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Friday, April 3, 1998

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, April 3, 1998

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL PARKS ACT

The House resumed from April 2 consideration of the motion that Bill C-38, an act to amend the National Parks Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate today in the debate at second reading of Bill C-38, an act to amend the National Parks Act.

This bill will not necessitate a lengthy debate as it contains a single clause adding Tuktut Nogait National Park in the Northwest Territories to the list of national parks in Schedule I to the act.

The added Part XII specifies the boundaries of the new park, which covers 16,340 square kilometres or 6,310 square miles. Future negotiations may result in park boundaries being expanded to include land that is currently part of Nunavut and traditional Sahtu Dene and Metis territories, which would increase the total area covered by the park to 28,190 square kilometres.

In 1995, the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Inuit of Nunavut and the Sahtu Dene and Metis agreed to leave the area to ensure the interim protection of the future location of the national park once the project has been completed.

The name of the park will be Tuktut Nogait National Park, which means “caribou fawn” in the Siglik dialect of Inuvialukton.

As indicated in the press release from the secretary of state responsible for Parks Canada announcing the tabling of this bill, this is a most appropriate name since the new park will protect the calving grounds of the Bluenose caribou.

The park is located in Melville Hills, east of Inuvik, in the Northwest Territories. It represents the natural region of tundra hills in the Canadian national parks system. Melville Hills consist of tundra vegetation, rolling hills and deep canyons. Its rich biodiversity is uncharacteristic of Arctic regions and comes from the variety of microhabitats it incorporates.

The many cliffs and ramparts provide ideal nesting areas for birds of prey. Moreover, the lush vegetation of the hills and the valleys provides an excellent habitat for caribou and musk sheep.

The closest inhabited place is Paulatuk, where we find a Inuvialuit community of about 300.

The park protects a natural site blessed with impressive tundra landscapes—spectacular canyons, many caribou, musk sheep, wolves, birds and other wild species from the North—as well as archaeological sites which confirm that there was a human presence thousands of years ago. These natural lands will enrich Canada’s natural parks network, whose reputation is already well established around the world.

The territory covered by the park has a great cultural and economic importance for the region’s population. Tuktut Nogait also has many features that are of interest to the scientific community. The high altitude areas escaped glaciation and served as a refuge to the biota during the Wisconsin glacial stage.

The only comparable zone in all of the Arctic’s continental regions is found in northern Yukon. The park has a number of pingos, which are steep, ice-cored mounds. It also has one of the largest population of eagles and falcons in the Northwest Territories.

From a scientific point of view, it is interesting to see signs of a human presence throughout the region. Contrary to what one might think, a large area of the park was inhabited a number of times during the last millennium. The interpretation of archeological sites raises important questions about the culture of Thule Inuit in that area, and about the origins of Inuit society.

The region provides visitors with an opportunity to discover untouched Arctic landscapes, and to observe wildlife and plant life. Activities include hiking, camping, birdwatching, nature watching and photography.

Among the points of interest, let us mention the spectacular canyons along the Hornaday and Brock rivers, the impressive LaRonciere Falls, and the abundance of birds, wildlife and wild

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flowers. Visitors can also familiarize themselves with the life, culture and history of northern peoples.

• (1010)

The first European to visit this part of the Arctic coast was Samuel Hearne, of the Hudson's Bay Company. He descended the Coppermine River in 1771 in search of copper deposits, the abundance of which had been considerably exaggerated.

The Tuktot Nogait region was not visited again until over 50 years later. Between 1821 and 1852, the royal navy renewed the search for the Northwest Passage. Many explorers, including John Franklin, surveyed the coastline. After 1900, eminent researchers such as Vilhjalmur Stefansson, R.M. Anderson and Diamond Jenness, studied the region and its people.

The agreement creating the park was signed in 1996 by Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and four representatives of the Inuvialuit: the Inuvialuit regional corporation, the Inuvialuit game management council, the Paulatuk community corporation, and the Paulatuk committee of hunters and trappers.

The purpose of the agreement creating the park was to fulfil the commitments made by the federal government to the Inuvialuit native peoples when it passed the Western Arctic (Inuvialuit) Claims Settlement Act in 1984. This legislation implemented an agreement that conclusively settled Inuvialuit claims over certain lands in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon territory that they traditionally used and occupied.

As compensation for the extinction of their ancestral claims, rights, titles and interests, the agreement provided that certain lands would be granted to or set aside for the Inuvialuit, and upheld their right to hunt, fish, trap and conduct commercial activities thereon, subject to certain limitations.

The agreement was intended to give the Inuvialuit a way to retain their cultural identity and values within a rapidly evolving Nordic society, while making them full participants in that society and its economy. The agreement contained the requirement to protect the fauna, environment and biological production of the Arctic.

Creation of the Tuktot Nogat park is, therefore, an offshoot of the Convention recognized in the Western Arctic (Inuvialuit) Claims Settlement Act.

This becomes obvious when the objectives of the park's creation are examined. They are: to protect the Bluenose caribou herd and its calving and post-calving habitat; to protect in perpetuity a natural area in the Tundra Hills region, and encourage the public to understand and appreciate the region in such a way as to leave it intact for coming generations; to encourage collaboration between

the Inuvialuit, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories with respect to the planning, operation and management of the park; to encourage and support the creation and maintaining of jobs and businesses in the region, by encouraging subsistence use of the park; to encourage greater understanding and respect of the cultural heritage of the Inuvialuit and their natural environment; to create an environment suited to long-term research into its ecological and cultural heritage; and to preserve the ecological integrity of the park.

