courage of the Canadian forces.

They serve Canada in many ways, from providing services to Canadians at home to representing Canada abroad with pride and in often difficult circumstances. They come from all parts of Canada, including my riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke and from my home community of Petawawa.

We salute them for their outstanding contributions to the Canadian forces and to Canada over the years.

* * *

LYNN LAROSE

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on January 8, 1997, Reverend James Browning of Drumheller, Alberta lost his dear and lifelong friend Lynn Larose of Kingston, Ontario. Miss Larose died suddenly and brutally at the hands of a woman with a murderous past.

I would like to repeat the words of Reverend Browning: "Another headline, another murder, another statistic, another victim but this time it is different, very, very different. This time the victim is an old friend, she was like an adopted sister, not another faceless victim—No, it's true you won't remember Lynn Larose's name among the mighty honour roll of this world's powerful and popular icons like John Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King or John Lennon, but she did have something in common with them. She too was brutally murdered. God bless and keep you 'Short stuff'. This world is poorer without your presence. I remain your friend".

Lynn Larose died at the hands of a person who had murdered before. Our justice system must change for the sake of us all.

[Translation]

WORLD SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the next world school championships will take place from March 2 to March 7, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Fifty per cent of the Canadian delegation will be made up of ten young students registered in the studies-sport-excellence program of the Thérèse-Martin secondary comprehensive school, in my riding of Joliette.

The team will compete in a cross country ski race with the best school athletes of 12 other participating countries. These young teenagers are primarily motivated by the pursuit of excellence, through intensive physical and intellectual development.

They will be led by one of their teachers who is also their coach, Jean-Pierre Sansregret, and who, for some 20 years now, has been constantly urging young people to meet academic and athletic challenges.

• (1100)

Their common determination deserves our admiration. Their personal commitment is an excellent example to help fight the problem of school dropouts as well as other problems that our young people currently face.

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[English]

PENSIONS

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while thousands of corporations like Bombardier receive huge federal hand-outs and families like the Bronfmans receive unbelievable tax holidays, somebody has to pay for all of this. Today the Liberals will announce who that will be. It will be future seniors, the disabled, widows and the working poor. This is nothing short of outrageous.

In a cruel and mean act, the Liberals will cut pension benefits to widows and the disabled. Pension exemptions will no longer be fully indexed, which will hit low income workers. The poor will pay more yet receive fewer pension benefits.

One can tell a great deal about a society as to how it provides for its elderly, its poor and its disabled. To introduce this regressive legislation that victimizes these individuals in our society says that Canada has turned its back on those most in need.

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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is now working hard in its commitment to young people in this country with the youth employment strategy announced Wednesday by the Minister of Human Resources Development.

The youth employment strategy is the result of consultations with youth, educators, parents and the private sector to determine how best to serve the needs of Canada's young people in today's newer and new economy. Each of us recognizes that youth unemployment is unacceptably high and that there is nothing as frustrating as wasted potential.

The strategy consolidates over \$2 billion in new and existing funding for programs and services that young people need to make the transition from education to our workplace. One of the strategy's highlights is the new internship programs that will provide work experience to young people in the crucial areas of science and technology, the environment, international trade and development.

I call upon those concerned to work together to accomplish what we need, a society that is good for all Canadians starting with our youth.

* * *

BANKS

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadian banks continue to contribute greatly to the Canadian economy.

In 1996 alone, banks paid \$4.9 billion in taxes and levies to government and paid over \$2.3 billion to their shareholders, the people of Canada. Unions, businesses and the general public own over 90 per cent of bank shares. Since most bank shares are owned by the people, when banks make a profit, the people profit.

Banks have recently introduced initiatives such as implementing a code of conduct, offering alternative dispute resolution and appointing both internal and national ombudsmen.

Banks in my community have contributed to university funds, have supported charities such as the Snowsuit Fund and have helped many youth organizations to name a few.

As you can see, banks are not all bad.

* * *

NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA DAY

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Saturday, February 15 is National Flag of Canada Day. The tradition of celebrating our national flag began last February and was promoted throughout the year by the Canadian Heritage One in a Million Flag Challenge.

I have also taken an interest in acknowledging this newfound tradition as I am searching for a song to commemorate the pride and glory of our Canadian flag. Over the last few months I have issued a challenge to students and artists in my constituency to

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compose new lyrics to the "Maple Leaf Forever" that reflect the significance of our Canadian symbol.

On the occasion of this year's flag day celebration, I would like to issue the same challenge to all Canadians to come up with a song that will capture true Canadian sentiment.

We have been represented by the red and white maple leaf since 1965. I feel the best way to honour this symbol would be to accompany it with a musical tribute.

It is my wish that as Canadians don their million flags with pride, they also have a song to commemorate the celebration of national unity.

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DIVORCE ACT

Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, today this House will once again be looking at Bill C-41. Maybe this time government members will actually listen to the Reform Party's concerns.

Earlier this week I had the occasion to hear a number of government members talking about how they were unaware of the full consequences of Bill C-41. One suggested that they should just acknowledge their mistakes and accept the amendments.

This is quite typical of how the Liberals have managed this Parliament. They just accept the notion that their cabinet ministers create perfect legislation so they put their brains in neutral. Independent thought is not welcome in the Liberal caucus.

I encourage members opposite to actually think for themselves and listen to the Reform Party's amendments in this House rather than rely on the patronage appointed hacks from the other place.

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● (1105)

[Translation]

QUEBEC ARTS WEEK

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the sixth consecutive year, the Quebec Department of Education, in co-operation with the provincial ministry of culture and communications, is organizing the Quebec arts week, which began on February 9 and will end on the 16.

In order to mark this unique event, the whole Quebec school system was invited to organize activities under the theme "Sans mots pour le dire". This means that over one million Quebec students at the elementary and secondary levels are currently exploring the various facets of an artistic project or creation process that includes dance, music, plastic arts, communications and performing arts.

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While some may claim, wrongly, that Quebec never spent a penny on its culture, it is not by spending millions of dollars on flags that we will make our young people aware of arts and culture, or that we will give them an opportunity to develop their creativity and their imagination.

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*[English]***STUDENT ASSISTANCE REFORM INITIATIVE**

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, seven national associations in the post-secondary education sector jointly proposed the student assistance reform initiative which, if enacted, would make higher education more accessible. I urge all members to study the proposal. As an active member of the caucus committee on post-secondary education, I applaud the groups involved in preparing and releasing this document.

Right now Canada's student loans can be a problem, not only for those trying to pay them off but also for those charged with trying to collect on defaulted loans. We can address this situation and acknowledge the realities faced by graduating students by establishing an income contingent loan repayment plan. This is especially relevant to those in the early stages of their careers after graduation.

Education is of vital national interest to Canada. When we invest in Canadians we strengthen our economy and improve our competitiveness in the global marketplace.

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*[Translation]***TEAM CANADA**

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the LanSer company of Westmount, Quebec, was on the last trade mission led by our Prime Minister, and came back from Thailand with very good news for the future.

This company, which specializes in wireless communication equipment research and development, signed a letter of understanding with a view to setting up a joint enterprise with a Bangkok company.

LanSer already has a staff of 75. Thanks to this letter of understanding, it could soon be starting to market a wireless credit card payment system to meet the demand from financial institutions, merchants and consumers in Thailand. This bold project is estimated at \$52 million.

This is another example of the extraordinary benefits and fallout for business and the economy in Quebec and in Canada resulting from the Team Canada missions.

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AÉROPORTS DE MONTRÉAL

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, the Quebec Superior Court handed down an important decision prohibiting the transfer of international flights to Dorval. Forty-eight hours later, the Minister of Transport still did not wish to comment on the decision. Instability continues. As a result, the economy of Montreal and the Lower Laurentians has suffered, is suffering and will go on suffering.

But it would not have come to this if the federal government had listened to the Bloc Québécois. A year ago, we asked the government to conduct public consultations quickly and make public all the studies done on this transfer.

The federal government, which got us into this mess, cannot now try to sidestep the issue and hide behind ADM. The decision brought to light the government's true colours. Instead of sitting back while the train, or should I say the plane, passes it by, it should be moving quickly to resolve this problem, which is largely of its own making.

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*[English]***EDWARD JAMES**

Mr. John English (Kitchener, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a constituent in my riding of Kitchener, Mr. Edward James.

Yesterday Mr. James had the honour of receiving the Prime Minister's award for teaching excellence in science, technology and mathematics. His dedication and enduring commitment to the teaching profession is truly admirable.

Mr. James was recognized for his particular attention devoted to the challenges facing young women interested in science. Among his many accomplishments, he organized a math and science program for young women at Eastwood Collegiate and helped prepared learning materials for the women inventors project.

His work to introduce more young women to science and encourage them along the way stretches back 10 years. This commitment has resulted in a significant number of women graduating with backgrounds in mathematics and science.

I wish to congratulate Mr. James for this special award. He is truly a leader in his community.

• (1110)

LIBERAL PARTY NOMINATION PROCESS

Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, in 1993 the Prime Minister overrode 15 Liberal associations to appoint pet candidates. This year the Prime Minister is again sanctioning pet candidates.

In Nepean the retiring MP has expressed her disgust. In Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke the Liberal Party banned Hec Cloutier from the party for five years in 1993 because he ran as an independent against the Liberal appointee. In Edmonton North national Liberal officials twisted the rules so that the PM's anointed candidate would be unchallenged. An executive has been excommunicated for their continued support for the incumbent ousted Liberal MP.

This should be no surprise. The Prime Minister ensured his own election victory in 1972 and 1974 by setting up a patsy as his PC opponent.

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CANADA—TAKE IT TO HEART

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of the "Canada—Take it to Heart" program, a week long celebration of our Canadian citizenship, symbols and heritage.

Tomorrow, February 15, we celebrate Canada flag day to remind us of the symbol of our national soul and to rededicate ourselves to the ideals that define our country. Let us take pride that the Canadian flag is respected and loved throughout the world.

On Monday, February 17, I will have the honour to participate in a Winnipeg celebration of the historic Fort Gary-Fort Edmonton Trail, a living reminder of the settlement of the three prairie provinces.

These commemorations are an opportunity to show pride in our country and to think about the things that make us unique: our symbols, our values and our heritage.

The better we know our country's past, the better we can envision the future with confidence.

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CANADA POST

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada Post mandate review completed last fall made a number of specific recommendations regarding the operation of Canada Post.

Upon release of the review the public works minister stated that Canada Post must operate with fairness, transparency, openness and accountability. Yet the minister still refuses to open the books of Canada Post, a crown corporation, to public scrutiny.

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The minister promised she would table a report with proposals for Canada Post after the financial review was completed in January. That timeline has passed, yet Canadians have heard nothing from the minister.

The mandate review stated that the corporation is currently beyond any effective control by the government. None of the authorities entrusted with supervising Canada Post currently have the resources to provide the strong ongoing supervision needed to safeguard the public interest. Unfair competition and abusive practices continue unchecked every day.

Canada Post is a corporation in chaos. It is time for the minister to do her job, take responsibility for Canada Post and hold it accountable.

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[Translation]

NOMINATION MEETINGS

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, nomination meetings were held in three ridings, namely my own, that of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and that of the hon. member for Brome—Missisquoi.

[English]

Yesterday the three of us celebrated the second anniversary of our 1995 byelection victories. On the same day two years later, we were chosen by the members of our respective associations to run in the next election as Liberal candidates.

I wish both my colleagues the best of luck in the upcoming election. I congratulate them on a job well done in the first two years as members of the Parliament of Canada.

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FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES

Mr. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we get closer to budget day I again call on the ministers involved to reconsider CAPC funding. The program is funded under the Minister of Health and funds family resource centres. It has proven to be very successful in terms of assisting families and individuals.

These family resource centres, seven of which are on Prince Edward Island, are a great success and are in great demand by many parents on Prince Edward Island. I believe they decrease dependency on government services and government personnel and set up a system where individuals support each other within a community of communities.

I call on the minister to reconsider funding.

The Deputy Speaker: Before proceeding to oral questions, the hon. Minister of National Defence has a brief point of order.

*Oral Questions***POINT OF ORDER**

TABLING OF DOCUMENT

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in question period I referred to a document. My understanding was that I was not allowed to table it during question period. I am certainly more than pleased to table it now for the benefit of members of the House.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

• (1115)

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there will be no objections to the tabling of a document from National Defence. For once, something is forthcoming and we are extremely pleased. One down, at least.

Today, in Quebec City, Montreal, Rimouski, Chicoutimi, Sept-Îles, Matane and Moncton, CBC audiences and staff are demonstrating to remind the government of its promise to provide the CBC with stable funding.

Another coalition, the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, has pointed out that the government's \$10 million to CBC radio fulfils only 3 per cent of its promises, while laying the CBC's independence open to question.

My question is to the government as a whole. How can the government explain that it has imposed cuts \$14 million higher than what the Reform Party proposed in their taxpayers' budget? How can the government claim to be defending culture, when it has pulled \$414 million from CBC and found millions for publicity schemes of all kinds, from kites to flags to who knows what?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is committed, as the minister said again last week, to long term funding for the CBC. All departments of our government have undergone cuts, and the CBC is no exception.

The hon. member across the way knows very well that the CBC will be the only government agency to be exempt from cuts for the next five years, so its funding will be stable in the long term.

What is more, the CBC will receive some \$900 million annually from the public purse. That is nothing to sneeze at. It is a

considerable amount and one that is ensured for the long term, of course.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that I heard that already sometime in 1993, regarding 1993-94. That is a recycled promise.

The Friends of Canadian Broadcasting; the mayor of Quebec City, Jean-Paul L'Allier; Tony Manera, who resigned from the presidency of the CBC because of this government's policies; Pierre Juneau, another former CBC president; Margaret Atwood; Pierre Berton; Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte, and many others question the government's true intentions toward the CBC.

Why has the government opted to weaken an independent institution, and to transfer funds into agencies which are not answerable to government, such as the cable production fund?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member claims that this fund is not answerable to government, he is surely aware that part of this fund will go to the CBC. He cannot be unaware of this. I believe that his accusation is totally off the mark.

Second, he is also surely aware that the government is committed, I repeat, to long term funding for the CBC, to the tune of some \$900 million annually—\$800 million in special credits, plus part of the fund—as I have just indicated.

Finally, the government has again just recently announced additional funding, over and above the amounts I have just referred to, for Radio Canada International.

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, that is an old ruse, taking everything away and then giving a little bit back. Then they can say: "See how generous we are. Look at what we have just given you".

They have played the same game with transfer payments. They cut something like \$1.3 billion, and then they come along with \$215 million. This is a government that is an expert at giving out trifling amounts.

Is the government aware that the recycling of old promises from the dead red book, to which the Prime Minister does not even refer any more, is just the old shell game, for this same government has, since 1993, chopped the CBC budget like no other government has ever dared do?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe the Bloc Québécois and their friends in Quebec are in a very poor position to give any sermons on this matter. Radio-Québec has also cut its staff by close to 50 per cent.

Oral Questions

• (1120)

Let us also keep in mind the words of the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata. On March 16, 1995, she said, and I quote: “If any cuts are needed, there are big ones to be made at CBC”.

No such big cuts were made, and we have ensured that there is long term funding, after making some cuts, of course, which were required. But, contrary to the Bloc Québécois, we have not made, nor do we intend to make, big ones.

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CULTURE

Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we should remember that the cuts the hon. member suggested were to be made at headquarters, not in the lower echelons. The government understood the message perfectly. It cut \$414 million and 4,000 jobs. That is what happened.

My question is directed to the government, to anyone who can answer. After the Minister of Canadian Heritage, we now have the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the national unity bandwagon. With his new rules for awarding grants, from now on the minister will only fund projects that will promote Canadian unity abroad.

Mr. Young: Hear, hear.

Mr. Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe): The Minister of National Defence says hear, hear, but what he is saying is “get out” to Quebec culture and Quebec artists. That is what it means.

Since this funding policy is discriminatory and antidemocratic, will the minister, so as to refrain from all political interference, remove this criterion from the objectives of the foreign affairs cultural relations program?

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, how typical of a member of the Bloc to think that promoting Canada abroad is undemocratic. That is what the hon. member opposite said.

I would urge him to think about what he said. I am sure the hon. member knows perfectly well, as we all do, that promoting Canadian culture includes promoting Quebec culture and, of course, this is also a cause all Canadians, I believe, should fully support.

If the reverse occurred, I am sure all members and taxpayers in this country would see this as totally inappropriate. The role of the Government of Canada is to promote Canada. That is clear.

Mr. Gaston Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I may remind the minister that is not what they said on the Canadian heritage committee to, for instance, Marie Laberge and our Quebec

film makers when they accused them of making anti-Canadian films.

The government should set its sights a little higher and allocate money for promoting culture abroad on the basis of the quality of the works and projects submitted by the artists and not in terms of the political propaganda sought by this government.

Hon. Don Boudria (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member did not ask a question. However, I would like to comment on what he said.

The hon. member is apparently suggesting to the members of this House that it is totally correct and appropriate, in his view, for the government to subsidize or otherwise advance money to artists who are sending messages that do not support Canadian unity and that proposals supporting Canadian unity would be unacceptable to him. I have trouble understanding the hon. member’s logic.

* * *

[English]

SOMALIA INQUIRY

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the defence minister is trying to rewrite history in the Somalia scandal. Yesterday he said:

There is no one in Canada who believes that there was or there is today a cover-up of a murder.

The minister’s arrogance knows no bounds. Does he think that documents shredded themselves? Why does he think the Somalia inquiry wanted to hear from Bob Fowler, Kim Campbell and John Anderson?

How can the minister possibly claim that no one tried to cover up the beating, torture and murder of Shidane Arone?

• (1125)

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of results where people have paid a significant price as a result of judicial processes arising out of the shootings and the beating of Somalian citizens.

What I said yesterday and what I am sure the hon. member knows I said is that Canadians who are interested in this matter know what happened on the ground in Somalia when these incidents occurred that resulted in the death of Somalian citizens.

I also went on to say, and the hon. member does not make reference to it, what happened subsequent to that. Not just the courts martial and the fact that individuals who were directly involved in the killings and the torture were dealt with, but it was totally unacceptable how the institution and the organization reacted subsequent to those incidents.

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That is why we are taking very dramatic action to try to develop systems and procedures to ensure that when any intolerable or unacceptable incident occurs there is a proper and appropriate response by the Department of National Defence and by the Canadian forces.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what the minister does not say is that he is shutting down the inquiry, thus covering up what happened at the top. That is what Canadians are saying the problem is.

We know the documents were hidden, shredded or altered. Military police were misled and senior officers and bureaucrats tried to intimidate cabinet ministers and keep the Canadian public in the dark.

If that was not an attempt to cover up a murder I do not know what was. There was a murder. There was a cover-up and this government is trying to cover up that cover-up by shutting down the inquiry.

Why is the government so afraid of the truth? Why will it not let the Somalia inquiry get to the bottom of the murder cover-up?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with an extremely serious and complex situation.

If the hon. member is suggesting the incidents that occurred on the ground are unknown or were covered up, he should know, as do most Canadians who are interested in the matter, exactly what happened. It has been written about in books. It has been reported in news coverage. It has been discussed at the Somalia inquiry.

Somalian citizens were shot. A Somalian citizen was tortured to death. Murders occurred. Action was taken through the military justice system to deal with those issues. That is well known.

It is totally unacceptable to Canadians and we must at some point come to grips with it. The government is prepared to ensure that what happened subsequent to the murders and the torture not ever be repeated in the Department of National Defence or in the Canadian forces.

The hon. gentleman refers to a number of allegations of shredding and of attempts to disguise what had taken place and to cover up, to use his term. That is what happened after the murders were very much made aware of, when the murderers or the people involved in the act that resulted in the death of Somalian citizens were dealt with.

We have always said, and I continue to assure my hon. friend, that the government is absolutely committed to cleaning up a system that did not respond appropriately to the murders and the torture that occurred in Somalia.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the minister only goes so far. As soon as we start moving up the ladder we shut it down. That is the point and he is missing that point.

When the defence minister said yesterday that there is no one in Canada who believes there was a cover-up, did he actually expect Canadians to believe that? Does he not understand the gravity of what is happening or that he will never get the military reformed if he does not deal with the whole situation at this point?