The park board will be responsible for reconciling these various objectives of preserving nature, economic and tourism development, and the respect of aboriginal traditions. This body will have a membership of five, two appointed by the Inuvialuit, two by the federal government, one of these on the recommendation of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and a chair to be appointed with the agreement of all parties.

The legislation proposed today will provide this national park with complete protection according to the limits set out in the 1996 agreement under the National Parks Act and regulations.

Even if we are in agreement with the principle of this bill, it seems we are being called upon to deal with it rapidly.

• (1015)

This bill was introduced at first reading on Monday, March 30, and here we are today, April 3, at second reading. The documents relating to the analysis of this bill, a press release and a briefing note, are still warm from arriving in such a hurry.

It is interesting to note that the government is assuming the park will be created. On page 102 of Heritage Canada's estimates, Tuktot Nogait appears as one of the three Northwest Territories parks. And yet, Bill C-38 has not been passed.

I think it would have been wiser and less presumptuous to add the word "planned" beside the name of the park. It would take little for us to question whether this was not a breach of the privileges of this House.

We will approve this bill in principle at second reading. But we reserve judgement until we have had time to read the agreements that led to this bill and until we hear the witnesses interested in this bill in the course of the public hearings that will be held by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

[English]

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments about this bill by my colleague from the Bloc Québécois. As he indicated, Bill C-38 does establish the boundaries for a new national park in the Northwest Territories. Last night the critic for parks from the

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official opposition, my colleague for Saskatoon—Humboldt, spoke at some length about this legislation.

I had the opportunity to raise a similar issue out of concern for the Porcupine caribou herd. This is another herd of caribou in the far north that happens to be in the western end of Yukon and its calving grounds overlap into Alaska. I raised that issue on September 29, 1995. I think it is quite appropriate that the government has moved to protect the Bluenose herd east of Inuvik.

The Reform Party is supporting this legislation. Comments from the Bloc member indicate his party is supporting this legislation which is moving very quickly through the process so the very fragile environment up north can be protected.

One of the concerns I have is to achieve a balance between the economic interests of the nation with protecting the environment and specific species of plant and animal life. This is especially relevant in the far north where those conditions are very fragile.

I am reminded of a couple of recent events in northern British Columbia. One was when the B.C. government moved to establish a provincial park in an area known as Tatshenshini-Alsek region in the northwestern corner of British Columbia. There was a projected \$1 billion mine that was going to go into that region. That ultimately was cancelled once that region was turned into a park.

In the background research for this park in the Northwest Territories some exploration rights had been granted earlier in error to a company called Damley Bay Resources. Fortunately it did relinquish its exploration rights for that part that was included in the park.

• (1020)

Does the hon. member believe that there is a necessity to achieve a balance to include all the stakeholders, the industry and the people who derive their livelihood from the land, whether it be trappers or hunters or tourists, to ensure that it is not only in the best interests of the environment of the country but so we can achieve that balance between environmental protection and the protection of our economy?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his edifying remarks on this bill and the creation of this national park.

I believe I said in my speech that the bill of course contains provision for protection of the park's ecosystem. Accordingly, I think my colleague would agree that, in protecting the unique ecosystem of the Tuktut Nogait park, we will be able to turn the park into a tourist site unique in North America.

I indicated that the only similar or comparable site is to be found in the northern Yukon. In addition to the tourist activities that should not only continue but increase and involve the native

populations of the territory, I also referred in my speech to the fact that we should involve local populations in the region's commercial and economic development.

I do not think that the bill excludes the possibility of economic and commercial development of the territory, far from it. It simply aims to provide a framework for protecting the ecosystem and the cultures and values of the Inuvialuit that live there. It also makes provision for economic and commercial development, outside of this protective framework.

[*English*]

Mr. Jay Hill: Madam Speaker, I listened attentively to my hon. colleague's reply. He may have missed the point I was trying to make.

When provinces or the federal government establishes parks there will no longer be any development within those boundaries. A case is the recent mining activities in the Northwest Territories and the new found wealth with the diamond mining activities in jobs and increased economic activities. What I was trying to get the hon. member to comment on is that once the park boundaries are formed, we exclude those types of activities. We will not have mining within the boundaries of that park, no matter what is eventually found in the way of underground resources.

Does he believe that before we establish parks across the country all the necessary research be done so that the country and the people understand very clearly what they may be giving up when we establish the boundaries and exclude industrial activity? I am not denying that this is necessary in this case to protect the calving grounds of the Bluenose caribou herd.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron: Madam Speaker, I think I now understand better the hon. member's question, and I thank him.

We are indeed faced with a dilemma as to whether we should give priority to the protection of our ecosystem, at the expense of possible industrial development.

It is a very real dilemma. A more in-depth study of the bill by a committee and the hearing of witnesses will help us see just what the implications are.

• (1025)

I believe the bill still allows for development of the land for economic purposes. We have to determine how far this development can go. Is this national park subject to the same restrictions as Canada's other national parks? All this will have to be closely examined in committee.

However, I should remind the Reform Party member that the objectives pursued by such a bill include some basic elements. Fundamental issues are at stake, including the protection of the

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region's ecosystem, which is unique in North America, and that of the culture and heritage of the people who live in that territory.

Therefore, as I pointed out earlier, there are extraordinary opportunities for economic development that must also be taken into account in assessing the benefits and the drawbacks for local people, when they give up, as the hon. member mentioned, certain rights for the establishment of a national park.

[English]

Ms. Wendy Lill (Dartmouth, NDP): Madam Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the member Churchill River and the NDP parks critic, I am very glad to speak on Bill C-38, an act to amend the National Parks Act.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the boundaries for a new national park in Canada's western Arctic called Tuktut Nogait. New Democrats support Bill C-38. Tuktut Nogait national park is an important step toward the completion of the Parks Canada objective for national parks, to protect for all time representative natural areas of Canadian significance in a system of national parks and to encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this natural heritage so as to leave it unimpaired for future generations.

Our system of national parks and national historic sites is one of Canada's, indeed the world's, greatest treasures. This noble effort began a century ago with Banff National Park and continues with Tuktut Nogait today. This vision for the preservation of Canada's natural spaces rests on a fundamental principle to protect a representative sample of each of our special landscapes. Canada was divided into 39 distinct national park natural regions with physiology and vegetation as a basis for policy to achieve this goal.

To date just over 60% of this goal has been completed. A great deal of work and political leadership is required to complete the vision. Unfortunately it is not expected that the noble effort of the national park system will be completed by the Liberal government by the year 2000, another failed promise.

Tuktut Nogait national park is representative of the tundra hills, a unique region of the Canadian shield. This tundra landscape includes spectacular river canyons, areas of scientific interest, archeological sites and abundant wildlife. Elevated areas within the park's boundaries are designated as refugia. A refugium is an area with a population of organisms that can survive through periods of unfavourable conditions. Northern Yukon is the only other comparable area of the mainland Arctic with similar biota. Canadians will recall that this government abandoned a glacial refugium in Alberta.

In this park evidence of human use and occupation over the last millennium exists. Protection of the hundreds of archeological sites is imperative. The knowledge garnered from these sites will

provide answers to questions on the development of Thule Inuit culture in the regions and the origins of Inuit society.

Visitors to the park will experience a pristine Arctic wilderness. The wilderness, birds and vegetation cover the spectrum of northern species. Abundant caribou, musk ox, wolves, birds and other northern wildlife will be protected by the national park designation.

• (1030)

It was a community idea to protect this area, a portion of the Melville Hills east of Inuvik in the Northwest Territories, which led to a community prepared conservation plan in 1989. The primary goals contained in the 1996 parks agreement were to protect the Bluenose caribou herd and its calving and post-calving habitat and to protect for all time a representative natural area of Canadian significance.

Paulatuk, the closest community to the park, recognized the importance of this area and acted upon the community wishes to preserve this integral part of its history, culture and livelihood. On behalf of the New Democrats I would like to commend Paulatuk for the initiative, dedication and perseverance to establish Tuktut Nogait.

Seven years of consultation and discussions led to the consensus decision of 1996. The boundaries are set out in Bill C-38 in accordance with the 1996 agreement signed by the Government of Canada, the Northwest Territories, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Inuvialuit Game Council, the Paulatuk Community Corporation and the Paulatuk Hunters and Trappers Committee.

The boundaries for Tuktut Nogait are unique for several reasons. I ask my colleagues to pay attention to what I am about to say on this point. It is important that we understand the very complex origin of this national park to better appreciate the incredible levels of co-operation and consensus building which led to the bill before the House today.

Tuktut Nogait lies within three land claim agreement areas: the Inuvialuit Settlement Region or ISR, which encompasses approximately 58% of the park area; the Nunavut Settlement Region including about 36% of the area; and the Sahtu Dene and Metis claim area including about 6% of the park.

I call upon my colleagues to imagine the consultation, discussions and negotiations that evolved across the years between the different parties united in a common purpose to protect this significant natural area.

Tuktut Nogait national park includes over 16,000 square kilometres. The parties came together around the absolute necessity of protecting the core calving ground vital for the Bluenose herd's survival. The park's name, Tuktut Nogait, means caribou calves in the Siglik dialect, a direct reference to the park's purpose. I also

note at this time that this area is important to the Bathurst herd in addition to the Bluenose herd.

The reason for explaining the significance of the consensus forming is relevant when one considers recent efforts to change the boundaries of the park. It is an issue that will arise during committee submissions and will contribute to the final decisions on the ratification of Bill C-38 boundaries as outlined today.

As my colleagues are no doubt aware, there is a magnetic anomaly that straddles the Tuktu Nogait's western boundary. This anomaly is said to rival the Voisey's Bay discovery and, if developed, could be a source of jobs and fiscal rewards to the region and of mineral extraction interests. Some 80% of the anomaly is located outside the park boundaries. In 1994 Darnley Bay Resources Limited of Toronto voluntarily relinquished exploration rights to the remaining 20%, the area within the park boundaries.

Now the developers have changed their minds and Darnley Bay launched a recent effort to delete an approximate 415 square kilometres from the park boundaries.

This may not seem like such a big concern, especially when to most observers looking at a flat map the proposed area the developers wish to delete appears insignificant when compared to the overall scope of the park. Nothing could be further from the truth for several reasons. First and foremost, the thought that it is okay to shrink a national park boundary to permit mineral development is reprehensible.

It would be hypocritical for the government to chastise our American neighbours regarding development impacts upon the Porcupine herd calving grounds in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Reserve while allowing development to harm the Bluenose herd calving grounds.

The second reason is that the location of the proposed deletion is crucial to the overall biodiversity of the park. The deleted area includes a section of the Hornaday River, critical char spawning habitat and acknowledged in company reports as part of Paulatuk's summer and fall fishing areas.