In my office we are hearing from Canadians. They are concerned about the cover-up and now the whitewash of the cover-up. Will the minister stop blustering, come clean with the Canadian people and let the inquiry get to the truth?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we also are getting calls. I received a call at my office from a gentleman in Smiths Falls who said that he supports what we are doing in bringing the Somalia inquiry to a conclusion.

• (1130)

He also said that he had been talking to some people in the hon. member's party who said there should be an inquiry into why the Somalia inquiry was closed. If an inquiry was not appointed to do that, there should be another one appointed into why there was not a second commission appointed, because apparently Reformers are into inquiries these days.

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[Translation]

AÉROPORTS DE MONTRÉAL

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

In response to a decision throwing out the transfer of flights from Mirabel to Dorval, the Minister of Transport once again insisted that ADM, a local administration, was responsible for managing the Montreal airports and not the federal Department of Transport. For almost a year now, the federal government has been hiding behind ADM to avoid public consultation and to avoid committing itself in this matter where its record for the past 30 years has been pitiful.

Is the minister aware today that his inaction and irresponsibility are leading us once again to a standoff in the matter of the Montreal airports?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well aware that the policy on the airports gives local authorities the opportunity to reach important

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decisions regarding airports specifically and the regions where they are located.

Yesterday, the Minister of Transport said, in response to a question, that the intent of his policy was to enable local authorities to make these decisions. The court expressed a different opinion, and the authority is the one before the courts.

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the minister that the federal government is the tenant in this contract, and that the judge himself appealed to the federal government to act and to assume its responsibilities.

Are we to understand that the minister is saying he still does not want to resolve a problem the federal government created through its own inaction?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think that even the hon. member understands there is a problem in a number of airports in Canada. Does he think a central government should make all these decisions? Or can a local authority resolve the problems of a given region? Is it not better placed to make these decisions?

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[English]

SOMALIA INQUIRY

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence recently quoted from a document. I would ask that he table that document in the House.

Yesterday the defence minister stated in the House that there was no cover-up of the murder in Somalia. Let me remind him that his department shredded documents, intimidated witnesses, withheld truthful information from the military police and withheld evidence.

This points to a cover-up but we will never know the truth because the government is covering up the cover-up by shutting down the inquiry.

When the defence minister says that there is no cover-up, how does he know? Does he have evidence or facts to base that on? Or, is he just politically interfering with the inquiry once again?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously we would not want to interfere in the work of this inquiry. The hon. member knows we are very conscious of our responsibility of not interfering in any judicial or quasi-judicial process.

The government has decisions to make. I want to say to my hon. friend it is true that yesterday I referred to a document during

question period. I have subsequently tabled that document with the Chair prior to the commencement of question period.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Today's letter.

Mr. Young: I hear the other member saying there are other letters or today's letter. Just to make sure there is no misunderstanding, that is one letter among several sent by the commissioners of the inquiry to the government asking for extension of time.

To be fair and rather than to quote from the documents and add to more confusion in the hon. member's mind, I would prefer when it is appropriate to also table the three other letters that were sent from the commission to the government requesting extensions of time and explaining how they function. I will be happy to do that for the edification of the member and his colleagues.

• (1135)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister may table the documents during question period with a page.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the letter he quoted from today. I asked him if he would table that document.

The minister stated in the House yesterday that there was no cover-up of the murder. Does he wish to withdraw that statement? He is drawing conclusions about events before the commission even produces its report. This is political interference with a judicial inquiry. Either the minister has evidence that he has not made public or he is interfering with the inquiry. Which is it? Is the minister interfering or hiding evidence?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as to the first part of the question I would like to be able to comply with my hon. friend's request that I table a phone call but it is tough to do that. I made it clear that I had received a phone call this morning and I simply indicated to the hon. member what the conversation was about.

Going to the second part of his question and discussing the specific issue of whether or not Canadians understand what happened on the ground in Somalia, the Somalia commission of inquiry has been going on now for nearly two years. It has heard over 100 witnesses. There have been hundreds of thousands of documents presented to the commission for its review.

There have been courts martial. There have been appeals of those courts martial. There are people who are and who have been clearly identified as having been involved in the specific incidents that occurred on the ground in Somalia.

What I have said and what I repeat is that Canadians who are interested in knowing what happened in those incidents are fully aware of what took place with respect to the murders by shooting or by torture.

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What I have also tried to explain—and I will continue to try to do this—is that subsequent to those incidents occurring many, many things took place which were unacceptable, which are intolerable and which cannot be allowed to be repeated.

We are moving to try to correct those problems and those kinds of approaches. The hon. member and his party would like to have it go on until 1998, 1999 or maybe the year 2000. He can accuse us of many things but he will not be able to make it stick that we are going to procrastinate on as important an issue as what we are facing in this particular situation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of National Defence.

The former director of the military police testified before the Somalia inquiry that, on three separate occasions, the current Chief of Defence Staff, who was the third top ranking officer of the armed forces at the time of the events in Somalia, refused to have the military police investigate the suspicious death of a Somali, on March 4, 1993, in attempt to cover up the circumstances.

In light of the troubling and contradictory testimony of the Chief of Defence Staff and the former director of military police, could the minister tell us if he continues to support the current Chief of Defence Staff in spite of the fact that he was at the heart of the Somalia scandal?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always have been very careful not to comment on testimony heard by the inquiry.

The hon. member referred to evidence given by a person who appeared before the inquiry. I will let the inquiry draw the appropriate conclusions after it has heard not only the person the hon. member referred to, but also Admiral Murray, who is the Acting Chief of Defence Staff at this time.

Of course, with all we have managed to accomplish since my appointment to National Defence, it is essential that those who hold positions in the Canadian Forces have the support of the Minister of National Defence, and that is the case for Admiral Murray.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the exact same thing was said about General Boyle. History is repeating itself.

Since, when he appointed Vice-Admiral Murray as Chief of Defence Staff, the minister knew about his involvement in the events in Somalia and since he made sure the inquiry will not be able to determine whether or not there was a cover-up, how can Quebecers and Canadians be sure of the vice-admiral's integrity?

• (1140)

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Vice-Admiral Murray has testified before the inquiry. He gave evidence for several days.

I have no doubt that, at some point between now and June 30, the inquiry will be able to table a report based on all the evidence and information before it. This is one of the reasons the government saw fit, after granting three extensions, to ask the inquiry to wrap up its hearings by June 30, so that we can obtain its findings and recommendations on a number of matters that have been under investigation for almost two years now, two years during which more than 100 witnesses were heard.

No decision will be made on the evidence given by one witness or another until the inquiry has presented its findings.

[*English*]

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the defence minister tried to blame the murder cover-up on the Somalia commission by quoting very selectively from a letter that he tabled only this morning.

What the minister did not tell the House is how the letter proves that the minister knew his decision to shut down the inquiry would hide the truth and protect Liberal friends like Bob Fowler.

Canadians want to know who the minister is protecting and why he is afraid of the truth.

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to allege that someone is afraid of the truth. It is another thing to demonstrate that one is less than familiar with the facts.

The gentleman to whom my hon. friend alludes, the current ambassador for Canada to the United Nations, was appointed to the position of deputy minister at the Department of National Defence during the previous administration's term of office. That individual retained the confidence of that government after the minister of national defence who was in office at the time of these incidents occurring became the Prime Minister of Canada.

The hon. member should be a little bit more careful with how he describes friendships of individuals and with whom they were, at least at one time, passing acquaintances if not friends.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this Liberal government is guilty of political interference in its own judicial inquiry, an inquiry that is supposed to be independent.

The Liberals have broken their own promises to find the truth. They have betrayed the trust of the commissioners they appointed and they have betrayed the trust of the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who expect justice to be done at the top, not just at the bottom. The minister knew his decision would bury

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the truth but Canadians will not let him. Again, why is he afraid of the truth coming out?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in mid-September the hon. leader of the Reform Party asked the Prime Minister of Canada to ensure, to guarantee—to use the exact word—that the results of the Somalia inquiry be made available before a federal election. He did not talk about the truth. He did not talk about friends of the government. He did not talk about getting to the bottom of everything. He simply said “to guarantee that the commission respond and report before the election”.

Is the hon. member suggesting that we should be telling the commissioners of the inquiry who they should call? That would be political interference. They have had an agenda for two years to call whatever roster of witnesses they wish. They had an opportunity to set their work plan in whatever manner they wish. Now after two years and \$25 million the government decided it was time, after three extensions of their mandate, to make sure that it had a report by June 30.

* * *

[Translation]

HYUNDAI PLANT IN BROMONT

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting Prime Minister or any other minister who may wish to reply. There are so few of them here this morning.

• (1145)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is well aware that we cannot comment on the absence of members or ministers.

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, we can say that there are ministers here. The Hyundai plant in Bromont has been shut down for a few years. Business leaders and stakeholders, including the Société de développement régional, the SODER, still do not know about the company's plans regarding this important plant which employed over 800 people. In January, the Prime Minister visited South Korea, where Hyundai's head office is located.

Could someone tell me if, during Team Canada's trip, the Prime Minister asked Hyundai's top executives about their intentions regarding the disused plant in Bromont?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems that all the Bloc members who are here will ask

questions. As regards the Hyundai plant, the hon. member knows full well that we co-operated with other levels of government to find a way to revive this plant.

Hyundai decided to close that plant. The company repaid the money that had been invested by the governments, pursuant to the agreement signed by the government and Hyundai. As for us, and I believe it is also the case for the Quebec government, these amounts were paid back under the bilateral agreement between the federal and Quebec governments.

We will try, together, to find a way to bring jobs back to Bromont.

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, unless I am mistaken, the Prime Minister did not meet anyone regarding this issue, during his trip.

Since the member for Brome—Missisquoi, who is responsible for Bromont, does not look after the concerns of his constituents, will the Prime Minister, or the minister who answered my first question, since he has some authority, pledge to ask Hyundai's executives about the future of the Bromont plant, through Canada's trade commission in South Korea?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hear a lot more about Bromont from the member for Brome—Missisquoi than I do from Bloc members.

An hon. member: He is a very good member.

Mr. Manley: He is indeed a very good member. He understands something Bloc members do not understand. It is not Hyundai that will save the plant it used to operate. Hyundai has made its decision.

There may be other possibilities for that plant, but the solution will not come from Hyundai.

* * *

[English]

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. According to a recent report of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the private sector does a better job of hiring and promoting minorities than the federal government.

Considering that the employment equity program has been in place for 10 years, what is the reason for this shortfall and what is the government doing to correct it?

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Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Public Service of Canada agrees that it must reflect the composition of the public it serves. I regret that it may not be the same in all the governments in Canada but the public service of Canada does want to reflect the composition of the population.

In doing this, in the last few years we have increased by 50 per cent the relative representation of visible minority groups. Treasury Board has even put together a program called the special measures initiatives program. This program has been supporting a series of innovative activities to assist visible minorities, including recruitment programs, initiatives to upgrade skills and promote marketability, and career development training to prepare individuals for senior positions. In this area the public service of Canada has clearly been doing its job.

* * *

• (1150)

SOMALIA INQUIRY

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the defence minister said clearly in this House that there was no cover-up of the murder in Somalia.

I would like to give the defence minister the opportunity of either withdrawing that statement or telling the House and the Canadian people how he knows there was no cover-up of the murder in Somalia.

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I assume that we are speaking about the incidents in Somalia that occurred in early 1993 for which individuals have been charged and for which individuals have been found responsible. The names of the Somalia citizens who were killed are known to Canadians and to the hon. gentleman if he is interested in finding out. The incidents have been described, reviewed, investigated and the subject of judicial proceedings.

What I said yesterday, and what I believe the Canadian people understand very well, is that what happened in Somalia was absolutely unacceptable. Two years later Canadians know that what happened subsequent to those incidents in Somalia, how the military justice system responded, how the military investigative capability was not up to snuff, was also intolerable.

We believe that Canadians expect us to do something about it and that is what we are going to do.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the defence minister has not answered the question. He made a clear statement of fact yesterday that there was no cover-up of the murder of the teenager in Somalia and yet that is the very reason that the inquiry was called in the first place.

I ask the minister one more time: Is he prepared to tell the House the facts on which he based the statement that there was no cover-up of the murder in Somalia or is he going to leave us with the conclusion that he is making an erroneous statement in the House?

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not want the hon. member to spend a sleepless weekend worrying about whether or not I understand, and that Canadians understand, what happened with respect to the murders in Somalia.

What I said yesterday is that every Canadian who really wants to get a clear understanding of what took place in Somalia knows who pulled the trigger. Everybody in Canada knows exactly what happened on the ground in Somalia to the extent that it can be determined after two years of work by the commission, military investigations, the courts martial and everything else that took place.

The hon. member cannot distinguish between the problems that occurred, the incidents that resulted in death and the difficulties that the system had and the inappropriate responses that took place subsequent to those events. I think he should give Canadians more credit for understanding this than he has so far. Canadians know—

* * *

[Translation]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

If the CRTC gives in to Bell Canada's demands, business customers in small communities will pay between \$44 and \$54 a month for telephone service, while in larger centres the bill will be about \$10 less.

What action does the Minister of Industry intend to take to ensure that telecommunications and telephone services essential to the competitiveness of businesses are just as affordable for SMBs in rural areas as for those in urban settings.

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe the member knows that the CRTC is in the process of examining issues related to the affordability of telephone services.

I think this is a very important question. One of the objectives of our information highway policy was that all Canadians should have affordable access to telephone services. But I think the member also knows that some very important changes are taking place in the telecommunications sector. There are new services, using advanced technology, and all Canadians would like to receive them.

• (1155)

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are well aware that the CRTC is presently studying the whole question of telecommunications and telephone rates, but I have put my question to the minister, not to the CRTC.

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In its red book, the Liberal Party said that it would do what was necessary to promote job creation. With the proposal now on the table, SMBs could see their telecommunications and telephone bill shoot up by 41 to 77 per cent.

How can the minister reconcile these huge increases with promises of increased productivity and job creation?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member is confusing the government's responsibility with that of the CRTC.

I would point out that the basic issue here is that we have put in place a system of competition that has already resulted in a substantial reduction in long distance rates, thus benefiting all SMBs. This system has made it possible to set up competitive services not just for Canadian businesses, but also with respect to American businesses. Here in Canada, we will receive modern and different services, and prices will be—

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton Southwest.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the finance minister.

Anyone who has signed a paycheque understands that payroll taxes are a disincentive to hiring. Employment insurance, workers' compensation and the proposed new Canada pension plan premium of nearly 10 per cent means payroll taxes will be almost 20 per cent of earnings. Then the victim pays income tax and then the GST. No wonder Canadians are tax poor.

How can the government create an economic climate conducive to job growth, particularly for first time job applicants, when payroll taxes make it more cost effective to pay overtime or to utilize part time contract employees?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member ought to know that as a result of the actions of the government, employment insurance premiums will be down by \$1.7 billion. That is money which will be put back into the hands of Canadians.

I want to thank the hon. member for giving me the opportunity to elaborate on this. He said there should be incentives for first time hiring. The hon. member may have forgotten that in the last budget we brought in a measure that forgave employment insurance premiums for all small and medium size businesses. Some 900,000 businesses across the country will be able to employ young Canadians without having to pay the premiums.

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians understand intuitively when a finance minister rises to speak that his hand goes into their pockets at the same time.

Employment insurance premiums currently take in over \$5 billion more than is paid out in benefits. It is nothing more than a federal payroll surtax. Canada pension plan premiums will be increased 69 per cent because the plan is seriously flawed.

To limit job killing regressive payroll taxes, will the government limit increases in Canada pension plan premiums to a corresponding reduction in employment insurance premiums?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member did not notice that my hand went into my own pocket.

Reform is advocating a \$3.5 billion cut in the CHST. It is advocating cuts in equalization. It is saying that it wants to withdraw moneys currently given to Canadians, in particular middle income Canadians. It wants to take it away from them. Our goal is to maintain the services that Canadians require for their livelihood.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Chairman: With my apologies to those members who were not able to ask their questions, this concludes oral question period.

[*English*]

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I seek the unanimous consent of the House to ask one question of the government.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to allow the hon. member to ask a question of the government?

An hon. member: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I heard a no.

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[English]***PENSIONS**

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling draft legislation to establish the Canada pension plan investment board and to amend the Canada pension plan, the Old Age Security Act, and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

* * *

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today it is my privilege to table draft legislation that secures the future of the Canada pension plan. These measures are the result of the review of the Canada pension plan which the federal and provincial governments have conducted over the past year.

As joint stewards with the provinces, we are obliged to do all we can to make sure that the plan is there for Canadians, those who retire and those workers who become disabled during their careers. We believe that Canadians should be able to count on Canada pension plan benefits and that is why we have worked so hard to make sure that they can.

[Translation]

The problems facing the CPP are fundamental. The chief actuary of the plan has shown that, without changes, the CPP fund will run out of money in less than 20 years. Without changes, contribution rates would have to increase from under 6 per cent today to over 14 per cent to cover escalating costs.

In other words, younger generations would have to pay more than twice as much as now—and get no more for it. This is not fair. This is not affordable.

[English]

The problem, quite simply, is that the Canada pension plan, as it is now, is not sustainable in the longer term at costs which are fair to future generations of Canadians. This has led some to say that we should dismantle the CPP.

Let me say unequivocally that neither the federal government nor the provinces believe that anyone would be well served by that. Nor do Canadians. They told us during the public consultations that we and the provinces held across the country last spring that they want the Canada pension plan preserved.

Canadians asked their government: first, to preserve it; second, to strengthen its financing; third, to improve the fund's investment practices and reduce its costs. In other words, they said not tinker

with the CPP. Make sure it is there for us. That is exactly what we have done.

The options we have considered in the course of our review required difficult choices, but we have come up with a strong and balanced package that will ensure the Canada pension plan is there when Canadians need it. We have done this in a way that has preserved a number of important features Canadians asked us specifically to protect.

● (1205)

All retired pensioners or anyone over the age of 65 as of December 31, 1997 are not affected by the proposed changes. Anyone currently receiving disability benefits, survivor benefits or combined benefits is also not affected. All benefits under the Canada pension plan will remain fully indexed to inflation. The ages of retirement, early, normal or late, remain unchanged.

Let me outline what has been done. The agreement makes a fundamental change in the financing of the plan. It would move from pay as you go to fuller funding to build a much larger reserve. The fund now is equivalent in value to about two years of benefits and is declining. With fuller funding, it will grow to about five years of benefits. It will be invested in a diversified portfolio of securities to earn higher returns and to help pay for benefits as Canada's population ages.

[Translation]

Canadians also told us to stop giving governments exclusive access to CPP funds. We have done that. Governments have agreed to limit their access and to pay interest at market rates. Canadians told us we should not allow contribution rates to go over 10 per cent. We heard them.

[English]

Contribution rates will rise over the next six years to 9.9 per cent and remain steady thereafter. This is far less than the projected rate of over 14 per cent that the chief actuary said would have been required if these changes had not been made.

Several measures have made it possible to keep contribution rates to 9.9 per cent. Let me mention a number of them. The year's basic exemption, the first \$3,500 of earnings on which no CPP contributions are paid, will remain at the current level. Retirement pensions will be calculated on the five year average of the year's maximum pensionable earnings at the time of retirement instead of the three year average. The administration of disability benefits is being improved to ensure that benefits go only to those who are eligible under the legislation.

Retirement pensions for disability beneficiaries will be based on maximum pensionable earnings at the time of disablement and then indexed to age 65 by prices instead of wages.

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[*Translation*]

New rules will be used to calculate combined pensions for people receiving both disability and survivor benefits, or retirement and survivor benefits. The death benefit will provide 6 months of retirement pension to a maximum of \$2,500.

A stronger labour force attachment will be required to obtain disability coverage—contributions will be required in 4 out of the last 6 years prior to claiming benefits.

[*English*]

These proposed changes are moderate and balanced. They will slow the growth of escalating costs. However, Canadians told us to go easy on changes to benefits and we have.

Finally, Canadians told us to treat them like members of a pension plan. We are going to do that. Public accountability will be strengthened. Canadians will receive annual reports on their CPP accounts as soon as possible and federal-provincial reviews will be required every three years rather than every five years.