• (1035)

The third reason is that it is the summer and fall caribou harvesting area. A founding principle for the degrees of co-operation exhibited by all participants during the consensus process was the need to ensure the continuing provision of traditional sustenance and subsistence for the Inuvialuit, the Sahtu Dene, the Gwich'in and Metis people.

Also the proposed deletion includes the most probable main entry point to the park. Does a mining interest wish to dictate access to the park or collect gate fees? The proposed deletion area

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is located in the Inuvialuit settlement area. They are in agreement with the developers and the territorial government for exclusion. The Sahtu Dene and the Gwich'in are opposed to the deletion. They fear the impact such development may have upon the core calving and post-calving grounds.

As parliamentarians it is our duty to question the abrupt change in direction, a switch from the preservation of lands and heritage to a wish for development and its impact upon future generations.

Why the sudden need for a deletion, an exemption by one participant that runs counter to the continuing process and perseverance of the other participants? Are extracted ores more valuable than the survival of the 100,000 strong Bluenose caribou herd?

For centuries this herd has helped support northern peoples across Canada's Arctic, spanning thousands of kilometres and dozens of communities. Does one mineral discovery merit the impact upon all native northern peoples?

Why the sudden need to change the boundaries after seven years of consensus building? Will the addition of an approximate 20% in development areas increase southern investment in the project for the benefit of those lucky shareholders involved?

I will take this moment to state clearly that the New Democratic Party is neither anti-mining nor anti-development. We believe, though, that the development can occur and support projects that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Contrary to recent decisions by the Liberal government such as the Cheviot decision where a federal minister okayed the destruction of fish habitat, the NDP fully support the sustainable development principles as described by the Brundtland commission in 1987:

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

I believe the principle of sustainable development is the reason Paulatuk set out to protect this area in 1989 and led to the bill before us today.

I call to the attention of my colleagues that this is not a recent discovery or find. The first clue to the anomaly was identified in 1955, over 40 years ago. In 1969 the geological survey of Canada described the Paulatuk find, titled the Darnley Bay gravity anomaly, as the strongest gravity anomaly in North America.

The following year a magnetic anomaly was identified coincident with the gravity anomaly. I am not a geologist, obviously. However I can understand the excitement in the mining industry during the early 1990s when sampling of basic sills identified minor amounts of copper, nickel and platinum group elements. At that time things were looking pretty good for extraction and the environmental implications on the Bluenose core calving grounds.

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After decades of speculation about a significant mineral find surrounding Paulatuk, exploration permits were awarded to Darnley Bay Resources. In 1994, after the sampling results were favourable to extraction, Darnley Bay voluntarily relinquished those permits within the park boundaries.

Why the change? Is it the depressed metals markets? What became of the founding principles for the co-operation to protect critical wildlife habitat and to preserve a representative example of the Tundra Hills natural region?

Those are the questions and answers we still have to discuss at committee. They are some of the questions and answers we will face as parliamentarians as we defend the 1996 boundaries.

I thank the government for displaying a rare instance of intestinal fortitude and moral conscience in an environmental matter. The minister of heritage has changed direction on park commercialization levels on occasion. The lack of Liberal foresight and planning and a lack of respect for Jasper National Park, a world heritage site, resulted in an international condemnation and a terse letter from UNESCO regarding the Cheviot decision.

Liberal ignorance in habitat protection through the Cheviot decision evolved into legal challenges and Canadians learning about another international embarrassment via their morning newspapers and televised news conferences. Canadians are continually learning about poor Liberal habitat policies and the repeated loss of our reputation as protectors of wilderness areas and stewards of a clean environment.

• (1040)

The decision to protect and to honour the 1996 agreement on the Tuktut Nogait national park boundaries is a rare occurrence for the government and a decision that the New Democratic Party will support.

As Bill C-38 is discussed at committee I urge my colleagues not to be swayed by submissions and witnesses that put forward a variety of arguments to promote boundary changes. As a submitter presents facts and data that suggest 5% of the core calving area can be removed, I ask them to question where that 5% is located and the significant effect that a small 5% slice could have upon the overall Bluenose caribou population; the loss of char spawning areas; where muskox will mate; the further loss of Canada's extremely limited refugium areas; and the impact upon fragile wild flowers and lichens where few footsteps have tread.

When jobs are discussed they should remember the capacity for sustainable development and the unforgiving limits the tundra environment allows for habitat and species recovery, and the centuries required to repair basic intrusion.

When socioeconomics are discussed they should remember the benefits that are presented through eco-tourism and the unique variety of enterprises available to the community: bird watching, hiking, camping, natural appreciation, natural and environmental sciences, archeology and photography. The list continues.

Ten years of studies of the Bluenose herd have identified the necessity for the preservation and the location of core calving and post-calving areas. They should not be swayed by pro-development arguments that more studies are required.

We must protect the current boundaries of Bill C-38, the designation of Tuktut Nogait national park in the National Parks Act for generations yet unborn. To shrink a national park boundary to permit mineral development is reprehensible and should not be tolerated.

Mr. Mark Muisse (West Nova, PC): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-38, an act to amend the National Parks Act to include Tuktut Nogait in the schedule of national parks.

[*Translation*]

The proposed site for Tuktuk Nogait Park is close to Paulatuk, in the western part of Canada's Arctic. In 1989, the community of Paulatuk submitted to the federal government a conservation plan recommending that a new park be established to protect the calving ground of the Bluenose caribou herd.

[*English*]

In 1993 the federal government announced its willingness to establish a national park near Paulatuk. In 1996 the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Inuvialuit Game Council, the Paulatuk Community Corporation and the Paulatuk Hunters and Trappers Committee signed an agreement to establish a national park in the Inuvialuit settlement region near Paulatuk in the Northwest Territories.