With the exception of a small additional increase in the contribution rate for 1997, these proposed changes will come into effect in 1998 once legislation is passed.

• (1210)

[*Translation*]

The changes to secure the CPP are supported by the federal government and the provinces of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

[*English*]

We regret that we were unable to get unanimous support, and that two provinces felt they were unable to join the agreement. However, the requirement to achieve the support of two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population has been met.

It is fair to say that all the options to secure the CPP had a fair hearing. Some were introduced, however, after the public consultations were over. The door is open to those ideas, along with several important issues that were beyond the scope of this review.

Let me emphasize, our first goal was to assure the fundamental security of the Canada pension plan and we have done that. This is something with which governments have failed to come to grips for over a decade.

We are now in a position to begin discussing other issues and we will do so as soon as possible. They include adding mandatory credit splitting during marriage, reviewing survivor benefits to make sure that they reflect changing realities in today's families,

looking at the work to retirement transition, including the possibility of providing partial CPP pensions during that period. We will look at British Columbia's proposal to expand CPP coverage up the income scale.

Canada's retirement income system is not alone in facing challenges from an aging population and increasing longevity. However, almost no other industrialized country in the world has done as much as Canada has to come to grips with these problems.

The government promised to make the retirement income system secure for Canadians. We are well on the way to doing it.

[*Translation*]

The CPP is one of the three pillars of our retirement income system. Old age security and the guaranteed income supplement also provide public pensions for seniors. We have taken action to make these programs secure and sustainable as well.

[*English*]

The new seniors benefit announced in the 1996 budget will consolidate the OAS and the GIS into one benefit, beginning in the year 2001. This new benefit is designed to help those most in need and will protect low and modest income Canadians.

The third pillar is tax assisted savings for retirement such as registered pension plans or registered retirement savings plans. We will continue to provide generous incentives for Canadians to save for their own retirement years.

In summary, all three pillars of Canada's retirement income system are being placed on a secure and a sustainable footing. Canadians can rest assured that the pension system, as they know it, can be counted on by them and by generations to come.

I would like to thank my colleague for his work on this file.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure, speaking on behalf of my colleagues and the Bloc Québécois, to respond today to the draft legislation to amend the Canada pension plan that was just introduced by the minister.

On the whole, we welcome this announcement although, as usual, there are some aspects that give us cause for concern. We are very much aware, as the chief actuary of the plan has said, that the problems facing the CPP are fundamental and that without changes, the CPP fund will run out of money in less than 20 years. Without changes, contribution rates would have to increase from 6 per cent to 14 per cent.

I would like to go over briefly most of the measures contained in this draft legislation and comment accordingly.

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One of the measures being proposed, the first one, is that anyone currently receiving survivor, disability or combined benefits and anyone over the age of 65 as of December 31 is not affected by the proposed changes. This is, of course, a pre-election measure, and we realize the minister does not want to give anyone the impression they will be affected immediately. However, those in the plan later on will be affected.

• (1215)

The second measure is that all benefits under the CPP will remain fully indexed to inflation. This is very good news. In this respect, the federal government is following Quebec's example. In fact, Quebec agrees with the federal government on this score. Only two provinces do not.

Every time Quebec has managed to defend its interests satisfactorily—we saw this in the harmonization of the GST, and we see it again today in this draft legislation—Quebec has always been among the first to agree with measures that support the interests of our citizens.

Measure number three is that the ages of retirement, normal, early or late, remain unchanged. There is no problem here, of course. The fund now is equivalent in value to about two years of benefits. With fuller funding, it will grow to about five years of benefits, and we agree with the minister that this will guarantee the system's viability.

Contribution rates will rise over the next six years to 9.9 per cent in 2003 and remain steady thereafter. This is another measure which, we believe, guarantees the system's viability in the long term. The basic exemption, the first \$3,500 of earnings on which no CPP contributions are paid, will remain at the current level. There is no problem here either.

Retirement pensions will be calculated on the five-year average of the year's maximum pensionable earnings instead of the three-year average. Some criticism here. This represents a small loss for beneficiaries, since the five-year average will usually be slightly less than the three year average.

Another measure is the improvement of the administration of disability benefits. In a recent report, the auditor general was critical of the way these benefits were administered and pointed to Quebec as an example of what should be done. Quebec was right again. We applaud the decision of the Minister of Finance to do things the right way. However, we will have to wait and see how this works out in the bill.

Another measure is that disability benefits will be indexed by prices instead of wages. Here again, we have a complaint. This penalizes beneficiaries to some extent, because prices tend not to change as quickly as wages.

New rules will be used to calculate combined pensions for people receiving both disability and survivor benefits or retirement and survivor benefits. This is very bad news.

Let us take the example of a woman receiving benefits after the death of her husband and who then becomes disabled. She is therefore entitled to disability benefits. Under the current plan, she receives both benefits. Under the new rules, there will be a limit on the amount she can receive. In real terms, it could mean she would receive \$800 a month instead of \$1,200. It seems unfair to penalize people who are in such unfortunate situations this way.

Death benefits will be equivalent to six months of pension or \$2,500, whichever is less. At first glance, that does not seem to pose a problem.

More active participation will also be required. Eligibility for disability benefits will require a person to have contributed during four of the six years preceding an application for benefits. Another downer. We will have to see what the witnesses before the Standing Committee on Finance have to say about the consequences of this measure. At first glance, it looks like a good number of contributors will be dropped from the plan and will thus have paid for naught.

Canadians will also be receiving an annual statement from the Canada Pension Plan. This of course is a good idea. Canadians and Quebecers should always be given a statement of what happens in their files.

A federal-provincial examination will be conducted every three years instead of every five. We also agree with this measure.

As the minister pointed out, there are three pillars to the Canadian retirement income system: the Canada Pension Plan, the Old Age Security together with the Guaranteed Income Supplement, and the tax incentives for retirement savings, namely RRSPs.

Where the rub lies is with the second pillar. The Bloc Quebecois will vigorously oppose the proposal to replace these two benefits with a single benefit for seniors in 2001.

• (1220)

The finance minister's proposal discourages saving by penalizing Quebecers and Canadians who have put money away for their old age, because the benefit will be reduced by an amount proportionate to their retirement income.

The Bloc Quebecois promised to battle the federal government on this every inch of the way, provided of course that Quebec is still part of Canada in 2002.

The Bloc Quebecois' position on the third pillar, RRSPs, is outlined in the analysis of personal tax expenditures released by the Bloc in early February. We think it is not fair to Quebecers and Canadians for a \$1,000 investment in an RRSP to generate \$313 in

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federal tax savings for those who earn more than \$100,000, while the same \$1,000 investment in an RRSP will only generate a \$175 tax saving for someone earning \$30,000 or less.

As an alternative to the RRSP tax deduction, we have proposed a \$268 across-the-board tax credit; this is the only fair and equitable way to encourage all taxpayers to save for their retirement.

This pretty well sums up for now our reaction to the tabling of this draft bill. Naturally, we will follow it as it goes through all the different stages and will gladly offer comments along the way.

[*English*]

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, today Canadians from coast to coast must be feeling a terrible chill as the shadow of the most regressive tax increase ever to hit our country has just been announced by the Minister of Finance.

Today the government announced the fact that it is going to be increasing the current Canada pension plan payroll tax from 5.85 per cent of earnings to 9.9 per cent. This is a huge increase in personal taxes, taxes that come out at the payroll, taxes that come out before income taxes are paid, taxes that come out even before Canadians get a chance to pay the GST. No matter how we slice it, this is a tax increase to Canadians.

If this were a pension plan, as people understand or contemplate pension plans, it may not be that bad, people providing for their future, but that is not what it is. For example, today if you pay 5.8 per cent of your salary in order to get a pension of \$8,724.90 which is the maximum Canada pension plan, you would get \$8,724.96 in pension. After the changes are made, you and your employer will have the opportunity to pay \$3,193.36 to get the same \$8,000. You are paying \$3,200 a year to get approximately \$9,000 in pension.

Does that make any sense? This is RRSP season. If the government were selling mutual funds, and the government said to each individual taxpayer “we have this great new plan that you and your employer will get to pay \$3,200 a year in premiums and for that you will receive about \$9,000 a year”, the taxpayer would laugh because it does not make any sense at all. That is the basic problem with this plan. It does not give to the person who owns the plan and puts the money into the plan, the individual Canadian, a balanced, decent and honest return on their invested money.

The government has said it is conscious of the negative impact that payroll taxes have on jobs. This is a historical fact. It is on record. The government has said and has evidenced that in recognition of that, it will reduce the employment insurance premiums by the magnificent sum of 10 cents per \$100 of earned income.

• (1225)

To put the increase into context, this increase in payroll taxes is \$4.10 per \$100 of income. So the government giveth and the government taketh away. When the government taketh away, is it balanced? I think not. And there again is the problem. Canadians are taxed to death. We cannot look at any individual tax alone. We have to look at the cumulative effect on our economy. The tax grab is an anchor that sucks the lifeblood out of our economy.

When the payroll taxes go up for the individual and for the employer—as they will in this circumstance, after six years the tax will go up to \$651.90 each—where does that money come from? The employer says “We have been contributing \$1,889.56 per employee annually but now we have to contribute \$3,193.36. Where are we going to get that money? Can we raise our prices? No we cannot”. We live in a competitive world. It shrinks profit. The shrunk profit means there is less money to reinvest in our economy. What does that mean? It means fewer jobs.

If we want to see what is going to happen to our economy as a direct result of this tax grab because of the fact that we have mismanaged the pension funds over the last 36 years, just watch the unemployment rate rise after this kicks in. What is going to happen? Businesses are going to do the only thing they can do in order to get by. They are going to lay off staff because there is no other way to get money. How can businesses survive when a government thinks of them as a bottomless pit of resources? It just does not happen.

The hon. member opposite used to be a highly placed member of the Toronto Dominion Bank. The Toronto Dominion Bank is going to look at all of those businesses and say “gosh, you have 100 employees, do you realize you are going to have to come up with some \$90,000 a year more just to cover the Canada pension plan premiums? Where are you going to get that money? More money will have to be injected into your business”.

Businesses are going to say “but wait a minute, we cannot automatically assume that business is going to increase so the only thing we can do is lay people off or not hire them”. That is the problem with this. We must inculcate a sense of fiscal responsibility within all governments.

When the government says to someone that it is investing this money on his behalf, I ask hon. members and I ask Canadians, what person in their right mind would ask a government that is \$600 billion in debt to be his investment adviser? Only a government that is \$600 billion in debt could say with a straight face to Canadians “give us \$3,200 of your money each year and we will invest it for you. For that, after your retirement, you will get almost \$9,000 a year”. Give me a break.

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Anybody investing in even the most moderate RRSP would know that a privately managed investment plan would return more than double the same amount over the same period of time. How can the government possibly look Canadians in the face and say that this is a good deal? It is not a good deal. It is a tragedy.

It is a tragedy for all Canadians because once again the government instead of facing reality is saying "we can get ourselves out of this problem by increasing taxes". Every time you increase taxes, you poke another hole in the lifeboat of the economy. It makes it harder to keep our national finances in shape.

• (1230)

We as a government and governments all over the country have fiduciary responsibility to our children and to their children to live within our means. That does not mean sucking money out of the country by means of a payroll surtax to lend to other governments at below market rates and make ourselves look better today at the expense of future generations.

The government has no reason to be pleased about this tax increase which will negatively influence employment. It will be terribly detrimental to the employment of young Canadians, especially the most vulnerable young Canadians, those trying to get into the workforce for the first time.

There is no excuse for the fiscal mismanagement of our country, our pension plans and our money which has brought us to the situation we are in today.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to return to the tabling of documents?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

LOWER CHURCHILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

Mrs. Marlene Cowling (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I am pleased to table, in both official languages, the 1995 annual report of the Lower Churchill Development Corporation Limited.

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. John English (Kitchener, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association on the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE held in Vienna, Austria, January 16 and 17, 1997.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 55th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of the Standing Committee on Industry.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 55th report later this day.

* * *

BANK ACT

Hon. Douglas Peters (for the Minister of Finance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-82, an act to amend certain laws relating to financial institutions.

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

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Dartmouth, that the 55th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

PETITIONS

GASOLINE TAX

Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of submitting a petition signed by 44 constituents. This petition is timely, since the budget will be delivered in a few days and also because the Minister of Finance happened to be with us when it was signed. This petition points to the level of taxes on gasoline. The petitioners ask Parliament and the Minister of Finance not to raise the federal excise tax on gasoline in the upcoming federal budget.

I do hope this government gets my constituents' message.

• (1235)

CREDIT CARDS

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition signed by 273 people in my riding, who are asking Parliament to pass a law that would impose a ceiling on the interest

rates paid on credit cards issued to consumers by banks and major retailers, based on the Bank of Canada rate.

EXCISE TAX

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of submitting two petitions.

The first one is signed by 50 people in my riding, who are asking the government and the Minister of Finance not to increase the excise tax on gasoline in the next federal budget.

HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I also have a second petition signed by 25 people in my riding.

The petitioners ask Parliament to put pressure on the federal government, so that it will join provincial governments and make it possible to improve our national highway system.

[English]

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I have two petitions praying that Parliament urges the federal government to join with the provincial government to make the national highway system upgrading possible beginning in 1997.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a second petition signed by a number of constituents in my riding urging Parliament to dedicate significantly more resources for the support and development of scientific research through programs such as the MRC and NSERC.

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present to the House today a petition signed by 200 of my constituents who strongly support the community action program for children.

The petitioners stress that health promotion preventive programs like CAPC are a cost effective way to spend health dollars. They also point out that local and regional evaluation studies of P.E.I. CAPC projects indicate a high level of success.

With this in mind these petitioners call upon government to maintain the CAPC with its present mandate and with its present resources.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to present a petition on behalf of constituents in both Ottawa South and Ottawa Centre. They call on Parliament to support the

Routine Proceedings

immediate initiation and conclusion by the year 2000 of an international convention that will set out a binding timetable for the abolition of all nuclear weapons.

RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 it is very appropriate and my pleasure to present a petition today on behalf of the citizens of Prince George—Peace River who have signed it because today Bill C-41 is back in the House.

Specifically the petitioners, among other things, call upon Parliament to decrease litigation in places where joint custody has been awarded automatically. Statistics show that in situations with greater access to the children there is an increase in compliance with support orders. The highest compliances are in cases where there is joint custody.

Therefore the petitioners call upon Parliament to enact legislation to protect the rights of children to be loved and parented by both parents, ensuring equitable enforcement programs and ensuring custodial arrangements are at least similar to the arrangements prior to separation.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Prince Albert—Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I present two petitions on behalf of the member for Edmonton East.

In the first petition the petitioners call upon Parliament to urge the federal government to join with the provincial governments to make the national highway system upgrading possible.

NATIONAL AIDS STRATEGY

Mr. Gordon Kirkby (Prince Albert—Churchill River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the second petition the petitioners are requesting that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health commit to a renewal of the national AIDS strategy prior to its expiry on March 31, 1998 at least at its current level of funding so that Canada can continue its programs in the areas of AIDS prevention, education, support and research.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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• (1240)

[*English*]

DIVORCE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-41, an act to amend the Divorce Act, the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act, the Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act and the Canada Shipping Act.

The Deputy Speaker: Because of the ministerial statement and the responses the business of the day will be extended by 30 minutes.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, just before we broke for question period I had directed a question to one of my colleagues who is not in the Chamber at the moment. Therefore I guess the proper procedure would be to continue with debate on the Senate amendments.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for indicating that.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-41, which, as was mentioned earlier, has been sent back to us by the Upper Chamber, the Senate, where it was amended, after having been passed by the House of Commons a few months ago.

We therefore find ourselves once again in the situation that has arisen on several occasions during this Parliament of having to go back over debates we have already had because senators, more often than not for lack of enough to keep them busy, decide to review a bill and make amendments to it.

In this case, three amendments were proposed by members of the Upper Chamber and I will come back to them during my speech.

I would like to take a few minutes to deplore the state of affairs I have just described. The House of Commons is made up of representatives from throughout Canada, who have been elected by their respective constituents to represent them in this House and to introduce and pass bills meeting the needs and aspirations of the public.

The nature of our parliamentary system is such that another Chamber, the Upper Chamber, or the Senate, whose members are not elected, may, for all sorts of reasons, more often than not partisan, hold up the legislative process by intervening to amend bills, thus delaying their implementation, often with unfortunate and even disastrous consequences for many members of the public.

We must speak out against this meddling by representatives of the Senate who are, I repeat, not elected. They have been appointed by various governments. We know how senators get to the Upper Chamber. In the great majority of cases, they were selected for purely partisan reasons. There are exceptions, of course, and most senators are men and women who have served the Liberal or Conservative parties at some time in the past—

Mr. Crête: Or both.

Mr. Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ): —and which continue to serve one or the other of these parties, or as my colleague from Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup has just pointed out, both, more often than not. These people, who totally lack the legitimacy of having been elected, hinder things at every turn.

• (1245)

I referred to the comment my hon. colleague for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup made earlier, and I will take this opportunity to call attention to his efforts regarding the uselessness, not the usefulness, of the Upper House. My colleague was the spark behind a petition tabled in this House after doing the rounds of Quebec. You will recall that in excess of 30,000 of our fellow citizens called for total abolition of the Senate.

In the years since 1993, every chance it gets, the Bloc Québécois has initiated this debate, or taken part in debates calling for the abolition of the Upper Chamber. In reference to the very option of the Bloc Québécois and the reason for its existence, that is Quebec sovereignty, we feel that the Upper Chamber is not the only thing that is superfluous. So is our presence here in the House of Commons

We therefore hope that, as soon as possible, a new country will appear on the North American scene, a country to be called Quebec, which will be able to establish good relationships with its neighbours, not just to the south, but to the east and west as well. Then, we will be able to concentrate on debates focussed on finding solutions, instead of wasting time discussing the uselessness of the Upper Chamber and, more often than not, having to do as we are today, pick up again on something that they have decided to demolish.

Since we are talking about the Senate and its purpose in life, although more often than not, what it does in the legislative sphere is pretty useless, the Senate does have a purpose. As I said, it is a kind of Club Med for former Liberal and Conservative party organizers which allows them to travel all over the world at government and taxpayers' expense.

It also allows organizers with the Liberal Party or the Conservative Party to work full time on organizing and fundraising for their respective parties. In the case of the Conservative Party, if it had not been for the presence of Conservative senators in the other place during the past three years, not much would have happened on the political or organizing side in the party, since here in the House, it has only two members, including the hon. member for

Government Orders

Sherbrooke, whose salary is largely paid by the taxpayers of Sherbrooke so he can act as director general of the Conservative Party.

And more often than not, the hon. member is not in the House, because he is too busy rebuilding a party which in any case will disappear in the next election. And the same applies to a large number of senators whom I will not identify, since everyone knows who I mean.

The fact remains that Bill C-41 is extremely important for all families with children which, for various reasons, have to separate. These children do not only suffer the emotional shock of separation but also suffer economically as a result of a decision made without their consent and often without consulting them. I repeat, they suffer the impact of such decisions, justified though they may be.

• (1250)

Bill C-41 is an attempt to deal with a problem that has been severely criticized by many people across Canada and especially in Quebec. The government wanted to deal with a problem that came before the Supreme Court with the Thibaudeau case, and the court's decision is well known, because as a result, support payments paid by a spouse are still deducted from that person's taxable income and added to the income of the person receiving them on behalf of the children, an important point.

I do not have the statistics before me, but from memory I would say that over 90 per cent of the time women are the ones receiving support for children in their care and the ones obliged to add this support to their income.

Their former husband, who has often faded into the woodwork or is hard to locate, often fails in his responsibility. When he does fulfil his responsibility, he gets a tax deduction, whereas his former wife, who has custody of the children, has an increase in her income and is obliged to pay tax on much of the child support.

This is unfair. Bill C-41 wants to put an end to this. When the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice spoke in the House, he repeated what the representatives of the Liberal government had said, and what had been said of course by the members of the Bloc Québécois. In Quebec, we have been aware of this situation for a number of years and, as we have in many areas, come up with solutions that are not only original but fulfil the needs and expectations of those concerned. I am speaking obviously of the guidelines that will be given to accommodate the establishment of the support payment.

In Quebec, we have already set a number of criteria. The federal government can do the same. The bill provides that the government may order that provincial criteria apply. This would avoid a double standard in the distribution and calculation of support payments.

My colleague from Lévis mentioned this earlier. In the case of divorce, federal law obviously applies, because divorce is under federal jurisdiction. In the case of separation, the Civil Code will apply as it does to marriage. As we have said on many occasions, the situation is a bit of a paradox, but nevertheless not unlike the constitutional issue. Whereas marriage, or union, comes under Quebec law, divorce or the break-up of the union is under federal jurisdiction.

This is the very thing we have been trying to explain to our colleagues across the way for decades, and we seem to be having a bit of a problem getting the message across.

• (1255)

Coming back to the bill per se, Bill C-41 provides an opportunity to include the criteria established by the provinces. The Bloc Québécois spoke out publicly against this. It is not that we disagree, on the contrary; we insisted that the criteria established by Quebec or any other province should take precedence over those established by the federal government. We feel there is no need for the kind of paternalistic attitude the federal government displays more often than not in different areas in the name of imposing national standards.

As I indicated at the beginning of my speech, the Senate made three amendments. The first one provides for the establishment of a joint committee of the House and the Senate on child custody and access. The Bloc is opposed to this amendment for a very logical reason. We believe the Senate should not interfere in any way with the preparation or consideration of this bill. There is no need for a committee on child custody and access.

For this provision to make its way into the bill, it has to have been approved by the government through its justice minister. The Bloc Québécois will make sure to sit on this committee to defend the views of our party of course, but also those of the people of Quebec.

Another Senate amendment would lift the legal obligation to pay for the children's education until they turn 25 and let the courts decide instead. The Bloc Québécois agrees with this amendment. In Quebec, this issue was settled by jurisprudence following an interpretation of the civil code. For us, it is a matter of fact. We certainly have no objection to the inclusion of this provision in the bill.

Finally, the third amendment made by the Upper House would have both parents provide for the child instead of just the parent paying alimony. Again, the official opposition agrees with this amendment. The problem was raised in committee by Bloc members. Furthermore, in its own guidelines, the Government of Quebec looks at the income of both parents.

Points of Order

That is the position of the Bloc Québécois on the Senate amendments. I will conclude my remarks by saying a few words about the need, in this kind of debate, to focus on those we are most concerned about, and I am talking about children of course. It was with our children in mind that we wanted to settle this matter.

It is important to point out that the child support we are talking about in discussing the determination of the amount and the need for it to be fair and equitable is the support paid to ensure what I would call the optimal development of the children, and not to support the spouse.

• (1300)

As I said at the beginning of my speech, children have no business paying for the decisions made by their parents, even if these decisions are warranted to ensure the well-being of the children as well as the adults.

In other words, we must make sure every precaution is taken not to penalize the children, who already have to deal with the emotional trauma of separation.

I do hope that, this time, the House will pass this bill, with amendments, so that it can be implemented as soon as possible.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order for clarification.

I want to explain a matter very briefly. Often in this House, whether in question period or in debate, we can totally and unintentionally provide information or give a response that is not entirely accurate.

As I was leaving the House I was reminded by members of the press that today in question period I had referred to incidents in Somalia, to which I have referred many times, as shootings, as killings and as murder, as has been suggested by questions and responses.

I want to apologize to the House and to my colleagues if in any way I mislead anyone by linking the two incidents in Somalia in the sense that I said “that Canadians are fully aware of what took place with respect to the murders by shooting or by torture”. The torture death obviously is a totally separate incident from the shootings of the two Somali citizens and that shooting resulted in the death of one of them.

As I recall to the best of my information, on two instances in question period today I spoke of murders, in the plural. Obviously there is one incident that can be described appropriately as a murder. The shooting that resulted in the killing of a Somali citizen is another matter. I did not want under any circumstances to leave that kind of impression with my colleagues or with anyone else who is following this matter.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: If it is to make a comment on what has just been said I will hear the hon. member. However, I do not think that is normally what is expected when somebody gets up and makes a statement such as the one just made.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, if it is permissible I would ask for a further point of clarification from the hon. minister. Is he telling the House that the death of the two civilians, which has been described in some accounts as execution style, were not murders? Is this what he is telling the House?

The Deputy Speaker: This is debate. It is not a question and answer period. However, in these very serious circumstances if the minister wishes to say something further I will be happy to hear it.

Mr. Young: Mr. Speaker, I thank you and the House very much for your indulgence. I think it is a question that needs to be addressed.

The reason that I came back at the very first opportunity to clarify this is because I do not believe that any of us can draw conclusions with respect to the nature of the incident. What the judicial proceedings have demonstrated is that in one instance there was a death that has been described and was determined as murder.

The other incident which involved a shooting and killing of a Somali citizen is still a question that needs to be resolved. That is why I want to make sure that I was not speaking of murders, in the plural, but making sure that I was as accurate as possible for the benefit of the House and for all of my colleagues.

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: We are not going to turn this into a question and answer period. This can be done better in question period. Is it a separate point of order or more on the same point of order?

Mr. Silye: Mr. Speaker, it is on the same point of order but it would be for clarification purposes.

• (1305)

In question period he made a comment which he now feels needs to be clarified. He has clarified it and I understand his clarification. However, why can we not have further clarification of what he has now said and submitted to the House because there is a difference.

In one case he knows it was murder. In the other case he is unsure, but yet he has invoked closure on the hearings. Why has he invoked closure on the hearings when he does not have all the answers?

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members are trying to develop a new procedure where we have questions and answers after anyone comes in to clarify something they said during question period. I do not think we have anything in our standing orders to cover this.

We will return to the order of business which is before the House.

* * *

DIVORCE ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-41, an act to amend the Divorce Act, the Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act, the Garnishment, Attachment and Pension Diversion Act and the Canada Shipping Act.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I will be brief because I see that one of my colleagues would also like to direct a comment or a question to the hon. member from the Bloc who just spoke.

I am a bit puzzled by comments he made during his presentation. Near the end he spoke about the three amendments which the Senate put forward with respect to this legislation. He indicated the Bloc will be opposing what he listed as the first amendment which is the promise to strike a joint committee to look at the whole issue of custody, access and visitation rights.

All of us know that the debate on Bill C-41 has been somewhat lengthy. A lot of people have spoken about its flaws and its ineffectiveness in addressing certain issues of parenting which are so vitally important to the majority of Canadians.

I wonder why the Bloc, other than perhaps animosity toward the other place, would oppose a joint committee to look at such a critical area pertaining to parenting.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thought I had answered that question, but I thank the hon. member for asking me to clarify my point. It is very simple: we are opposed to the Senate getting involved in this matter. We do not object to the fact that a committee should follow up on these issues.

On the contrary, I pointed out that, while we do not think the proposed formula, that is the establishment of a joint committee of the House and the Senate, is the appropriate solution, we certainly

intend to take part in the work of that committee and to state our point of view, in the best interests of our fellow citizens.

[English]

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member has now said the Bloc is willing to talk about the joint committee.

I want to question the member about the abolition of the upper House. He seemed very bitter about the upper House, when in fact it is one of the few occasions when it is actually doing its job, which is to look at legislation that has passed here with a sober second thought to find out if it is really fair.

Thank goodness there is a very close balance between Tories and Liberals in that House right now because it has enabled some common sense to come out of it. They sent the legislation back here so that we could have a better look at it.

Instead of scrapping the Senate and the whole country being held hostage to this place, does he not think it would be better to have an elected Senate which would have equal representation from each province? In that way we could have a truly representative House of sober second thought.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Mr. Speaker, again, it seems to me I answered that question. First, I want to express my surprise at hearing the Reform Party member rave about the Conservative and Liberal representation in the Senate. It seems to me he should hope instead that some Reform senators would be present, as was the case previously.

• (1310)

We, Bloc Quebecois members, say that the Senate is a completely useless institution in our parliamentary process. Moreover, in my speech I made reference to our party's political option, which is known throughout Quebec, since we were elected by discussing it openly. Once Quebec achieves sovereignty, the issue of whether the Senate is useful or not will become moot. The Senate will simply disappear.

Once this happens, our Canadian friends can certainly choose whatever institutions they wish to have, through whatever process they select. If they want an elected Senate because it would better meet their concerns and expectations, we will certainly not object. We will take note of that, and we will watch the implementation of such a measure. We, Bloc Quebecois members, have absolutely no use for the Senate, now or in the future.

[English]

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak to the Senate amendments to Bill C-41, which amends the Divorce Act.

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This bill has received a certain amount of notoriety and attention in the media over the last week or two because of the work of one senator in particular. As my colleague from North Vancouver just said, the Senate became a House of sober, second thought. The impression seems to have been left that this House did not adequately debate and take a good look at the bill. That is simply not true.

Although that seems to be the perception of the public, and perpetuated by the media, in reality this bill was before the House on a number of occasions. I spoke to it twice, at second reading and at report stage, when both opposition parties brought forward a number of amendments which would have improved the bill.

It is a bit ironic that Senator Anne Cools picked up on this when the bill came before the Senate. She also brought forward amendments, which people in the other place are entitled to do. We applaud their efforts to try to better the legislation that comes before them. After all, that is why the Senate is there.

As my hon. colleague from North Vancouver just stated, this is one example that clearly demonstrates that the Senate can actually accomplish a lot, especially in the present situation with such a close balance of power existing in the upper chamber between the Conservatives and the Liberals. This is an example where the Senate can actually accomplish a lot, where it has a lot of power to force change to a piece of legislation.

It is also ironic that while this could be used as an example of the power of the upper Chamber, conversely it also indicates the powerlessness of this Chamber. The amendments that eventually came from the Senate that we are debating today are essentially the same amendments that were brought in by the Reform Party of Canada and the Bloc Quebecois when the House dealt with this legislation.

As I indicated, I had the privilege to speak to this bill twice, once on October 3, 1996 and again quite extensively on November 4, 1996 when the bill was in this Chamber for report stage.

• (1315)

We brought forward four amendments. The first would have established an order of priority so that the court would look first at the needs of the child and the non-custodial parent's ability to pay and then at the applicable guidelines for child support. As the bill is written and still exists, the court only looks to the guidelines. We see that as a real flaw in the bill and one that has not been addressed by the Senate amendments.

The second amendment we brought forward is that the guidelines established under the bill should take into consideration the needs of the child and the ability of the parent to pay.

The third amendment would extend the period from 30 to 50 days for a non-custodial spouse to react to the receipt of notice that his or her passport may be suspended or federal licence withdrawn for non-payment of support. This is a real concern in that a situation could develop because of this legislation whereby a non-custodial parent due to an error, and in these days of technology computer errors happen all the time, could arrive at a port or airport planning to leave the country perhaps for employment overseas only to find their passport had been revoked.

In cases where there has been a legitimate error, by the time the individual could go through the appeal process they could perhaps have lost their job. How would this be beneficial to the child that the legislation is supposedly being put in place to help support? This is a very real concern.

We put forward another amendment dealing with the same issue that would extend the period from 10 to 20 days for deeming that a person has received notice that the passport may be suspended or a license revoked for the same purpose. A little more advance notice might prevent a tragic situation when a person could conceivably lose their employment and their ability to support their children because of some error.

We have no problem where an individual has gone through the process and it is obvious the non-custodial parent is intent on not abiding by their responsibilities for the support of the children, that the law treats it as a very serious offence. With the garnishment of wages provision the bill provides that the children are properly cared for and supported.

However, to go to the extent of revoking passports, the bill goes a bit too far as there certainly could be some errors in the future. When they come to light they could prove to be quite tragic in the sense of loss of income for support of the very children the bill was designed to assist.

Another area I want to get into is custody and access which the bill does not deal with. We have said on many occasions when the bill was before the House and when speaking on this issue outside the House that the bill deals with the monetary aspect of child support but completely misses the boat by not dealing with custody and access and co-parenting. It does not promote an enhanced environment for co-parenting.

As mentioned in the debate earlier today, the problem many of us see in the whole area of divorce and what happens to the family is that the divorce process seems to build a sense of adversity between the two parents. The very system promotes adversity rather than trying to arrive at a more amicable conclusion to the divorce. We have said that while the overall purpose of Bill C-41 is quite admirable, it is very lacking in this area.

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• (1320)

While I am speaking on this issue, it reminds me that I introduced private member's Bill C-242 in the House of Commons on March 20 last year. The bill would give joint custody in all cases of divorce except where it could be shown to the court that it was in the best interests of the child or children to have sole custody awarded to one parent. Obviously there are cases where there is abuse, neglect or a very real reluctance on the part of one parent to assume the responsibilities, however I would suggest that those cases are a very small exception in the vast majority of cases.

I have talked to a lot of divorced parents in my riding of Prince George—Peace River and across the country about these types of issues. In the vast majority of cases, both parents are trying to operate in the best interests of the children. They want to continue to be loving and caring parents after the divorce just as they were when the marriage was intact.

I noted in an earlier speech that according to a 1995 study by the U.S. bureau of statistics, non-custodial parents with visitation and joint custody were much more likely to pay support. Seventy-nine per cent of those with access paid support, while only 59 per cent of those without access paid.

We cannot separate the issue of financial support from the issue of custody, visitation and access to the children. The two go hand in hand. We cannot separate the two because statistics clearly show that when there is greater access, there is also a greater willingness on the part of the non-custodial parent, on the part of the other parent, in most cases the father, to comply with support requirements. This is an area where the government could enact legislation that would support families rather than furthering the adversity that we have presently.

A May 19, 1992 study by the Canadian Research Institute for Law and the Family found that almost 75 per cent of non-custodial parents reported problems in visiting their children. This shows that access and visitation rights in Canada are not working and it results in many problems, including as I said, non-compliance in child support.

That is why when I was looking at this situation I opted to go with moving toward joint custody, which many of the states in the United States have adopted. It is not the total answer and I recognize that. I talked with many groups, such as the umbrella group FACT, Fathers Are Capable Too, that was here about a week and a half ago. They had a number of speakers and held a press conference downstairs in this very building. They brought forward a lot of points on this legislation and on this issue which the government would certainly do well to listen to and pay heed to.

As one of my colleagues said earlier, we have to look at this issue as a family issue and a support issue. Why is it that both

parents are assumed by society, by the communities and by the justice system to be loving, caring parents when the marriage is intact? We assume that unless it is proven otherwise. Yet it seems that once the marriage breaks down and the parents are separated, the system supports the sense of adversity between the parents. It gives certain rights and powers to one that do not go to the other. In 1992 Canadian courts awarded joint custody only 16 per cent of the time. Sole custody is awarded to mothers approximately 72 per cent of the time and to fathers only 12 per cent of the time.

• (1325)

In some instances where sole custody is awarded to one parent or the other, the parents themselves can arrive at a reasonable solution, a solution which is in the best interests of the children as far as visitation, holidays and access to those children go. It is in the best interests of those children and I certainly applaud those parents who are able to do that.

However those statistics would indicate to me that there is a problem out there. The problem is that in many cases, the children are used as pawns. They are the innocent victims. That is my great concern.

I do not want to come down on the side of the custodial parent versus the non-custodial parent or vice versa. I do not want to come down on the side of fathers versus mothers. I want to come down on the side of the children.

As a loving, caring parent of three children, I cannot understand, I cannot fathom nor can I see anything worse than the loss of a child. In cases where the marriage breaks down and one parent wants to continue to be that loving, caring parent and wants to build a lifetime relationship with his or her child and is denied that access, it is an indescribable horror for both the parent and the child. Because of that separation, the bond between the parent and child as the young person grows and reaches maturity will never exist. This will affect everything that will happen to the child and will certainly be an ongoing anguish for the parent.

Therefore, even with the amendments from the Senate, it is my judgment that this bill does very little. It fails to meet the very real need of so many families. We are failing the Canadian people on this very important issue.

I only look to the future in the hope that following the next election we will have a Reform government in this country that will properly address this issue and so many other issues. We will bring forward legislation that truly does support the whole family.

When we deal with the Divorce Act, the focus has to be what is best for the children.

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Prince George—Peace River for his remarks which I found very thoughtful. I realize he considered

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them very carefully. I would like to raise a point with my colleague that was raised several times in the House.

I think we have all agreed that this bill has come back from the Senate with improvements through the amendments that have been added. My Reform Party colleagues on several occasions mentioned that this was the Senate doing good work. They credited the fact that it was a Liberal senator who, because of the equal number of seats in the Senate, was able to answer the concerns about the bill and to pressure for changes which resulted in improvements. All in the House feel there have been improvements here.

I note that the member for North Vancouver used the occasion of this debate to suggest that while the Senate is doing its job in this instance, it would be better if the Senate were an elected Senate. I submit to my Reform Party colleagues that if the Senate were an elected Senate, the even balance that has permitted this event to occur, a Liberal senator ensuring that amendments are made, would not exist. An elected Senate would be an unbalanced Senate. If it reflected the balance in the House of Commons the Liberals would be in great majority and there would be no opportunity for the kind of result we have here.

• (1330)

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the particular question because it gives me a chance to talk, very briefly admittedly, about the whole need for democratic reform in Parliament.

The problem with the hon. member's comments is the presumption that were the upper Chamber an elected body people would vote for their senators in the same fashion as they would vote for their members of Parliament. From what we see in other parliaments and republics around the world it is not always the case the same party that holds the majority in the lower Chamber holds the majority in the upper Chamber.

The presumption is that there are no free votes in this place. The basis of the member's comment is that there are no free votes; they will simply vote along party lines. Yet in this case Liberal Senator Anne Cools stood up to the pressure from this justice minister, stood up to the pressure from the government, and did not allow this piece of legislation to be fast tracked through the upper Chamber. That is what took place. She stood up to the pressure and forced through the amendments we were unable to force through in this Chamber.

This Chamber does not allow free expression and free votes in the House. There are no free votes in the House. The very basis of the comments made by the hon. member across the way allude to that fact.

Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I recently had a letter from a constituent in my riding of Kootenay West—Revelstoke who was concerned about the issue the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River brought forth, that is denial of access of the non-custodial parent.

This individual was very concerned having over the years paid thousands upon thousands of dollars which he was required to pay. He paid each time on time with honour and yet was denied access. There is nothing in the system to address that. It is a very important point.

My hon. colleague addressed it very well as he always does when he speaks. Would he make a few comments on why such a common sense provision has met with such resistance by the government?

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Mr. Speaker, the reason common sense provisions do not prevail with the government across the way is that there is no common sense over there.

If common sense was the guiding motive for legislation in the House we would have a lot less legislation. A lot of the bills that have been brought before the House over the past three years have done very little in the eyes of the citizens out there in the real world who might be watching the debate today.

• (1335)

At one point I commented that a party running for election to the House of Commons could very well win a substantive majority if it ran on a platform of repealing useless laws and legislation rather than bringing in inconsequential, ineffective legislation like the government has done over the last three years.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

An hon. member: On division.

(Motion agreed to, amendments read the second time and concurred in.)

* * *

CANADA-CHILE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. John Manley (for the Minister for International Trade) moved that Bill C-81, an act to implement the Canada-Chile free trade agreement and related agreements, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to debate a very important piece of legislation for all Canadians. The legislation would solidify the good trading relationship Canada has had with Chile.

Bill C-81 is enabling legislation for the Canada-Chile free trade agreement. It is an important milestone for us because it broadens the access to Canadian products and services under a free trade regime into Latin American and South American countries.

As most people in the House and in the country are aware, Canada has a very proud and strong tradition of being very competitive in international markets.

I come from Atlantic Canada which has a history of trade. Many times I have said in the past that up until 1867 when we were merely a British colony places like Nova Scotia did a great deal of trade. The reason Nova Scotia did so well in the 1800s is that the culture of the people in Atlantic Canada was to look abroad.

The port of Halifax, the finest natural port in the world, used to be chock full of ships plying their trade. I am told one could almost walk from the shores of Dartmouth to the shores of Halifax on a good summer day. Ships from all over the world were coming into the port of Halifax in the 1850s and 1860s to trade with the world. They would not just trade with central or upper Canada. They would trade with the New England states. They traded a great deal with Latin America, with the Caribbean, with Europe and with the rest of the world.