The agreement also recognized the boundaries of Tuktut Nogait which represent approximately 16,304 square kilometres. It is also important to note that this area represents the Tundra Hill national region, an area not currently represented under the national parks system.

It is unfortunate that it has taken the government so long to bring in a simple piece of legislation that would see the establishment of Tuktut Nogait. In consequence, the government has delayed the creation of long term meaningful jobs and economic growth for the north.

As the members of the House heard yesterday, the Government of the Northwest Territories is reviewing a request by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation to remove part of the lands agreed upon in the 1996 agreement. What we are talking about here is the removal

of 415 square kilometres to permit mineral development within the core calving ground of the Bluenose caribou herd.

• (1045)

My party is not against mineral development but we cannot start carving out parts of our national parks to make mining companies more attractive to investors. The proposed reduction of Tuktut Nogait for mineral development would set a dangerous precedent for this park and other parks that are not protected under the National Parks Act.

I would like to remind the House that we are awaiting amendments to our ore legislation for seven other parks which represent 20% of the national parks system. I want to assure my colleagues that my party will continue its efforts to ensure that our natural heritage is preserved for our generation and generations to come.

We would hope this government would move more quickly in future, especially in light of its commitment of completing the national parks system by the year 2000.

In closing I want to congratulate all of the stakeholders for their ongoing efforts in establishing a national park in the Tundra Hill national region. I thank them for their contribution to the protection of Canada's ecological integrity.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): 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)

* * *

PENSION BENEFITS STANDARDS ACT, 1985

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (for the Secretary of State for International Financial Institutions, Lib.) moved that Bill S-3, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985 and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mrs. Sue Barnes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to speak today in support of Bill S-3. This legislation offers concrete and well-considered measures to enhance the supervision of federally regulated private pension plans.

As hon. members know, this bill was introduced through the Senate on September 30 last year and was reported back on November 4 with seven amendments. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Senate committee for its rigorous review

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of the bill and the thoughtful amendments that were made. I will highlight the thrust of these amendments later.

Updating the Pension Benefits Standards Act 1985, or the PBSA as it is usually called, is long overdue. I would like to explain to my hon. colleagues that the PBSA is the legislation that governs private pension plans in sectors subject to federal jurisdiction. Examples of these sectors include banking, interprovincial transportation and telecommunications.

The PBSA is administered by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, or OSFI as it is usually called, on behalf of our federal government. Of Canada's 16,000 pension plans, 1,100 are covered by the PBSA. They represent approximately \$45 billion or 10% of the asset value of all private pension plans in Canada.

With the number of Canadian seniors growing rapidly, I want to assure the House that ensuring sound secure pension plan systems has been and continues to be a priority of the government. My hon. colleagues know that over the past two years the government has embarked on a dramatic reform to the public component of the national pension system.

• (1050)

Not only is the old age security program being transformed into a revised seniors benefit, but also more recently there was the federal-provincial agreement to reform the Canada pension plan. These are two of the three pillars of retirement security for Canadians.

Private pension plans represent that vital third pillar. Here too there is a need for action, although much less dramatic since prudent supervision and good governance are the issues that need to be addressed with respect to private pension plans.

As I stated earlier, these changes are long overdue. The PBSA has not been materially revised since it came into force in early 1987. This is in contrast to the federal institutions legislation where the supervisory and prudential systems were significantly strengthened in 1992, 1995 and again in 1997.

There is no question that the PBSA needs to be updated. While most federally regulated pension plans are fully funded, some pension plans have come under financial pressure as a result of both demographic and economic factors. These include the aging workforce and corporate downsizing we have experienced in Canada. These are two factors which make pension funding relatively more expensive for employers.

In this environment there have also been solvency concerns with some plans while others have been wound up without sufficient assets to pay all the promised benefits. In these situations the employer, whether a single employer or an industry group, experienced economic difficulty.

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In addition many pension plans made substantial improvements to pension benefits in the 1980s with the expectation that employers would always be able to fund them. This also added to the challenges. In some cases insufficient contributions were made to fund these improvements.

As these problems emerged it became clear that the current prudential and supervisory framework is not equipped to deal with problem plans. The range of powers and regulatory components needed are not there. Bill S-3 meets these challenges. Under this legislation the federal government and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions will have additional necessary powers to work with plans that are experiencing problems.

I want to go into the basic principles. I want to assure hon. members that these are not patchwork band-aid measures. The measures in Bill S-3 flow from a series of basic principles outlined in the government's July 1996 white paper.

Included are the principles that private pension plans are supervised for the benefit of members, retirees and other beneficiaries; that the pension regulatory and supervisory framework should contain the incentives and safeguards necessary to reduce the possibility that pension promises are not met; and also that early intervention in and resolution of pension plans experiencing some difficulty should occur.

Outside supervision cannot and will not be expected to guarantee that pension promises will always be met nor can it be a substitute for good governance of the plans by the administrators of those plans. Regulation and supervision must be cost effective.

The regulatory framework for private pension plans should not impose undue costs on existing plans or unduly inhibit the creation of new pension plans. Members of private plans should receive adequate information from the administrator concerning the financial condition of their plan. There must be appropriate accountability and transparency in the supervisory process.

I want to discuss the basic principles in more detail. The first principle helps us to focus on what pension plans are. They are really employee benefits.