In 1867 with the formation of Canada and the various regimes and nation states that were being put in place protectionism became the name of the game. For well over 120 years we saw countries like Canada looking more and more inward and putting up barriers to trade to protect their industries and markets.

In the last decade there has been an explosion in trade deregulation. If we look around the globe we see the emergence of different trade groups like the European Union and the Mercosur block in South America. In North America we initially had the free trade deal with the United States which was then extended to Mexico and was known as the NAFTA.

• (1340)

Great debates took place in Canada on whether or not this nation was up to the challenge of competing globally and of removing the tariff and non-tariff barriers to its own markets, on whether or not we had the wherewithal as an entrepreneurial class of Canadians to still be competitive, to have growth in our industries and jobs, and to create wealth.

Maybe the verdict is out but I think the verdict in on free trade. After two recessions, one in the early eighties and the other in the early nineties, Canadian industries are among the most competitive in the entire world.

In my job as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade I deal with some of the most successful competitive companies with the best practices in the world. They are Canadian companies in almost every sector: mining, natural resources, telecommunications and infrastructure. They are renowned around the world for the way in which they do their business, the quality of the product and the timeliness of delivery of their service.

In the last few years we have seen the Canadian industrial infrastructure take advantage of the reduction in tariffs and the introduction of free trade in the NAFTA. We continue to penetrate the toughest market in the world, the American market.

The statistics are important. At the risk of sounding boastful I would like to repeat them. Canada, this great country of ours with 30 million people, does \$1 billion a day in two way trade with the United States of America. We ship \$550 million in goods and services south of the border and we get \$450 million back. For every working day of every month in Canada, Canada does over \$1 billion in two-way trade. This is a small country with 30 million people and we do over \$1 billion every working day.

If anybody out there questions whether or not Canadian industries are up to the challenge of free trade and can compete in international markets and keep their own markets the answer is yes.

Canada leads G-7 countries in terms of the percentage of GDP coming from trade. It is approaching 39 per cent. It boggles the mind that Canadian industry has been as competitive as it has been. Most of the nearly 700,000 jobs created since the government came to power have been created in industries that have expanded their export performance. They have gone out. They have competed. They have penetrated markets. They have created jobs and wealth for Canadians.

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What does it mean in terms of jobs created in international trade? How do they relate? They relate in a very real manner. For every \$1 billion in exports from Canadian industry there are 11,000 jobs maintained or created in the Canadian economy. These are not the traditional McJobs at \$5 per hour. These jobs are in the high tech sector. These are jobs for scientists, researchers and professionals. These jobs create real wealth and prosperity across the country.

Places like Atlantic Canada where I come from have benefited a great deal. It has taken us a little longer to twist our minds around to the fact that we once again can be competitive and that we are no longer bridled and collared by just the domestic marketplace and the regulatory regimes that go with it.

Increasingly we see ships from around the world once again making the port of Halifax and the port of Saint John, New Brunswick, part of their international ports of call. We see the jobs that come with that. We see more and more people from around the world looking at places like Atlantic Canada because of its strategic location, because of its natural resources and because of its history of entrepreneurship and trade. Increasingly we are seeing these individuals looking at places like Atlantic Canada and the ports in the province of Quebec and in British Columbia as places where they want to invest dollars.

The recent history of free trade has been extremely successful. About a year ago we decided we would not wait for the United States which had decided not to give fast track authority to its president to pursue trade liberalization or free trade negotiations with Chile. We as a government made a strategic decision to follow an independent forum and an independent trade policy. It was in our best interest, because we knew how competitive our industry was, to extend our free trade negotiations to our friends to the south. We found a willing partner in the great nation of Chile. Chile said "we also want to become a partner in free trade with Canada. We believe there is a tremendous amount we can do together". The negotiations began in January 1996. In less than one year, on November 18, 1996 the Prime Minister of Canada and the president of Chile initialled the free trade deal between Canada and Chile.

• (1345)

It is a very important deal. It showed the world that Canada was not just going to talk about free trade. It showed Canada was going to pursue opportunities wherever they existed so Canadian companies could have access to foreign markets. It showed that we were not afraid to allow foreign companies access to the Canadian marketplace because we were absolutely convinced of the competitiveness of our industry and our entrepreneurs.

What has this deal done for us? Some people would ask why we would go with Chile, that we do not really have a lot of trade with

that country. We do have a lot of trade. We have about \$700 million a year in trade. More important is the recognition that we invest about \$7 billion in Chile. Canada is the second largest investor in Chile. It is important for us. It gives us a window on that market in South America.

This is a good deal for Canada. It is a deal that has good support around the House of Commons. It immediately reduces the import duty for about 75 per cent of the goods that Canada exports to Chile. For the rest of the goods, by and large with one or two exceptions, over the next five years a zero tariff will be applied.

The deal also allows us to do a couple of other things which I will cover quickly. It gives us a very good dispute settlement mechanism which is similar to the deal we have with the United States. On trade remedies, where I will draw the line, we have agreed in this deal that there is no room in a free trade association for anti-dumping laws to be applied. This is a great victory for Canada. This deal is a great victory for the people of Chile.

I look forward to support from all members of the House to have this speedily passed at second reading and referred to a committee so that on June 2 this free trade deal will come in force for the benefit of all people of Canada and Chile.

Mr. Kilger: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I have engaged in some discussions with representatives of the official opposition and the Reform Party. There is unanimous support for this legislation. I know the sitting has been extended until two o'clock.

Could we have unanimous consent that there would not be any questions or comments to any of the interveners, that we would still have a member from each of the two parties, the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party speak, and then we would put the question.

An hon. member: No.

Mr. Kilger: Mr. Speaker, I see there is no consent to that so let me try this. While there would be questions and comments if people chose to have them, that a member of the Bloc would speak and then a member of the Reform Party. At that time you would put the question. Effectively, you would not see the clock at two o'clock.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Mr. Laurin: Mr. Speaker, we would be in agreement, but on condition that each party be limited to 10 minutes.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: Subject to the wrinkle added, is there consent from the Reform Party to that?

Mr. Silye: Mr. Speaker, I thought we had discussed that we would allow one question on the Liberal member's speech and then after that no more questions, just finish the speeches if they wanted.

The Deputy Speaker: We have added a second wrinkle. There will be one question to the hon. parliamentary secretary and then 10 minutes to each of the parties. Agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, after listening to the speech of the hon. member for Dartmouth, I do not think he is a Liberal. He spoke of all the virtues and strengths and benefits of a free trade agreement, of the North American free trade agreement and this wonderful agreement with Chile. My goodness, he sounds like an entrepreneur and a free enterpriser if I ever heard one.

• (1350)

He also spoke of the advantages of Halifax. With his forward vision I am surprised that the Liberal Party under John Turner was against free trade. We hear these great sounding speeches from Liberal members which is quite an about face, but I might add a welcomed about face. However, I take exception to the reference in his speech about the NAFTA in terms of the dispute mechanism settlement.

When the Liberals ran in the last election their three big issues were jobs, jobs, jobs; get rid of the GST and renegotiating NAFTA. We all know that they did not renegotiate NAFTA. They signed it the way it was presented.

They made the mistake of not sticking to their original principles and by not adhering to their commitment to hold the agreement up until there was a satisfactory dispute settlement mechanism. That has really cost this country severely. It has caused a severe problem in international trade and trade with our partners because the Americans are taking advantage of us very chance they get. We would not have the dispute over softwood lumber. It would have been settled. Settlements would be a lot faster if there was a proper dispute settlement mechanism in place in the NAFTA.

Based on the comments in his speech that he feels this is a good deal with Chile because it is the same as the one Canada has with the States, I submit we are not happy with the one with the United States. It is causing some problems. I would like clarification of that kind of double talk.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member needs a lot of clarification if he misunderstands that the Liberal Party has always been the traditional party of free trade. It was not the Tory Party, it has never been. The hon. member laughs, but if he looks at some of

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the most important trade liberalization moves that have been taken since 1867, they were taken by the Liberal Party of Canada.

What he does not want to understand is that when the Liberal Party of Canada goes forward with trade liberalization, it does not succumb to the wishes of the United States. We stand firm for the rights of Canadian industry. We have done it under NAFTA. We have done it under the FTA and we have done it with Chile.

Finally, the hon. member has asked a very important question. He alluded to the fact that the dispute settlement mechanism under NAFTA simply does not work. I would like to sit down and show my hon. colleague that the dispute settlement mechanism has worked very well. Of the disputes that have gone full term, Canada has won over 90 per cent of them. I believe the deal we have negotiated has protected Canadian industries.

With respect to the promises made in the election campaign about NAFTA, working groups have been established to look at a subsidies code as well as at anti-dumping. Those reports are going to be the subject of negotiations and discussions at the next NAFTA commission. If he is still around when those are discussed we will be edified with the results of those negotiations.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maud Debien (Laval East, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-81, an act to implement the Canada-Chile free trade agreement.

It was at the Summit of the Americas held in Miami in late 1994 that the decision was made to allow Chile into NAFTA. One year later, following complications in its negotiations with the U.S., the Chilean government decided to break off talks.

Canada and Chile then looked into the possibility of bilateral negotiations on an interim agreement. This agreement would eventually pave the way for Chile's accession to NAFTA.

Negotiations with a view to such an agreement took place between January and November 1996, and the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement, signed in December 1996, will take effect June 2, 1997. It is an interim agreement, one purpose of which is to facilitate the accession of Chile to NAFTA, probably around the year 2000.

• (1355)

First of all, I will tell you the Bloc Quebecois is pleased that this agreement has been signed, and it is with an open mind that we prepare to welcome our Chilean friends into the vast North American free trade zone.

The Bloc Quebecois is obviously in favour of the principle of free trade. I would point out that this has been the traditional position of the Quebec government. Furthermore, we were strongly

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in support of the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States. Let us remember that this was one of the primary issues in the 1988 federal election campaign in Quebec.

Similarly, we also supported extending the FTA, which later became the NAFTA, as well as the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement.

In reiterating the sovereignists' strong position on free trade, I cannot help thinking about the last election campaign of the Liberal Party, the party forming the government today.

I was listening earlier to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International Trade as he boasted—we have a more colourful expression for it—that they have been in favour of free trade since 1867. I would encourage the parliamentary secretary to take another look at his history books.

At the time, the Liberals were strongly opposed to the free trade treaty with the United States. In the infamous red book, the Liberals promised, on page 24—the parliamentary secretary does not need to take a history course, all he has to do is read the red book—that “a liberal government will renegotiate the Canada-United-States Free Trade Agreement and NAFTA”.

It just happens that this is another one of their broken promises. Today, a few years after they came to power, the Liberals seem to have miraculously converted to free trade.

Indeed, once elected, the Liberal Party decided to change its tune and is now finding the Free Trade Agreement quite acceptable. It likes its purpose, content, and wording so much that instead of making changes to it, the current government used it as a model to draft the Canada-Chili Free Trade Agreement, and rightly so.

Of course, since the purpose of the Canada-Chili Free Trade Agreement is ultimately for Chili to join NAFTA, it was appropriate to include dispositions similar in many respects. However, I believe that since it is on a smaller scale, with less of an impact on both partners, it would have been possible to include certain elements, if only to put its feasibility to the test. I refer mainly to parallel agreements.

As was the case with NAFTA, parallel agreements on the environment and labour standards are attached to the Canada-Chili Free Trade Agreement. I believe the government could have taken this opportunity to include environmental and labour standards within the agreement.

The government should have done everything in its power to raise the labour standards and thus increase protection for Chilean workers. I will, once again, quote the red book where the Liberals said: “Future trading arrangements will be shaped not only by economic considerations but also by social concerns”.

The Liberal government could have included a clause on respect for human rights and democratic principles. In any case, the government must not forget that, over and above trade and commercial interests, it bears some responsibilities both on the national and the international scene.

On the question of human rights, I want to emphasize that the Bloc Québécois considers that respect for fundamental rights is a top priority and that such a principle should always be part of any agreement like the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement.

Trade must go on, free trade must be encouraged, but not at the expense of our responsibilities as individuals and as members of the global community.

• (1400)

The Minister for International Trade feels that the protection of human rights has no place in a free trade agreement, but the free trade agreement between Israel and the European Union contains an interesting clause in this regard.

It says: “The relations between the parties, as well as all the provisions in this agreement, are based on respect for human rights and the democratic principles that underlie their domestic and international policies and constitute an essential part of this agreement”.

As I have said repeatedly in this House, respect for human rights will not come about automatically, either in isolation or through trade. I now take this opportunity to applaud the Quebec government for subscribing to an unknown part of NAFTA this week: the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation.

This agreement will now allow the filing of complaints against businesses in the United States or in Mexico which do not respect certain basic principles relating to their employees' working conditions. Apart from Quebec, Manitoba and Alberta are the only provinces to have signed this agreement.

I will conclude by welcoming a new economic partner of Quebec and Canada. The institutionalization of closer political and economic ties with Chile, through this bilateral agreement, and possibly in the longer term, through its accession to NAFTA, is promising.

For many Quebecers and Canadians, Chile is now associated with democracy, political stability and economic success. What a change for a country that, for a long time, reminded us more of authoritarianism and human rights violations. In less than a decade, Chile has been able to put itself in the forefront of a renewed, resolutely modern and promising continent.

[English]

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my party has agreed to this truncated form of debate because, like the government, we would like to see

this bill get into committee where it can be properly dealt with. We do support it in principle. There are a couple of stickers in it that are worthy of further discussion. We will get to them in committee and at third reading.

As everyone here knows, the origins of this treaty were at the summit of the Americas in Miami in 1994 where the leaders of Canada, the U.S., Mexico and Chile announced their intention to pursue Chilean ascension to NAFTA.

Chile looked rather briefly at this possibility however, since the Clinton administration was unable to convince the U.S. Congress to fast track a treaty to a pass or fail vote without amendment. Chile therefore backed away from the risk of entering into an agreement that could be further modified after it was signed.

This treaty as everyone knows, although it will have bilateral advantages to Canada and to Chile, certainly is mostly about what the Department of Foreign Affairs likes to refer to as building bridges. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade sometimes calls the Canada-Chile FTA an interim bilateral free trade agreement because it is hoped that the agreement will ultimately lead to incorporating Chile into NAFTA, or FTAA as it is sometimes called now, a free trade agreement for the Americas.

It appears that the U.S. Congress' stubborn refusal to fast track Chile's entry into NAFTA will be to our gain. Mexico already has an FTA with Chile and the Americans will eventually have to get on board through the free trade agreement for the Americas initiative.

One of the advantages of leading by example is that we do get a head start. Chile has strong trade links throughout the southern hemisphere, in particular through its association with Mercosur, the common market between Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Chile is not a full member of that trading bloc. Therefore even though it has this easy access, it was able to give us certain considerations which are a little better than it is giving to its neighbours.

• (1405)

For example our agricultural products will get much better treatment. Many Canadian companies are already finding that Chile is an excellent gateway or an open door to the other markets in Latin America.

The deal in its immediate consequences provides Canadian exporters with significantly improved access to the Chilean market through the elimination of the 11 per cent duty on about 75 per cent of the goods which we ship into Chile. Since 80 per cent of Chilean exports into Canada are already duty free, it is reasonable to expect that the adjustment phase for the Canadian market will be very moderate.

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In the agricultural sector which is of particular concern to me Canadian durum wheat which accounts for 35 per cent of Canadian agricultural exports to Chile will benefit from an immediate removal of the 11 per cent duty currently imposed. There is similar treatment slated for barley and pulse seeds.

Duties on Canadian exports of a variety of processed agricultural products will be reduced to zero over five years. The exception for a long phase out period is for Chile's most sensitive product, milling wheat, but in 17 years that will be duty free as well. On the Canadian side we will phase out a limited number of tariffs over six years primarily for horticultural products. Canada's over quota most favoured nation tariffs for dairy, poultry and eggs are excluded from tariff elimination and will continue to be protected.

However, it is not all wine and roses. Some Canadian producers are afraid of the Chilean \$15 a day average farm wage, cheap land and flexible government regulations, all of which lower the cost of production for Chilean agricultural goods. Fortunately most Canadian horticultural produce will be available during our summer and fall and Chilean produce will fill in the winter-spring gap of our growing season. So Canadian and Chilean producers will mostly complement each other rather than compete head to head.

Apples however are another story. This is a very significant worry. B.C. fruit growers have expressed concerns about the six year phase out period of the FTA's anti-dumping regulations. Chilean apples have been entering Canada duty free for years with no problems apparent. However, Canadian orchardists are uneasy over the precedent that the agreement sets when Chile eventually gets into the general NAFTA agreement for this reason. A few years back the price for red delicious apples was driven below the cost of production when Washington state growers dumped their product in the B.C. market. The Okanagan apple producers eventually won damages under the anti-dumping laws in the Canada-U.S. FTA.

Should Chile eventually be admitted to NAFTA and the phasing out of anti-dumping regulations be extended to all NAFTA partners, Washington producers could dump their apples in Canada again and drive down domestic prices. So it is not Chile they are afraid of, it is the U.S.A. which is sitting in the wings watching this.

We must be cautious. I hope that this will be addressed in committee. The only remaining recourse for Canadian growers in the scenario that I have outlined would be an appeal to the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, a safeguard action. The CITT could apply immediate tariffs on a temporary basis and probably for one season. It would be a mirror image of our never ending softwood lumber dispute, only in this case the plaintiffs would be north of the border instead of south of it.

Let us proceed with a moderate degree of caution. In general, this treaty is a good deal for both Chile and Canada but like all

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treaties, it is not perfect and I would not want to see British Columbia apple growers sacrificed for the general benefit of our trade relations.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

The Deputy Speaker: It being 2.10 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

NUCLEAR LIABILITY ACT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Lib.) moved that Bill C-249, an act to amend the Nuclear Liability Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill would amend the Nuclear Liability Act. The Nuclear Liability Act was passed in 1970 but was only proclaimed in 1976. Its purpose was to make operators of nuclear installations absolutely liable for damages, but at the same time it limited their liability for a particular incident to \$75 million.

When I say that it made them absolutely liable, I mean that it provided that victims of a nuclear accident would not have to prove negligence against the operators of a nuclear facility. They merely had to show that the damages to their person or to their property were caused by a breakdown or by an accident at the nuclear installation. Once they did that, the defendant was absolutely liable. However as I said, the liability was limited to a total of \$75 million for all claimants on any one particular incident.

The Nuclear Liability Act also protects manufacturers of nuclear facilities and manufacturers of components for nuclear facilities, such as General Electric, Westinghouse and others. It protects them from any liability whatsoever. It does the same thing for the suppliers of fuel for nuclear installations. In other words, all damage claims by victims of a nuclear power accident must be channelled to the operators who are in turn limited to \$75 million.

The act also provides that where the damage exceeds \$75 million, the Government of Canada may decide to pay additional amounts, but that is not obligatory.

It should be noted that all operators must be licensed under the Atomic Energy Control Act by the Atomic Energy Control Board. Of course the purpose of that is to screen out unreliable operators.

Bill C-249 which is before the House today would do two things. First, it would increase the liability limit for operators from \$75 million to \$500 million per damage incident. Second, it would oblige the government to pay damages when they went above \$500 million, subject to certain conditions.

Why is this necessary? Why am I putting forward this bill? It is necessary because the liability limit of \$75 million is totally out of date and inadequate.

There are presently 23 nuclear installations in Canada situated in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

• (1415)

If we were simply to adjust the \$75 million maximum to compensate for inflation, the adjusted maximum calculated for 1989 would be \$279 million. As members know, it is now 1997 so with further inflation adjustment the maximum would be close to \$500 million.

Experience has now shown us that the original maximum was woefully too low. The 1986 Chernobyl breakdown resulted in \$300 billion of damages in Ukraine and Belarus. As a result of that accident 250,000 people had to be evacuated from their farms, villages and communities.

Briefs to the Ontario Hydro hearings in 1990 demonstrated that a severe accident at the Darlington, Ontario installation would result in damages of \$1 trillion. In 1990 the *Business Journal* stated that Ontario Hydro was not adequately insured for damage from accidents of this kind.

It should be pointed out that Toronto is closer to Pickering than Kiev was to Chernobyl yet Kiev incurred approximately \$100 billion in damages in 1986. That is probably why the city of Toronto with Energy Probe and Rosalie Bertell went to court in 1986 to have the Nuclear Liability Act declared unconstitutional.

Unfortunately in 1996 after 10 years of legal wrangling they were obliged to drop their action. The principal opponents in that action were Ontario Hydro and New Brunswick Power.

Some say that these changes are not necessary because Canadian installations are extremely safe. It may be correct that the Canadian safety record is a good one, and I congratulate the operators for that, but no one will argue that our system is fail safe. Not only do we have the examples of Chernobyl in 1986 and Three Mile Island in the United States in 1979, but in 1995 in this country there were 786 unusual incidents recorded for Canadian installations and 391 were formally reported to the Atomic Energy Control Board.

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In 1983 there was a serious accident at the Pickering 2 installation less than 20 miles from Toronto. The two reactors were shut down for four years. A pressure tube had burst without warning in the in the very core of the reactor system. The replacement cost was \$700 million.

Ontario's nuclear facilities are not built to withstand the magnitude of earthquakes now anticipated in this region. An earthquake is considered the most likely cause of a severe accident to a nuclear power facility.

The bill is also necessary because individuals in Canada cannot get personal or household insurance which will cover them for damages resulting from a nuclear facility accident. No insurance company will cover this risk for individuals. The insured has no coverage for radioactive contamination. I was shocked to learn that but that is the case. None of us can get an insurance policy which will cover us against these kinds of damages.

Consequently the only recourse for individual damage claims from victims is the operators under this law. At present the operators are only liable up to \$75 million. One can imagine what this would give to the citizens of greater Toronto if there was a Chernobyl type breakdown at Pickering or Darlington. One million people would get about \$75 each.

In the United States under the 1957 Price Anderson Act recent amendments require liability coverage of \$160 million per reactor. Plus, in event of claims beyond that, a fund has been established which provides total coverage of up to \$7 billion. Sweden has recently increased its liability in similar circumstances from \$81 million to \$130 million per reactor, and Japan from \$80 million to \$240 million.

• (1420)

If you were affected by a nuclear accident, Mr. Speaker, because the winds deposited radioactive fallout over your home, business, farm or workplace making them uninhabitable for tens or perhaps hundreds of years, think of what this would mean to you, quite apart from the knowledge that you and your loved ones might contract cancer or your offspring suffer genetic damage.

Financially your means of livelihood could be wiped out and your property destroyed. You and your family could be ruined and there is no way to protect yourselves because insurance companies also fear a meltdown. Every insurance policy in Canada excludes coverage for nuclear accidents. No other industry has the freedom to destroy the health or property of innocent third parties who can neither insure themselves beforehand nor sue for compensation afterwards.

In conclusion let me summarize. The Nuclear Liability Act in its present form is not adequate to compensate victims of a nuclear facility accident. Accidents have taken place before and can take place again. The law needs to be updated and revised. The act requires other amendments as well but I am not dealing with those

today. For example, in the act there is a limitation that all claims must be made within 10 years. Now they realize that such claims for such damage only come to light much later than 10 years, such as damage to offspring or cancer and so on. There have been recommendations that claims be allowed up to 30 years but I am not dealing with that. I am not dealing with that today; I am simply saying that the act requires other amendments.

I urge hon. members to send the bill to committee where witnesses could be heard and if necessary have the bill amended. I am extremely flexible on the details of the bill. If the evidence suggests that the liability should be higher than \$500 million then change it. That is no problem. If the committee can find a better way of protecting citizens when the damage goes beyond \$500 million I am all in favour of improvements.

On the other hand I cannot accept that this matter be ignored. Nuclear energy is too dangerous a substance. There is no perfect way to control it or its waste product. I would prefer that we stop using nuclear energy, but if that cannot or will not be done then at least let us make sure that any victims get fair and just compensation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce for introducing Bill C-249, an act to amend the Nuclear Liability Act.

If I am not mistaken, the purpose of this bill is to increase to \$500 million the maximum level of liability for which a private sector nuclear facility operator may be required to have insurance coverage. This level is currently set at \$75 million. So, the cost of a nuclear disaster exceeding \$75 million would be borne by the Crown if, of course, it agrees to meet that cost.

Personally, I have no objection to increasing the insurance coverage required. I would even feel that \$500 million is not enough.

We only have to consider what happened last summer in the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region to realize that a figure like \$500 million is not nearly enough when disaster strikes.

Another example more closely related to the nuclear industry is the Chernobyl disaster. Five hundred million dollars is not much considering the extent of a disaster such as Chernobyl. I am sure that accident cost billions of dollars, and I am not taking into account all the repercussions on the lives of the people affected.

In a country like the USSR, at a time when human rights and individual rights did not count for much, officials were able to come through all right.

• (1425)

Let us imagine for a moment that such a disaster should occur in Canada. Let us consider the impact on people and estimate the costs of such an accident.

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I do not think Bill C-249 goes far enough. I agree that companies should have excellent insurance coverage, but is that the real problem?

Some may think an insurance coverage of \$1 billion is excessive. They think so because, collectively, we do not think we could experience such a disaster here. Personally, I am convinced we could.

Since the beginning of nuclear power plants in Canada, a number of minor incidents have occurred. More recently, we have realized that certain components of our plants deteriorate faster than our engineers had expected. Moreover, those who run these plants in the public or parapublic sectors have only one goal: producing electricity at the lowest possible cost.

Some of you may agree with me, but they do not think companies would push it to the point of jeopardizing public safety. Again, I am a bit more sceptical. Collectively, when we have examined this issue in committee or when other bills have been put before the House, we have realized that if public safety is a goal, it is not necessarily assured.

In the nuclear industry, the situation is worse, because this form of energy is extremely difficult to control and a relative safety can be achieved only with the most advanced and carefully implemented technology.

And I do mean relative safety. Also, \$500 million in coverage does not seem like much for the following reason. If an accident were to occur in one of our plants in Quebec, in Ontario or in New Brunswick, it could mean massive population evacuations, and depending on the direction of the winds, it would not be surprising if our neighbours down south were affected.

We know that several countries were affected by the fallout from the Chernobyl accident. Do you think that \$500 million would be enough to deal with the problem? I do not think so. We would need to evacuate the whole population of some cities and towns, the sick, the elderly, the school children. Not to mention the unavoidable damages to the environment. The fallout could affect livestock, wildlife, the flora and all the food production over quite a large area. Add to that the destruction of whole service sectors in cities located near these facilities.

Man still has much to learn about nuclear energy. An oil spill can be contained. With much effort, the environment can be restored within a few years, but following a nuclear accident, it will be thousands of years before the environment is back to normal.

For example, such an accident in Canada would have a major impact on extensive forests, agricultural lands, and vast mining areas. Would 500 million years take care of it? In Ontario, with Ontario Hydro, in Quebec, with Hydro-Québec, in New Brunswick or elsewhere in Canada, I doubt any operator could deal with a major accident.

The introduction of this bill is another opportunity for me to raise the question of the development of nuclear energy as a source of power. I really think that, in spite of the assurances they give us as taxpayers, the leaders of all the countries in the world have made decisions in too great a haste.

We started to build nuclear generating stations without being assured of their total safety.

To conclude, we support Bill C-249 but we are still sceptical that \$500 million will be sufficient in the event of a major nuclear catastrophe.

• (1430)

[English]

Mr. George Proud (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House on Bill C-249. I thank my colleague, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, for bringing this important matter before the House.

The hon. member has a long and distinguished history of service to Canadians. I commend him on his commitment to issues of public safety and well-being. This member is well known across the country for the good work he has done. He is especially well known in my part of the country.

This proposed legislation is another example of my colleague's concern for Canadians and it deserves the careful attention of this House. As I understand it, Bill C-249 would achieve three objectives. First, it would increase the maximum level of a nuclear operator's liability for third party damage in the event of a nuclear accident. The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce is proposing that nuclear operators be required to carry \$500 million worth of liability insurance compared to the current requirement of \$75 million.

By extension, Bill C-249 would increase the threshold at which the Nuclear Damage Claims Commission would be established and claims would be moved from the court system to the commission.

Finally, the bill would require the minister to make liability payments once an order is issued by the commission. This addresses what some have criticized as unwarranted discretion on the part of the minister.

I want to make it very clear that the government supports in principle the objective of increasing operator liability under the Nuclear Liability Act. We support a strengthened commitment to compensate victims of nuclear accidents. At the same time, we recognize that a number of other important changes need to be made to the act. I would like to take a few moments to explain why.

The Nuclear Liability Act, as the hon. member said, was proclaimed in 1976. It establishes a comprehensive scheme for

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compensating victims of injury and damage arising from nuclear accidents. Twenty years after its proclamation, the act continues to uphold the principles that are important to a nuclear liability regime.

It is important to note that in those 20 years the Nuclear Liability Act has not changed substantially. A full six years before it was proclaimed, the act was actually passed by Parliament in 1970. It is a quarter of a century old and in that time the nuclear industry has evolved dramatically. While there is clearly a need to increase liability levels in the act, this is only one of several modernizations that need to be made for the benefit of potential victims of a nuclear accident.

In other words, the time has come for a comprehensive review of this act. Recent litigation that challenged the constitutionality of the act also highlighted the need for a comprehensive review. Although the Ontario Court, General Division, ruled in 1994 that the act is valid federal legislation, in 1996 an appeal of that decision was discontinued.

We need to update and modernize the act to more fully meet our present domestic needs and also to reflect changes in the area of international nuclear liability. In addition to revising the compensation regime, we need to correct several technical problems that have been identified within the act.

I am pleased to inform the House that such a comprehensive review is currently under way. A federal interdepartmental review committee has already developed a number of proposals to amend the act, and these proposals have been presented to key stakeholders, including operators of nuclear facilities, representatives of provincial ministries with responsibility for energy and emergency planning, and the Nuclear Insurance Association of Canada. Based on the feedback received during these preliminary discussions and on subsequent consultations, the review committee will recommend how to proceed.

Hon. members should know that the stakeholders involved in these discussions have expressed strong support for a comprehensive review of the Nuclear Liability Act, one that will encompass all of the issues that need to be addressed. The outcome will be a package of amendments that will update, modernize and clarify the entire act.

I want to assure the House that the improvements to the compensation regime as proposed in Bill C-249 are a key element of the review. This is the most important objective of the revision process. I agree with the hon. member that we need to review the current liability limit of \$75 million. We must arrive at a liability level that reflects current realities. I think the limits should be raised, but I do not know whether that amount should be \$500 million or some other amount. We should approach the matter in a thoughtful way, assessing what funds might be available from whom, and in what form.

• (1435)

The interdepartmental review committee is currently exploring options for securing higher levels of insurance from private insurers. This would increase funding for victims. The review committee is prepared to consider other forms of security, such as self-insurance, pooling arrangements and government compensation. If we examine all these sources, we may well come up with a \$500 million fund. However, I am told that this is not an easy matter and certainly it is not clear that the private insurers can come up with these funds.

Another issue we need to consider is the impact Bill C-249 will have on the federal government's liability under the reinsurance agreement that was signed with the Nuclear Insurance Association of Canada in 1976. Reinsurance enables insurance companies to undertake business that their limited capacity would not normally allow them to touch.

This arrangement between the federal government and the NIAC provides for both additional insurance capacity and additional types of risk. Basically it ensures that the federal government will provide coverage for all the risks contemplated in the Nuclear Liability Act that are not covered by the operator's insurance up to that limit of \$75 million.

For example, some small reactors may be required by the Atomic Energy Control Board to carry only \$500,000 in liability insurance. In that case, the remaining \$74.5 million is guaranteed by the federal government through the reinsurance agreement. Increasing the maximum liability to \$500 million would mean that the federal government could become liable for as much as \$499.5 million under this scenario. Any amendment to the liability limit clearly should be accompanied by changes to the reinsurance agreement.

The interdepartmental review committee is addressing another issue, the limitation periods for claims arising from nuclear accidents. Under the current act, claims must be brought within 10 years of the accident. However, some arguments favour extending the limitation period for claims related to personal injury or death.

Other arguments favour relying more heavily on administrative systems, rather than the courts to deal with compensation. This could be achieved by amending the act to explicitly lower the threshold at which the Nuclear Damage Claims Commission is established. The result would be a more effective compensation scheme that minimizes hardships for victims of nuclear accidents.

A number of other provisions of the Nuclear Liability Act need to be clarified or updated. For example, the definition of compensable nuclear damages should be reviewed. The current definition does not make explicit reference to environmental damage, preventive measures or economic losses. This is not consistent with evolving international trends, nor with the growing public concern for the environment or with principles of fairness. The review will

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address the need to revise the definition of nuclear damage to reflect these matters.

As well, the rules and regulations governing the Nuclear Damage Claims Commission need to be elaborated. The criteria for the commission's membership could be broadened to permit people with a range of experience to participate.

Another concern is that under the current act, the rules governing the commission's procedures can only be developed after the commission is established. It would seem to make sense to have this operating framework in place before an accident occurs, rather than after an accident when the development process may be rushed and may not be well thought out.

As mentioned earlier, there are also a number of technical problems with the act. For example, the act lacks a preamble that would explain its purpose and objectives and describe a constitutional basis for the legislation. It has also been suggested that compensation amounts be included in regulations rather than in the act itself, since it is easier to amend regulations to take account of inflation or increased insurance capacity than it is to amend the act.

There is also a perceived need to clarify and strengthen the relationship between the federal government and the Nuclear Insurance Association of Canada.

In conclusion, I can offer my qualified support for Bill C-249. I acknowledge and agree with the objective of increasing liability limits under the Nuclear Liability Act. However, we need to establish a solid rationale for a new liability limit. As well, we need to identify where these funds come from and how this proposed change will affect the federal government's liability.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Hamilton—Wentworth. A senior colleague has given his place to him because he has to catch a plane.

• (1440)

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in support of Bill C-249 because it gives me an opportunity to share with you an historic anecdote pertaining to Canada and Canada's role in nuclear energy that I do not think is very well known.

During the second world war, Canada was very active in research in chemical and biological warfare weaponry at Suffield in Alberta near Medicine Hat. At that time the Canadians experimented with the dispersal of biological and chemical dust with the expectation that this would be the kind of weapon that would be used during the second world war by the Germans or possibly the Japanese. So the research was primarily directed at the developing countermeasures.

However, by the end of the second world war because this research took place out in the prairies Canada became the number one nation with an expertise in the dispersal of small particulate matter over very large areas.

What we are really talking about in Bill C-249, which is an act to amend the Nuclear Liability Act, is nuclear fallout. In the event of an accident occurring at a nuclear reactor there is the possibility of radioactive dust escaping into the atmosphere, polluting and irradiating large regions and causing serious consequences to the health of humans and animals.

This is the same problem that existed in the late 1940s when at the onset of the cold war it was realized that the Soviet Union had developed an atomic bomb. My historic anecdote is for those of that generation who remember the early years of the cold war and the nuclear fallout scare. I think people in their fifties and sixties will remember that their parents were installing fallout shelters in their basements. They will remember that there were all kinds of maps and diagrams showing the effects of nuclear fallout.

These maps and diagrams were produced mainly by the Americans and by the British showing the impact of a nuclear explosion on a city in the United States or in Europe were entirely the product of Canadian research in chemical and biological weapon dispersal.

It is an interesting anecdote because as Canada was the second country in the world to develop nuclear capability, we have always had a responsibility to lead the world in issues pertaining to nuclear energy and certainly issues pertaining to nuclear safety.

The Nuclear Liability Act addresses the possibility that a peacetime nuclear reactor will have a catastrophic accident and will pollute the atmosphere with down wind fallout in the same sense as a nuclear explosion. There is no doubt that in the event of such a catastrophe the provision for \$75 million in damages is inadequate in every way for the kind of damage that would actually occur.

Canadian studies done during the second world war and the immediate post-war period indicated that in the event of a nuclear bombing or a nuclear accident at a reactor the fallout could go down wind for as much as 30 miles on a widening, fan shape that could be a couple of miles wide at the outset to very wide at the 30 mile limit.

Since then as a result of the accidents that have occurred, in particular at Chernobyl, we have come to appreciate that when there is a nuclear fallout emergency, it very long term and long range. In fact the radioactivity from the Chernobyl accident has been detected all away around the world, so the fallout has come down.

Therefore, it is high time, after 26 years, to upgrade Canada's nuclear liability legislation.

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• (1445)

Of the G-7 nations, Canada has the lowest at \$75 million of nuclear liability in the event of an accident. In Great Britain and Germany the liability in the event of an accident is \$550 million. In other countries in Europe there is an unlimited liability. In the United States the liability runs up to \$13 billion.

Therefore it seems clear that Canada needs at least to come up to the minimum level of liability as expressed by our European colleagues.

It is certainly true there is a different situation occurring in Europe in the sense that the countries are small and there has been a need for international conventions in the event of an accident in one country that contaminates the territory of another country. There are conventions that provide for compensation across borders.

Because of the vast spaces in Canada and the vast spaces in the United States, in the event of an accident of less than 1,000 kilotons only Canada and possibly the United States will be affected. It is not likely to affect other countries of the world. We do have an arrangement with the United States in the event of an accident in Canada or in the United States. Crossing the border there is a provision for liability payments if the lives and properties of citizens of our neighbouring country are affected.

In the final analysis Bill C-249 addresses only one aspect of the Nuclear Liability Act. Obviously the act has to be upgraded and modernized in many aspects. Other colleagues have suggested some ways in which this can be done.

By raising the liability threshold from \$75 million to \$500 million at the very least we say to the operators of nuclear facilities, who in some instances are private operators, that they have a very high responsibility to ensure every level of safeguard is implemented in the operation of their nuclear establishments. This is the very least we can expect of both nuclear institutions that are privately run and those that are publicly run.

It is with great pleasure that I support in principle and to the letter the intent of Bill C-249. The member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce has done a great service to his country and to the House bringing the bill forward.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to address the House regarding Bill C-249, an act to amend the Nuclear Liability Act. The issues raised by the proposed legislation are important to all Canadians. It adds to our international standing as a responsible nuclear nation.

It comes as no surprise to any of us that the bill was sponsored by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce. He has consistently shown foresight and wisdom in bringing matters of national

concern before the House. I commend my hon. colleague for his commitment to his principles and to the parliamentary process.

He and I were elected on the same day to the House. On many occasions we have been seatmates over the years. He has been consistent in his feelings and principles toward various issues that he has promoted.

• (1450)

As my colleagues before me have indicated, the government supports in principle the need to increase operator liability under the Nuclear Liability Act. However, we also bring to the attention of hon. members the need for a comprehensive review of the act to address a number of other concerns as well.

I will take a few minutes to outline the rationale for the Nuclear Liability Act and the principles upon which it is based to underscore the importance of the act and the need to establish some broad based consensus on amendments.

Canada is recognized as a pioneer and world leader in the development and use of nuclear power. I am pleased to note that we were among the first world nations to establish a liability regime geared specifically to the special circumstances of the nuclear energy sector. A distinct regime is needed for a number of reasons.

As hon. members know, a strong nuclear industry brings tremendous economic and environmental benefits to Canada in spite of what we hear from the other side of the story almost constantly.

If it had not been for the Candu reactors in Canada we would have had to purchase coal from Pennsylvania on a large scale to have coal burning furnaces to generate hydro electric power in industrialized Canada, and our environment would have suffered terribly as a result. The Candu reactor is one of the most clean, environmental sources of energy we could have. In particular Ontario would never have been industrialized to the extent it has if it had not been for the Candu reactors perfected in Canada.

In order to encourage investment in nuclear facilities, however, it is necessary to limit operator liability in the unlikely event of an accident. Otherwise the financial risks are simply too great. This is as true today as it was 30 years ago when the Nuclear Liability Act was first presented. At the same time it is important to ensure that Canadians have access to compensation should they suffer injury or damages as a result of a nuclear accident.

Canada's nuclear safety record is second to none in the world. The Atomic Energy Control Act and the Nuclear Liability Act provide a solid legislative framework for regulating the industry and have done so since day one. The former seeks to prevent and minimize nuclear accidents while the latter applies should an accident occur. However, unlikely as it may be, we must be

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prepared for the possibility of a serious nuclear accident that could result in significant third party damages.