Employers, and often employees, contribute to these plans but let us keep in mind that employees often have no opportunity to withdraw from their employer plan while they work for the organization. Without the opportunity to cease making contributions, employees must rely on the plan's administrator to make sound financial decisions with their money so that benefits will be available for them in the future. It is precisely because of this situation that the government believes OSFI must have new powers to resolve the troubled plan's problems early on.

• (1055)

Clearly when an employer's economic difficulties affect a pension plan and a plan fails to manage its risks, it is to the

advantage of the plan's members, retirees and other beneficiaries to have the situation resolved promptly.

This should not necessarily mean that the plan be terminated. There may well be other approaches and actions that can more fully preserve the employees' contributions and benefits. Yet termination is currently the only supervisory tool available to OSFI. This leads to another closely related point.

It is important that our regulatory approach recognize that the termination of a pension plan with insufficient assets to pay the promised benefits does not in and of itself represent a failure of the supervisory process. Even in vibrant economies, pension plans occasionally terminate with insufficient assets to pay the promised benefits. The health of pension plans is inescapably tied to the health of the pension plan employer and the industry in which it operates.

In a market economy some companies will inevitably encounter problems. This is simply business reality. The corollary then is clear. With insufficient assets to pay all promised benefits, no supervisory system could even begin to forestall any pension plan termination without the authority and resources to oversee all management decisions made by the sponsor.

Even if it could work in theory, such total supervision is neither feasible nor desirable. Without question this is not a viable approach in a dynamic economy like that which Canada enjoys. What is required is a balanced approach that melds appropriate supervision with responsible internal governance.

I would like to highlight one final principle. That is the need for transparency of the supervisory system, a similar one to the financial institutions supervisory system. If the financial condition of a pension plan deteriorates, it is important that pension plan administrators understand the steps authorities could be expected to take. This understanding provides a realistic and credible incentive for plan supervisors to act in a timely fashion. Furthermore the supervisor must have a clearly defined role.

Amendments in this bill to OSFI's mandate include recognition of the importance of OSFI taking prompt action to deal with pension plans in trouble. To complement Bill S-3, a guide to intervention clarifying actions that could be expected in the role of OSFI in various situations has also been introduced. This guide is similar to ones issued for financial institutions.

I would like to move on to another aspect of this legislation. Bill S-3 allows for the future introduction of a simplified pension plan. This measure is intended to help small employers and to foster an environment that provides incentives for the creation of new pension plans.

The low pension plan participation rate of small businesses suggests that the traditional pension plans do not adequately meet the needs and expectations of small employers. The government believes that action is necessary and needed to correct this situation. Bill S-3 opens the door for the creation of a cost effective

regime for pension plans below a certain size, for example, one with 250 members.

In a simplified pension plan, financial institutions could propose standard pension contracts containing both general and specific provisions for the small employer. In addition, financial institutions would be responsible for administering the pension plan.

Standardizing pension plan contracts and transferring responsibilities for plan administration to financial institutions will greatly reduce costs for the small employer. The details of this regime will be introduced later through regulations.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but it being 11.00 a.m. it is time to proceed to Statements by Members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April 19 to 25 is National Volunteer Week. It was first proclaimed in 1943.

Women's voluntary services organized special events to draw the public's attention to the vital contribution women made to the war effort on the home front.

• (1100)

Today volunteers play a crucial and critical role in contributing to the quality of life in our communities. It is through their tireless efforts and commitment to community values that events such as Canada Day and winter carnivals can be celebrated. Organizations such as the CNIB and the Cancer Society benefit from their energy, skills and dedication.

This year's National Volunteer Week motto is "Volunteers open the doors to a better world". In my riding of the Oak Ridges the Helpmate Community Information and Volunteer Bureau provides skilled volunteers to many organizations and I pay tribute to their efforts in honour of National Volunteer Week.

* * *

J. R. SHAW

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of all Canadians to congratulate J. R. Shaw,

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chairman and chief executive officer of Shaw Communications, on his induction into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame.

Canada was built by entrepreneurs who with vision, determination and hard work achieved success and built a country. Through their efforts, their products and services they have helped to define us as Canadians both at home and internationally.

J. R. Shaw built a small family business into a true western success story. A diversified Canadian communications company, Shaw provides an electronic link to millions of people through cable television, telecommunications, high speed Internet access, paging, specialty television programming networks, radio, satellite and digital delivery of music. The Shaw name is well known and well respected and is positioned for continued success in the growing and competitive telecommunications market.

This House congratulates J. R. Shaw, a true Canadian entrepreneur.

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NATIONAL WILDLIFE WEEK

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Kitchener—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April 5 to 11 marks National Wildlife Week, an opportunity for Canadians to pay tribute to a national treasure.

The beaver, loon and polar bear on our coins and the maple leaf on our flag are symbols that epitomize the richness and diversity of this country's wildlife. These symbols help bind us together as a nation.

This year's theme is: "Give Wildlife an Edge: Protect our Shorelines" which reflects the importance of sustainable wetlands for the future of wildlife.

In communities throughout Canada people are involved with their environment. They donate their time to help wildlife and their habitats.

I encourage all Canadians to use National Wildlife Week to take up the challenge in their communities so we may ensure that future generations inherit a country as rich and diverse in wildlife as the one we enjoy today.

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[Translation]

CANADA-LEBANON PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Mr. Yvon Charbonneau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to announce to this House that a new parliamentary friendship group has been formed: the Canada-Lebanon Parliamentary Friendship Group.