Candu reactors are the safest in the world because they have built in backup systems in the event that something goes wrong. It is because of the expense of building those safe reactors with those backup systems that they have sometimes been difficult to market in the world. Today countries are beginning to realize that the Candu reactor is not only safe but also very efficient.

I mentioned before about the safety record in Canada being one of the best in the world.

• (1455)

I want to make the point that AECL workers at Chalk River have a lower rate of cancer than the national average and across the country where there are no nuclear reactors or processors. It is because of the safety features built into the system. The employees are well protected. They are checked on a daily basis. If other industries in Canada put as much emphasis on safety factors in their industries as our nuclear industry has done, we would have a better record right across the board in industrialized Canada.

The cobalt therapy unit for the treatment of cancer was brought in by Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. Research and development produced that product. We have now sold it in dozens of countries all over the world.

Radioisotopes are produced in Canadian reactors. They are used to sterilize medical instruments. They are used in all kinds of health checks, in checking patients out for various types of injuries and blood conditions. The result is that Canada has a very good nuclear health system.

The results of the non-use of nuclear energy would have had a tremendous negative effect on the health of Canadians because of the environmental fallout of coal dust and fumes.

Canada's involvement in the nuclear industry and in research and development has been for peaceful purposes. Every time

people mention nuclear they think of war. They think of explosions and all kinds of other things. However, our work in the nuclear industry in Canada has been to produce energy to drive industry and promote jobs across the country. It has promoted a good environment and cheap energy. It has also been a tremendous asset to Canada's medical industry.

It always bothers me when Chernobyl is thrown into these arguments. The Russian reactor is totally different from the Canadian reactor. The Russians built their reactors with no built-in systems to protect people. We did the very opposite here in Canada by building the Candu reactor. It is the safest reactor in the world and has all kinds of built in systems to serve workers and Canadians at large.

This is an industry we should positively promote. I totally agree with the hon. member that with this safety record we should be looking at greater insurance for the people in the areas of these developments.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, this bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources.

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

The Deputy Speaker: It being three o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m.

(The House adjourned at 2.59 p.m.)

APPENDIX

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

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. GILBERT PARENT

The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. DAVID KILGOUR

The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. PETER MILLIKEN

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MRS. PIERRETTE RINGUETTE–MALTAIS

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. GILBERT PARENT (CHAIRMAN)

MRS. MADELEINE DALPHOND–GUIRAL

MR. GILLES DUCEPPE

HON. ALFONSO GAGLIANO, P.C.

HON. HERB GRAY, P.C.

MR. LEN HOPKINS

MR. BOB KILGER

MR. DAVID KILGOUR

MR. CHUCK STRAHL

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session – Thirty-fifth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay East	British Columbia	Ref.
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary North	Alberta	Ref.
Adams, Peter	Peterborough	Ontario	Lib.
Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	Lib.
Allmand, Hon. Warren	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	Quebec	Lib.
Althouse, Vic	Mackenzie	Saskatchewan	NDP
Anawak, Jack Iyerak	Nunatsiaq	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Transport	Victoria	British Columbia	Lib.
Arseneault, Guy H., Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage	Restigouche — Chaleur	New Brunswick	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau — La Lièvre	Quebec	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Don Valley North	Ontario	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	Quebec	BQ
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke — Lakeshore	Ontario	Lib.
Axworthy, Chris	Saskatoon — Clark's Crossing	Saskatchewan	NDP
Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Baker, George S.	Gander — Grand Falls	Newfoundland	Lib.
Bakopanos, Eleni	Saint-Denis	Quebec	Lib.
Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	London West	Ontario	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton	Ontario	Lib.
Bélair, Réginald	Cochrane — Superior	Ontario	Lib.
Bélanger, Mauril	Ottawa — Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bélisle, Richard	La Prairie	Quebec	BQ
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier — Montcalm	Quebec	BQ
Bellemare, Eugène	Carleton — Gloucester	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon E.	Vegreville	Alberta	Ref.
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères	Quebec	BQ
Bernier, Gilles	Beauce	Quebec	Ind.
Bernier, Maurice	Mégantic — Compton — Stanstead	Quebec	BQ
Bernier, Yvan	Gaspé	Quebec	BQ
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac — Gatineau — Labelle	Quebec	Lib.
Bethel, Judy	Edmonton East	Alberta	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Maurizio	York North	Ontario	Lib.
Bhaduria, Jag	Markham — Whitechurch — Stouffville	Ontario	Dem.
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg Transcona	Manitoba	NDP
Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Training and Youth)	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	Lib.
Bodnar, Morris, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Saskatoon — Dundurn	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Ontario	Lib.
Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie	Glengarry — Prescott — Russell	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Breitkreuz, Cliff	Yellowhead	Alberta	Ref.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton — Melville	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Bridgman, Margaret	Surrey North	British Columbia	Ref.
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	Quebec	BQ
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville — Milton	Ontario	Lib.
Brown, Jan	Calgary Southeast	Alberta	Ind.
Brushett, Dianne	Cumberland — Colchester	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Bryden, John	Hamilton — Wentworth	Ontario	Lib.
Byrne, Gerry	Humber — St. Barbe — Baie Verte	Newfoundland	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Ontario	Lib.
Calder, Murray	Wellington — Grey — Dufferin — Simcoe	Ontario	Lib.
Campbell, Barry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Ontario	Lib.
Canuel, René	Matapédia — Matane	Quebec	BQ
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West	Ontario	Lib.
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Federal Office of Regional Development — Quebec)	Outremont	Quebec	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph — Wellington	Ontario	Lib.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific)	Richmond	British Columbia	Lib.
Charest, Hon. Jean J.	Sherbrooke	Quebec	PC
Chatters, David	Athabasca	Alberta	Ref.
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Quebec	Lib.
Chrétien, Jean-Guy	Frontenac	Quebec	BQ
Clancy, Mary	Halifax	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Cohen, Shaughnessy	Windsor — St. Clair	Ontario	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M.	Don Valley East	Ontario	Lib.
Collins, Bernie	Souris — Moose Mountain	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay — Nipigon	Ontario	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Ontario	Lib.
Cowling, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Dauphin — Swan River	Manitoba	Lib.
Crawford, Rex	Kent	Ontario	Lib.
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska — Rivière-du-Loup	Quebec	BQ
Culbert, Harold	Carleton — Charlotte	New Brunswick	Lib.
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta	British Columbia	Ref.
Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	Quebec	BQ
Daviault, Michel	Ahuntsic	Quebec	BQ
Debien, Maud	Laval East	Quebec	BQ
de Jong, Simon	Regina — Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	NDP
de Savoye, Pierre	Portneuf	Quebec	BQ
Deshaies, Bernard	Abitibi	Quebec	BQ
DeVillers, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Simcoe North	Ontario	Lib.
Dhaliwal, Harbance Singh	Vancouver South	British Columbia	Lib.
Dingwall, Hon. David, Minister of Health	Cape Breton — East Richmond	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent — Cartierville	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Discepolo, Nick, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Vaudreuil	Quebec	Lib.
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay — Atikokan	Ontario	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis	Quebec	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier — Sainte-Marie	Quebec	BQ
Duhamel, Ronald J.	St. Boniface	Manitoba	Lib.
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil — Papineau	Quebec	BQ
Duncan, John	North Island — Powell River	British Columbia	Ref.
Dupuy, Hon. Michel	Laval West	Quebec	Lib.
Easter, Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Arthur C., Minister for International Trade	York Centre	Ontario	Lib.
English, John	Kitchener	Ontario	Lib.
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	Alberta	Ref.
Fewchuk, Ron	Selkirk — Red River	Manitoba	Lib.
Fillion, Gilbert	Chicoutimi	Quebec	BQ
Finestone, Hon. Sheila	Mount Royal	Quebec	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Ontario	Lib.
Flis, Jesse	Parkdale — High Park	Ontario	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London East	Ontario	Lib.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster — Burnaby	British Columbia	Ref.
Frazer, Jack	Saanich — Gulf Islands	British Columbia	Ref.
Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women)	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Gaffney, Beryl	Nepean	Ontario	Lib.
Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Labour and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Saint-Léonard	Quebec	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	Quebec	BQ
Gagnon, Patrick	Bonaventure — Îles-de-la- Madeleine	Quebec	Lib.
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia — Lambton	Ontario	Lib.
Gauthier, Michel, Leader of the Opposition	Roberval	Quebec	BQ
Gerrard, Hon. Jon, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification)	Portage — Interlake	Manitoba	Lib.
Gilmour, Bill	Comox — Alberni	British Columbia	Ref.
Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	Don Valley West	Ontario	Lib.
Godin, Maurice	Châteauguay	Quebec	BQ
Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Regina — Wascana	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Gouk, Jim	Kootenay West — Revelstoke	British Columbia	Ref.
Graham, Bill	Rosedale	Ontario	Lib.
Gray, Hon. Herb, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada	Windsor West	Ontario	Lib.
Grey, Deborah	Beaver River	Alberta	Ref.
Grose, Ivan	Oshawa	Ontario	Lib.
Grubel, Herb	Capilano — Howe Sound	British Columbia	Ref.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Ontario	Lib.
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	Quebec	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport — Montmorency — Orléans	Quebec	BQ
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	Ref.
Hanrahan, Hugh	Edmonton — Strathcona	Alberta	Ref.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Harper, Ed	Simcoe Centre	Ontario	Ref.
Harper, Elijah	Churchill	Manitoba	Lib.
Harris, Dick	Prince George — Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	Ref.
Hart, Jim	Okanagan — Similkameen — Merritt	British Columbia	Ref.
Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Winnipeg St. James	Manitoba	Lib.
Hayes, Sharon	Port Moody — Coquitlam	British Columbia	Ref.
Hermanson, Elwin	Kindersley — Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Hickey, Bonnie	St. John's East	Newfoundland	Lib.
Hill, Grant	Macleod	Alberta	Ref.
Hill, Jay	Prince George — Peace River	British Columbia	Ref.
Hoepfner, Jake E.	Lisgar — Marquette	Manitoba	Ref.
Hopkins, Leonard	Renfrew — Nipissing — Pembroke	Ontario	Lib.
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	New Brunswick	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity — Spadina	Ontario	Lib.
Iftody, David	Provencher	Manitoba	Lib.
Irwin, Hon. Ron, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Sault Ste. Marie	Ontario	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Bruce — Grey	Ontario	Lib.
Jacob, Jean-Marc	Charlesbourg	Quebec	BQ
Jennings, Daphne	Mission — Coquitlam	British Columbia	Ref.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	Ref.
Jordan, Jim	Leeds — Grenville	Ontario	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough — Agincourt	Ontario	Lib.
Kerpan, Allan	Moose Jaw — Lake Centre	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Keyes, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	Hamilton West	Ontario	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont — Dundas	Ontario	Lib.
Kilgour, David, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Edmonton Southeast	Alberta	Lib.
Kirkby, Gordon, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Prince Albert — Churchill River	Saskatchewan	Lib.
Knutson, Gar	Elgin — Norfolk	Ontario	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	York — Simcoe	Ontario	Lib.
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	Quebec	BQ
Landry, Jean	Lotbinière	Quebec	BQ
Langlois, François	Bellechasse	Quebec	BQ
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Ontario	Lib.
Laurin, René	Joliette	Quebec	BQ
Lavigne, Laurent	Beauharnois — Salaberry	Quebec	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun — Saint-Paul	Quebec	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	Quebec	BQ
LeBlanc, Francis G., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Cape Breton Highlands — Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Leblanc, Nic	Longueuil	Quebec	BQ
Lee, Derek	Scarborough — Rouge River	Ontario	Lib.
Lefebvre, Réjean	Champlain	Quebec	BQ
Leroux, Gaston	Richmond — Wolfe	Quebec	BQ
Leroux, Jean H.	Shefford	Quebec	BQ
Lincoln, Clifford	Lachine — Lac-Saint-Louis	Quebec	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Loney, John	Edmonton North	Alberta	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe — Bagot	Quebec	BQ
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Secretary of State (Veterans)(Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
MacDonald, Ron, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Dartmouth	Nova Scotia	Lib.
MacLellan, Russell	Cape Breton — The Sydneys	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea — Gore — Malton	Ontario	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie	Ontario	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development — Quebec	Ottawa South	Ontario	Lib.
Manning, Preston	Calgary Southwest	Alberta	Ref.
Marchand, Jean-Paul	Québec-Est	Quebec	BQ
Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister of the Environment	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Sudbury	Ontario	Lib.
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt — Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	Ref.
Martin, Hon. Paul, Minister of Finance	LaSalle — Émard	Quebec	Lib.
Massé, Hon. Marcel, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	Hull — Aylmer	Quebec	Lib.
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo — Chilcotin	British Columbia	Ref.
McClelland, Ian	Edmonton Southwest	Alberta	Ref.
McCormick, Larry	Hastings — Frontenac — Lennox and Addington	Ontario	Lib.
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
McKinnon, Glen	Brandon — Souris	Manitoba	Lib.
McLaughlin, Hon. Audrey	Yukon	Yukon	NDP
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Natural Resources	Edmonton Northwest	Alberta	Lib.
McTeague, Dan	Ontario	Ontario	Lib.
McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga — Maisonneuve	Quebec	BQ
Mercier, Paul	Blainville — Deux-Montagnes	Quebec	BQ
Meredith, Val	Surrey — White Rock — South Langley	British Columbia	Ref.
Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Bonavista — Trinity — Conception	Newfoundland	Lib.
Milliken, Peter, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Kingston and the Islands	Ontario	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Alberta	Ref.
Mills, Dennis J.	Broadview — Greenwood	Ontario	Lib.
Minna, Maria, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Beaches — Woodbine	Ontario	Lib.
Mitchell, Andy	Parry Sound — Muskoka	Ontario	Lib.
Morrison, Lee	Swift Current — Maple Creek — Assiniboia	Saskatchewan	Ref.
Murphy, John	Annapolis Valley — Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Murray, Ian	Lanark — Carleton	Ontario	Lib.
Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Kenora — Rainy River	Ontario	Lib.
Nunez, Osvaldo	Bourassa	Quebec	BQ
Nunziata, John	York South — Weston	Ontario	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
O'Brien, Lawrence D.	Labrador	Newfoundland	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London — Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Victoria — Haliburton	Ontario	Lib.
Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Paradis, Denis	Brome — Missisquoi	Quebec	Lib.
Paré, Philippe	Louis-Hébert	Quebec	BQ
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Welland — St. Catharines — Thorold	Ontario	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga West	Ontario	Lib.
Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Pierrefonds — Dollard	Quebec	Lib.
Payne, Jean	St. John's West	Newfoundland	Lib.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Alberta	Ref.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Ontario	Lib.
Peters, Hon. Douglas, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Scarborough East	Ontario	Lib.
Peterson, Jim	Willowdale	Ontario	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development	Papineau — Saint-Michel	Quebec	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	Quebec	BQ
Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Essex — Kent	Ontario	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Ontario	Lib.
Plamondon, Louis	Richelieu	Quebec	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Anjou — Rivière-des- Prairies	Quebec	BQ
Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	Hillsborough	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Ramsay, Jack	Crowfoot	Alberta	Ref.
Reed, Julian	Halton — Peel	Ontario	Lib.
Regan, Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs	Perth — Wellington — Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Rideout, George S.	Moncton	New Brunswick	Lib.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops	British Columbia	NDP
Ringma, Bob	Nanaimo — Cowichan	British Columbia	Ref.
Ringuette-Maltais, Pierrette, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Madawaska — Victoria	New Brunswick	Lib.
Robichaud, Hon. Fernand, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans)	Beauséjour	New Brunswick	Lib.
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Saint-Henri — Westmount	Quebec	Lib.
Robinson, Svend J.	Burnaby — Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois-Rivières	Quebec	BQ
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma	Ontario	Lib.
St-Laurent, Bernard	Manicouagan	Quebec	BQ
Sauvageau, Benoît	Terrebonne	Quebec	BQ
Schmidt, Werner	Okanagan Centre	British Columbia	Ref.
Scott, Andy	Fredericton — York- Sunbury	New Brunswick	Lib.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	British Columbia	Ref.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming — French River	Ontario	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Ontario	Lib.
Sheridan, Georgette	Saskatoon — Humboldt	Saskatchewan	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Silye, Jim	Calgary Centre	Alberta	Ref.
Simmons, Hon. Roger	Burin — St. George's	Newfoundland	Lib.
Skoke, Roseanne	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Alberta	Ref.
Solomon, John	Regina — Lumsden	Saskatchewan	NDP
Speaker, Ray	Lethbridge	Alberta	Ref.
Speller, Bob	Haldimand — Norfolk	Ontario	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron — Bruce	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)	Northumberland	Ontario	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of National Revenue	Brant	Ontario	Lib.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan — Shuswap	British Columbia	Ref.
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley East	British Columbia	Ref.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Ontario	Lib.
Taylor, Len	The Battlefords — Meadow Lake	Saskatchewan	NDP
Telegdi, Andrew	Waterloo	Ontario	Lib.
Terrana, Anna	Vancouver East	British Columbia	Lib.
Thalheimer, Peter	Timmins — Chapleau	Ontario	Lib.
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Alberta	Ref.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Ontario	Lib.
Tremblay, Benoît	Rosemont	Quebec	BQ
Tremblay, Stéphan	Lac-Saint-Jean	Quebec	BQ
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski — Témiscouata	Quebec	BQ
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton — Middlesex	Ontario	Lib.
Valeri, Tony	Lincoln	Ontario	Lib.
Vanclief, Lyle	Prince Edward — Hastings	Ontario	Lib.
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Hubert	Quebec	BQ
Verran, Harry	South West Nova	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Eglinton — Lawrence	Ontario	Lib.
Walker, David	Winnipeg North Centre	Manitoba	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough West	Ontario	Lib.
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	New Brunswick	PC
Wells, Derek	South Shore	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Whelan, Susan	Essex — Windsor	Ontario	Lib.
White, Randy	Fraser Valley West	British Columbia	Ref.
White, Ted	North Vancouver	British Columbia	Ref.
Williams, John	St. Albert	Alberta	Ref.
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Ontario	Lib.
Young, Hon. Douglas, Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs	Acadie — Bathurst	New Brunswick	Lib.
Zed, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Fundy — Royal	New Brunswick	Lib.
VACANCY	Calgary West	Alberta	
VACANCY	Jonquière	Quebec	

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib.—Liberal; BQ—Bloc Québécois; Ref.—Reform Party of Canada; NDP—New Democratic Party; PC—Progressive Conservative; Ind.—Independent.