Some 30 Canadian parliamentarians from both the House of Commons and the Senate established this group, whose purpose is

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to foster exchanges between Lebanese and Canadian parliamentarians, propose initiatives to promote better understanding of national and international issues and develop co-operation between our two countries.

As chairman of this friendship group, I thank my colleagues from both Houses who have agreed to join me on the executive of this group.

Let us hope that our parliamentary friendship group will help strengthen the bond between our two countries, Canada and Lebanon, which share tens of thousands of citizens and both consider themselves as full-fledged members of the French-speaking community.

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[English]

BOBCAYGEON

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to congratulate Bobcaygeon, Ontario on becoming the first millennium village community in Canada.

Volunteers have been working on millennium projects for over a year. Founders Gail Thomassen, Frank Poole, Michael Murphy and Catherine Brayley deserve a great deal of credit, as do the more than 700 people participating in many different millennium tasks within the village.

Projects include everything from changing the face of the downtown core to organizing a millennium size cake served with millennium flavoured ice cream to 40 knitters working toward a goal of 2,000 mitts for needy children to various other projects. The 2,500 people of this community have taken an active role in reflecting their pride as Canadians.

I encourage all to participate in this one in a thousand year celebration we call the millennium.

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, members of Canada's armed forces have paid with their lives and health in service to our great country. How well we attend to our veterans' concerns is a measure of our national conscience and is the expression of the will of our nation. Some of our veterans' concerns still sit, as they have for over 50 years, gathering dust as we prepare to leave for another two week break.

Hong Kong veterans' enslavement compensation by Japan has not been resolved despite assurances. Merchant navy requests for full war veteran status have not been given in spite of recognition by other allied countries. Our gulf war veterans suffer ailments of the gulf war syndrome which has not been recognized as an official disease.

● (1105)

Most of these issues have existed for over 50 years. Most of the veterans have little time left to enjoy restitution. The veterans of Canada want our government to listen now and not later. Our veterans' concerns should not be a new millennium project.

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NORAD

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the 1998 NORAD Top Scope air control competition was held on March 31 at Tyndell Air Force Base in Florida, involving American and Canadian personnel. I am proud to note the impressive performance of two Canadian members.

Corporal John Lynch of 22 Wing North Bay, a native of Dartmouth, won the title of Best Weapons Director Technician following six days of intense competition.

Captain John Woodbeck, a native of Peterborough, won the title of Best Airborne Warning and Control System Surveillance Officer following fierce competition from his Canadian and American peers.

NORAD is respected worldwide for its radar technology, but the utility and performance of this technology is only as good as the experts controlling it. That is why this biennial competition is so important.

Again I salute these two men on behalf of all Canadians and congratulate the armed forces for continuing to produce such high calibre personnel.

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[Translation]

GENERAL CHARLES DE GAULLE

Mr. Gilles-A. Perron (Saint-Eustache—Sainte-Thérèse, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago General Charles de Gaulle visited Quebec and shouted his famous "Vive le Québec libre" from the balcony of Montreal's city hall. France will be issuing a commemorative medal, which was unveiled at a ceremony at Institut de France.

Originally, the plan was for France to issue not a medal but a commemorative stamp. However, pressured by the English-speaking majority, the Prime Minister of Canada phoned French President Jacques Chirac and stopped the project. Such interference is absolutely outrageous.

We are pleased with the French initiative. In the words of Pierre-Louis Mallen, president of the association for the commemoration of the general's historic visit, "Fewer medals will be awarded, but they will last much longer. Thanks to this medal, people will still remember General De Gaulle's visit to Quebec a hundred years from now."

[English]

CANADIAN COLLEGE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the theme of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine's open house in Toronto tomorrow is "The Road To Wellness".

This college offers Canada's only four year full time program, educating doctors of naturopathic medicine, the integration of scientific knowledge with traditional healing wisdom.

Naturopathic doctors use non-evasive therapies such as clinical nutrition, botanical medicine, homeopathic Oriental medicine, acupuncture, hydrotherapy, lifestyle counselling and prevention to assist the whole person in maximizing the body's inherent self-healing capacity.

The tremendous increase in enrolment in the college reflects the increasing demand for naturopathic doctors in Canada. We wish the college a very successful open house.

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CANADA PENSION PLAN

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada pension plan is \$485 billion in debt and rising. To repay this debt the government has decided to tax young Canadians through premiums that are over two times what they should be. Canadians know that it is unfair to place so much of the burden of past Liberal mistakes on future generations. Many measures will be required to remedy the financing problems of the CPP.

The Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce has proposed some measures that would help, the most important of which is that the limit on the CPP investment fund to invest in a diverse international portfolio be raised from the current 20% to 30% over five years.

Why did our finance minister turn his back on this sensible proposal, one that would have increased the fund's performance by as much as 1.5% per year? Why does our finance minister turn his back on future generations, many too young to vote or even to speak for themselves?

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[Translation]

SOCIÉTÉ SAINT-JEAN-BAPTISTE

Mr. Nick Discepolo (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning I am calling upon all the sovereignists to dissociate themselves as quickly as possible from the words used by one of their group, the president of the Montreal Saint-Jean-Baptiste society. Guy Bouthillier is calling for the creation of a media

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monitoring agency to ensure fair coverage of the views expressed during the next referendum campaign.

Words like this are not only evidence of a form of total intolerance, they are also a perfect example of undemocratic behaviour that is both threatening and worrisome to the quality of life of citizens in a sovereign Quebec.

This sovereignist notion was also in the air during the 1970s. The Parti Québécois government of the day had to move quickly to dissociate itself from it.