Anyone wishing to communicate with House of Commons members is invited to communicate with either the Member's constituency or Parliament Hill offices.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session — Thirty—fifth Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (26)		
Ablonczy, Diane	Calgary North	Ref.
Benoit, Leon E.	Vegreville	Ref.
Bethel, Judy	Edmonton East	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Cliff	Yellowhead	Ref.
Brown, Jan	Calgary Southeast	Ind.
Chatters, David	Athabasca	Ref.
Epp, Ken	Elk Island	Ref.
Grey, Deborah	Beaver River	Ref.
Hanger, Art	Calgary Northeast	Ref.
Hanrahan, Hugh	Edmonton — Strathcona	Ref.
Hill, Grant	Macleod	Ref.
Johnston, Dale	Wetaskiwin	Ref.
Kilgour, David, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Edmonton Southeast	Lib.
Loney, John	Edmonton North	Lib.
Manning, Preston	Calgary Southwest	Ref.
McClelland, Ian	Edmonton Southwest	Ref.
McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Natural Resources	Edmonton Northwest	Lib.
Mills, Bob	Red Deer	Ref.
Penson, Charlie	Peace River	Ref.
Ramsay, Jack	Crowfoot	Ref.
Silye, Jim	Calgary Centre	Ref.
Solberg, Monte	Medicine Hat	Ref.
Speaker, Ray	Lethbridge	Ref.
Thompson, Myron	Wild Rose	Ref.
Williams, John	St. Albert	Ref.
VACANCY	Calgary West	
BRITISH COLUMBIA (32)		
Abbott, Jim	Kootenay East	Ref.
Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Transport	Victoria	Lib.
Bridgman, Margaret	Surrey North	Ref.
Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia—Pacific)	Richmond	Lib.
Cummins, John	Delta	Ref.
Dhaliwal, Harbance Singh	Vancouver South	Lib.
Duncan, John	North Island — Powell River	Ref.
Forseth, Paul	New Westminster — Burnaby	Ref.
Frazer, Jack	Saanich — Gulf Islands	Ref.
Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women)	Vancouver Centre	Lib.
Gilmour, Bill	Comox — Alberni	Ref.
Gouk, Jim	Kootenay West — Revelstoke	Ref.
Grubel, Herb	Capilano — Howe Sound	Ref.
Harris, Dick	Prince George — Bulkley Valley	Ref.
Hart, Jim	Okanagan — Similkameen — Merritt	Ref.
Hayes, Sharon	Port Moody — Coquitlam	Ref.
Hill, Jay	Prince George — Peace River	Ref.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Jennings, Daphne	Mission — Coquitlam	Ref.
Martin, Keith	Esquimalt — Juan de Fuca	Ref.
Mayfield, Philip	Cariboo — Chilcotin	Ref.
McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Meredith, Val	Surrey — White Rock — South Langley	Ref.
Riis, Nelson	Kamloops	NDP
Ringma, Bob	Nanaimo — Cowichan	Ref.
Robinson, Svend J.	Burnaby — Kingsway	NDP
Schmidt, Werner	Okanagan Centre	Ref.
Scott, Mike	Skeena	Ref.
Stinson, Darrel	Okanagan — Shuswap	Ref.
Strahl, Chuck	Fraser Valley East	Ref.
Terrana, Anna	Vancouver East	Lib.
White, Randy	Fraser Valley West	Ref.
White, Ted	North Vancouver	Ref.

MANITOBA (14)

Alcock, Reg	Winnipeg South	Lib.
Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Winnipeg South Centre	Lib.
Blaikie, Bill	Winnipeg Transcona	NDP
Cowling, Marlene, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources	Dauphin — Swan River	Lib.
Duhamel, Ronald J.	St. Boniface	Lib.
Fewchuk, Ron	Selkirk — Red River	Lib.
Gerrard, Hon. Jon, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification)	Portage — Interlake	Lib.
Harper, Elijah	Churchill	Lib.
Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Winnipeg St. James	Lib.
Hoepfner, Jake E.	Lisgar — Marquette	Ref.
Iftody, David	Provencher	Lib.
McKinnon, Glen	Brandon — Souris	Lib.
Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Walker, David	Winnipeg North Centre	Lib.

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

Arseneault, Guy H., Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage	Restigouche — Chaleur	Lib.
Culbert, Harold	Carleton — Charlotte	Lib.
Hubbard, Charles	Miramichi	Lib.
Rideout, George S.	Moncton	Lib.
Ringuette-Maltais, Pierrette, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Madawaska — Victoria	Lib.
Robichaud, Hon. Fernand, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food, Fisheries and Oceans)	Beauséjour	Lib.
Scott, Andy	Fredericton — York-Sunbury	Lib.
Wayne, Elsie	Saint John	PC
Young, Hon. Douglas, Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs	Acadie — Bathurst	Lib.
Zed, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Fundy — Royal	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
NEWFOUNDLAND (7)		
Baker, George S.	Gander — Grand Falls	Lib.
Byrne, Gerry	Humber — St. Barbe — Baie Verte	Lib.
Hickey, Bonnie	St. John's East	Lib.
Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Bonavista — Trinity — Conception	Lib.
O'Brien, Lawrence D.	Labrador	Lib.
Payne, Jean	St. John's West	Lib.
Simmons, Hon. Roger	Burin — St. George's	Lib.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (2)		
Anawak, Jack Iyerak	Nunatsiq	Lib.
Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Training and Youth)	Western Arctic	Lib.
NOVA SCOTIA (11)		
Brushett, Dianne	Cumberland — Colchester	Lib.
Clancy, Mary	Halifax	Lib.
Dingwall, Hon. David, Minister of Health	Cape Breton — East Richmond	Lib.
LeBlanc, Francis G., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs	Cape Breton Highlands — Canso	Lib.
MacDonald, Ron, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade	Dartmouth	Lib.
MacLellan, Russell	Cape Breton — The Sydneys	Lib.
Murphy, John	Annapolis Valley — Hants	Lib.
Regan, Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Skoke, Roseanne	Central Nova	Lib.
Verran, Harry	South West Nova	Lib.
Wells, Derek	South Shore	Lib.
ONTARIO (99)		
Adams, Peter	Peterborough	Lib.
Assadourian, Sarkis	Don Valley North	Lib.
Augustine, Jean	Etobicoke — Lakeshore	Lib.
Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue	London West	Lib.
Beaumier, Colleen	Brampton	Lib.
Bélaïr, Réginald	Cochrane — Superior	Lib.
Bélangier, Mauril	Ottawa — Vanier	Lib.
Bellemare, Eugène	Carleton — Gloucester	Lib.
Bevilacqua, Maurizio	York North	Lib.
Bhaduria, Jag	Markham — Whitchurch — Stouffville	Dem.
Bonin, Raymond	Nickel Belt	Lib.
Boudria, Hon. Don, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie	Glengarry — Prescott — Russell	Lib.
Brown, Bonnie	Oakville — Milton	Lib.
Bryden, John	Hamilton — Wentworth	Lib.
Caccia, Hon. Charles	Davenport	Lib.
Calder, Murray	Wellington — Grey — Dufferin — Simcoe	Lib.
Campbell, Barry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance	St. Paul's	Lib.
Cannis, John	Scarborough Centre	Lib.
Catterall, Marlene	Ottawa West	Lib.
Chamberlain, Brenda	Guelph — Wellington	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Cohen, Shaughnessy	Windsor — St. Clair	Lib.
Collenette, Hon. David M.	Don Valley East	Lib.
Comuzzi, Joe	Thunder Bay — Nipigon	Lib.
Copps, Hon. Sheila, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage	Hamilton East	Lib.
Crawford, Rex	Kent	Lib.
Cullen, Roy	Etobicoke North	Lib.
DeVillers, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Simcoe North	Lib.
Dromisky, Stan	Thunder Bay — Atikokan	Lib.
Eggleton, Hon. Arthur C., Minister for International Trade	York Centre	Lib.
English, John	Kitchener	Lib.
Finlay, John	Oxford	Lib.
Flis, Jesse	Parkdale — High Park	Lib.
Fontana, Joe	London East	Lib.
Gaffney, Beryl	Nepean	Lib.
Galloway, Roger	Sarnia — Lambton	Lib.
Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation	Don Valley West	Lib.
Graham, Bill	Rosedale	Lib.
Gray, Hon. Herb, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada	Windsor West	Lib.
Grose, Ivan	Oshawa	Lib.
Guarnieri, Albina	Mississauga East	Lib.
Harb, Mac	Ottawa Centre	Lib.
Harper, Ed	Simcoe Centre	Ref.
Hopkins, Leonard	Renfrew — Nipissing — Pembroke	Lib.
Ianno, Tony	Trinity — Spadina	Lib.
Irwin, Hon. Ron, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Sault Ste. Marie	Lib.
Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board	Bruce — Grey	Lib.
Jordan, Jim	Leeds — Grenville	Lib.
Karygiannis, Jim	Scarborough — Agincourt	Lib.
Keyes, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport	Hamilton West	Lib.
Kilger, Bob	Stormont — Dundas	Lib.
Knutson, Gar	Elgin — Norfolk	Lib.
Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment	York — Simcoe	Lib.
Lastewka, Walt	St. Catharines	Lib.
Lee, Derek	Scarborough — Rouge River	Lib.
Malhi, Gurbax Singh	Bramalea — Gore — Malton	Lib.
Maloney, John	Erie	Lib.
Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development — Quebec	Ottawa South	Lib.
Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister of the Environment	York West	Lib.
Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Sudbury	Lib.
McCormick, Larry	Hastings — Frontenac — Lennox and Addington	Lib.
McTeague, Dan	Ontario	Lib.
Milliken, Peter, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Mills, Dennis J.	Broadview — Greenwood	Lib.
Minna, Maria, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Beaches — Woodbine	Lib.
Mitchell, Andy	Parry Sound — Muskoka	Lib.
Murray, Ian	Lanark — Carleton	Lib.
Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development	Kenora — Rainy River	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Nunziata, John	York South — Weston	Lib.
O'Brien, Pat	London — Middlesex	Lib.
O'Reilly, John	Victoria — Haliburton	Lib.
Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker	Welland — St. Catharines — Thorold	Lib.
Parrish, Carolyn	Mississauga West	Lib.
Perić, Janko	Cambridge	Lib.
Peters, Hon. Douglas, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)	Scarborough East	Lib.
Peterson, Jim	Willowdale	Lib.
Phinney, Beth	Hamilton Mountain	Lib.
Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Essex — Kent	Lib.
Pillitteri, Gary	Niagara Falls	Lib.
Reed, Julian	Halton — Peel	Lib.
Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs	Perth — Wellington — Waterloo	Lib.
Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Etobicoke Centre	Lib.
St. Denis, Brent	Algoma	Lib.
Serré, Benoît	Timiskaming — French River	Lib.
Shepherd, Alex	Durham	Lib.
Speller, Bob	Haldimand — Norfolk	Lib.
Steckle, Paul	Huron — Bruce	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Christine, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa)	Northumberland	Lib.
Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of National Revenue	Brant	Lib.
Szabo, Paul	Mississauga South	Lib.
Telegdi, Andrew	Waterloo	Lib.
Thalheimer, Peter	Timmins — Chapleau	Lib.
Torsney, Paddy	Burlington	Lib.
Ur, Rose-Marie	Lambton — Middlesex	Lib.
Valeri, Tony	Lincoln	Lib.
Vanclief, Lyle	Prince Edward — Hastings	Lib.
Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health	Eglinton — Lawrence	Lib.
Wappel, Tom	Scarborough West	Lib.
Whelan, Susan	Essex — Windsor	Lib.
Wood, Bob	Nipissing	Lib.
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Easter, Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Secretary of State (Veterans)(Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Cardigan	Lib.
McGuire, Joe	Egmont	Lib.
Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour	Hillsborough	Lib.
QUEBEC (75)		
Allmand, Hon. Warren	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	Lib.
Assad, Mark	Gatineau — La Lièvre	Lib.
Asselin, Gérard	Charlevoix	BQ
Bachand, Claude	Saint-Jean	BQ
Bakopanos, Eleni	Saint-Denis	Lib.
Bélisle, Richard	La Prairie	BQ
Bellehumeur, Michel	Berthier — Montcalm	BQ
Bergeron, Stéphane	Verchères	BQ
Bernier, Gilles	Beauce	Ind.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Bernier, Maurice	Mégantic — Compton — Stanstead	BQ
Bernier, Yvan	Gaspé	BQ
Bertrand, Robert	Pontiac — Gatineau — Labelle	Lib.
Brien, Pierre	Témiscamingue	BQ
Canuel, René	Matapédia — Matane	BQ
Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Federal Office of Regional Development — Quebec)	Outremont	Lib.
Charest, Hon. Jean J.	Sherbrooke	PC
Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister	Saint-Maurice	Lib.
Chrétien, Jean-Guy	Frontenac	BQ
Crête, Paul	Kamouraska — Rivière-du-Loup	BQ
Dalphoné-Guiral, Madeleine	Laval Centre	BQ
Daviault, Michel	Ahuntsic	BQ
Debien, Maud	Laval East	BQ
de Savoye, Pierre	Portneuf	BQ
Deshais, Bernard	Abitibi	BQ
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs	Saint-Laurent — Cartierville	Lib.
Discepolo, Nick, Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada	Vaudreuil	Lib.
Dubé, Antoine	Lévis	BQ
Duceppe, Gilles	Laurier — Sainte-Marie	BQ
Dumas, Maurice	Argenteuil — Papineau	BQ
Dupuy, Hon. Michel	Laval West	Lib.
Fillion, Gilbert	Chicoutimi	BQ
Finestone, Hon. Sheila	Mount Royal	Lib.
Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Labour and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Saint-Léonard	Lib.
Gagnon, Christiane	Québec	BQ
Gagnon, Patrick	Bonaventure — Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Lib.
Gauthier, Michel, Leader of the Opposition	Roberval	BQ
Godin, Maurice	Châteauguay	BQ
Guay, Monique	Laurentides	BQ
Guimond, Michel	Beauport — Montmorency — Orléans	BQ
Jacob, Jean-Marc	Charlesbourg	BQ
Lalonde, Francine	Mercier	BQ
Landry, Jean	Lotbinière	BQ
Langlois, François	Bellechasse	BQ
Laurin, René	Joliette	BQ
Lavigne, Laurent	Beauharnois — Salaberry	BQ
Lavigne, Raymond	Verdun — Saint-Paul	Lib.
Lebel, Ghislain	Chambly	BQ
Leblanc, Nic	Longueuil	BQ
Lefebvre, Réjean	Champlain	BQ
Leroux, Gaston	Richmond — Wolfe	BQ
Leroux, Jean H.	Shefford	BQ
Lincoln, Clifford	Lachine — Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Loubier, Yvan	Saint-Hyacinthe — Bagot	BQ
Marchand, Jean-Paul	Québec-Est	BQ
Martin, Hon. Paul, Minister of Finance	LaSalle — Émard	Lib.
Massé, Hon. Marcel, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure	Hull — Aylmer	Lib.
Ménard, Réal	Hochelaga — Maisonneuve	BQ
Mercier, Paul	Blainville — Deux-Montagnes	BQ

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Nunez, Osvaldo	Bourassa	BQ
Paradis, Denis	Brome — Missisquoi	Lib.
Paré, Philippe	Louis-Hébert	BQ
Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development	Pierrefonds — Dollard	Lib.
Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development	Papineau — Saint-Michel	Lib.
Picard, Pauline	Drummond	BQ
Plamondon, Louis	Richelieu	BQ
Pomerleau, Roger	Anjou — Rivière-des-Prairies	BQ
Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Saint-Henri — Westmount	Lib.
Rocheleau, Yves	Trois-Rivières	BQ
St-Laurent, Bernard	Manicouagan	BQ
Sauvageau, Benoît	Terrebonne	BQ
Tremblay, Benoît	Rosemont	BQ
Tremblay, Stéphan	Lac-Saint-Jean	BQ
Tremblay, Suzanne	Rimouski — Témiscouata	BQ
Venne, Pierrette	Saint-Hubert	BQ
VACANCY	Jonquière	

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

Althouse, Vic	Mackenzie	NDP
Axworthy, Chris	Saskatoon — Clark's Crossing	NDP
Bodnar, Morris, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Minister of Western Economic Diversification	Saskatoon — Dundurn	Lib.
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton — Melville	Ref.
Collins, Bernie	Souris — Moose Mountain	Lib.
de Jong, Simon	Regina — Qu'Appelle	NDP
Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Regina — Wascana	Lib.
Hermanson, Elwin	Kindersley — Lloydminster	Ref.
Kerpan, Allan	Moose Jaw — Lake Centre	Ref.
Kirkby, Gordon, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Prince Albert — Churchill River	Lib.
Morrison, Lee	Swift Current — Maple Creek — Assiniboia	Ref.
Sheridan, Georgette	Saskatoon — Humboldt	Lib.
Solomon, John	Regina — Lumsden	NDP
Taylor, Len	The Battlefords — Meadow Lake	NDP

YUKON (1)

McLaughlin, Hon. Audrey	Yukon	NDP
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LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of February 14th, 1997 — 2nd Session, 35th Parliament)

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Vice-Chairmen: Claude Bachand
John Finlay

Jack Iyerak Anawak Margaret Bridgman	Maurice Dumas John Duncan	Elijah Harper Charles Hubbard	John Murphy Bernard Patry	(11)
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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Chairman: Lyle Vanclief

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Glen McKinnon

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

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Vice-Chairs: Gaston Leroux
Beth Phinney

Jim Abbott Guy H. Arseneault	Mauril Bélanger Pierre de Savoye	Hugh Hanrahan Raymond Lavigne	Pat O'Brien Janko Perić	(11)
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Vice-Chairs: Judy Bethel
Osvaldo Nunez

Colleen Beaumier Mauril Bélanger	Maud Debien Hugh Hanrahan	Dan McTeague Val Meredith	Maria Minna Tom Wappel	(11)
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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Vice-Chairs:

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Jean Payne

Peter Adams
Jack Iyerak Anawak

G rard Asselin
Paul Forseth

Daphne Jennings
Gar Knutson

Karen Kraft Sloan
Paul Steckle

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John Finlay

Maurice Godin
Clifford Lincoln
Bob Mills

Pat O'Brien
John O'Reilly
Julian Reed

Geoff Regan
Darrel Stinson
Len Taylor

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Chair: Karen Kraft Sloan

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Monique Guay

Jean Payne

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(6)

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Chairman: Jim Peterson

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Dianne Brushett

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Brenda Chamberlain
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Vice-Chairmen:

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John English

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SUB-COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Chairman: Bill Graham

David Iftody	Bob Mills	Philippe Paré	Paddy Torsney	(5)
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: John English

Maud Debien	Beryl Gaffney	John Godfrey	Keith Martin	(5)
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON TRADE DISPUTES

Chairman: Michel Dupuy

Sarkis Assadourian	Ron MacDonald	Charlie Penson	Benoît Sauvageau	(5)
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GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

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Vice-Chairmen: Eugène Bellemare
Gilbert Fillion

Colleen Beaumier John Bryden	Paul Crête Bill Gilmour	Stephen Harper John Harvard	Ovid L. Jackson Ian Murray	(11)
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Associate Members

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HEALTH**Chairman: Roger Simmons****Vice-Chairs:****Harbance Singh Dhaliwal
Pauline Picard**Antoine Dubé
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Andy ScottPaul Szabo
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Roseanne Skoke
Rose-Marie Ur**SUB-COMMITTEE ON BILL C-47, AN ACT RESPECTING HUMAN
REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS
RELATING TO HUMAN REPRODUCTION****Chair: Bonnie Hickey**Colleen Beaumier
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON HIV/AIDS**Chairman: John O'Reilly**Grant Hill
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HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**Chairman: Maurizio Bevilacqua****Vice-Chairs:****Jean Augustine
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Christiane Gagnon
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Gurbax Singh Malhi
Ian McClellandLarry McCormick
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Associate MembersDiane Ablonczy
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Paul CrêtePaul DeVillers
Antoine Dubé
Jim Gouk
Herb GrubelKeith Martin
Réal Ménard
Svend J. Robinson
Andy Scott**HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE STATUS OF
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES****Chair: Sheila Finestone****Vice-Chairmen:****Maurice Bernier
Andy Scott**Warren Allmand
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Vice-Chairmen: Walt Lastewka
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON CONVERSION OF MILITARY INDUSTRIES TO CIVILIAN PURPOSES

Chairman: Walt Lastewka

Bonnie Brown	Réal Ménard	Ian Murray	Chuck Strahl	(5)
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JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

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SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Chairman: Derek Lee

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**SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT
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Gordon Kirkby

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PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

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François Langlois

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Suzanne Tremblay
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Ted White
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SUB-COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Chair: Marlene Catterall

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Chair: Carolyn Parrish

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John Bryden

Gilbert Fillion
Mac Harb
Ed Harper

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Ian McClelland

John Solomon
Benoît Tremblay

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Chairman: Reg Alcock

Vice-Chairmen:

Joe Comuzzi
Paul Crête

Gerry Byrne
Roy Cullen

Joe Fontana
Jim Gouk

Dick Harris
Jim Jordan

Stan Keyes
Paul Mercier

(11)

Associate Members

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Antoine Dubé
Ivan Grose

Jake E. Hoepfner
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Pat O'Brien
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(10)

Associate Member

Ted White

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The Hon. Sergio Marchi	Minister of the Environment
The Hon. John Manley	Minister of Industry, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development – Quebec
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Marlene Cowling	to Minister of Natural Resources
Gordon Kirkby	to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
George Proud	to Minister of Labour
Maria Minna	to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Ted McWhinney	to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
Sue Barnes	to Minister of National Revenue
Paul DeVillers	to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs
John Godfrey	to Minister for International Cooperation

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