• (1110)

One might have expected the leader of the Bloc Québécois to stand up at the first opportunity in order to speak out against such remarks coming from a sovereignist with whom he has crossed paths on numerous occasions, but there has not been so much as a peep out of him since these shocking words by Guy Bouthillier.

The silence from the sovereignists is a source of concern.

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[English]

DEVCO

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the situation in Cape Breton is becoming desperate. Today more layoffs were announced at the Cape Breton Development Corporation in addition to the more than 500 men who are already off the job.

The government says there is no Devco without Phalen, so Devco is now on a 15 month plan.

This government denied the 15 month plan existed and it denied that the cabinet memo existed.

Why will the government not be honest with Cape Bretoners and tell them that, yes, the government has failed to make Devco commercially viable and is now in the process of pulling the plug on industrial Cape Breton?

Honestly, that is all we are looking for. Is that too much for the people of Cape Breton to ask?

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O'NEILL COLLEGIATE CHOIR

Mr. Ivan Grose (Oshawa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize a group of students from my riding who are in Ottawa today. These students are members of O'Neill Collegiate's intermediate chamber choir. Members who saw and heard them yesterday as they performed in the rotunda will acknowledge that they are fine.

O'Neill Collegiate bands and choirs have represented Oshawa and Durham region at music festivals and concerts across Canada

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and in Europe. One of the reasons for this recognition is the efforts made by their teachers to provide their students with outstanding quality opportunities to work with the best clinicians and hear the finest ensembles on the continent.

I am proud to tell the House that in Oshawa we not only make the finest cars in the world, we also turn out quality people.

We were not sure whether the O'Neill choir could be here because its fame has spread even to Ottawa. They were invited to perform at Gloucester High School.

To the members of this House I present some of the finest young people in this country from Oshawa.

* * *

THE LATE ROB THOMPSON

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, last month Nova Scotia lost one of its favourite sons, Rob Thompson. Rob was 23 years old when he died of cystic fibrosis in a North Carolina hospital on March 17.

I first met Rob when I was a student at Dalhousie University, working as a lunch monitor at LaMarchant School where he was a student. Even then his optimism and his sense of humour were very evident. These were the traits that helped him in the face of adversity. His long fight with CF did not stop Rob from contributing to Halifax, Nova Scotia and to Canada as a student, an athlete, a journalist and, most importantly, a leader. In the words of Rob himself, "The more you put into life, the more you get out".

On behalf of this House I would like to express our sincere condolences to Rob's family, his friends and his community.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of the Environment announced an action plan to manage toxic substances released from the electric power generation sector. This plan is the result of consultations with key stakeholders, including the industry, the provinces and environmental groups.

The action plan includes the development of environmental standards and performance agreements with the provinces and the utilities in order to reduce the release of toxic substances from the sector.

The action plan will reduce emissions of harmful particulate matter and toxic metals from oil and coal fired power plants by more than 100,000 tonnes annually by the year 2003. This represents a reduction of up to 85% of total emissions from the electrical power generating sector.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Supreme Court of Canada launched an unprecedented attack on democracy and on our constitutional order in what can only be described as an exercise of raw judicial power.

In the name of the charter of rights and freedoms the court ruled that Albertans do not have the right or freedom to govern themselves. In the name of the Constitution the unaccountable justices created a law that had been explicitly rejected by Alberta's elected officials and they did so basing this judgment on a right that cannot be found in the Constitution and one which was explicitly rejected by this parliament and the legislatures when the charter of rights was ratified.

In the name of protecting basic rights, the court has violated the rights of people to freely associate around common values in a private religious institution.

The Vriend decision was not about interpreting the Constitution. It was not about protecting rights. It was about unelected and unaccountable justices taking upon themselves the position of elected legislators and legislating from the bench.

● (1115)

Abraham Lincoln said that the candid citizen must confess that if—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Laurentides.

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[Translation]

MEMBER FOR SHERBROOKE

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the former Conservative leader announced he was in the running for the leadership of the Quebec Liberal Party, he said he was "fed up with the endless squabbles cultivated and maintained by the sovereignist leaders, which are sapping our energies".

Between 1960 and the present, the sovereignists have been in power about 12 years and the federalists more than 25. Did Fulton-Favreau fail because of the "nasty separatists"? Did Victoria fail because of the "nasty separatists"? Was the 1982 patriation and Pierre Elliott Trudeau's rejection of the Quebec Liberal beige book the fault of the "nasty separatists"? Were the failures of Meech and Charlottetown the fault of the "nasty separatists"?

If we have been up to our ears in squabbles since 1960, this is because the federalists are incapable of getting along together. That is why the only solution left is sovereignty.

Oral Questions

The former Conservative leader claims he is going to succeed where all those before him have failed. We are anxious to know exactly how he will go about this, because at the moment we are simply faced with a big black hole.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

HEPATITIS C

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the health minister has used the word “compassion” dozens of times this week when he was asked why he abandoned thousands of hepatitis C victims.

The arguments he advances for justifying the government’s position are legal arguments, accounting arguments and political arguments. There is no real compassion in either the government’s position or in the minister’s deeds.

Where is the compassion in abandoning tens of thousands of victims of poisoned blood who were infected through government negligence?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government does have compassion. The government is concerned. It is expressing its compassion and concern in a practical way by putting forward \$800 million aimed at helping tens of thousands of victims of this tragic situation.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a reflection on compassion. Just a few weeks ago this is what the health minister was saying to victims of poisoned blood.

He said “We have to remember what this is about. It is not about fiscal federalism. It is not about politics. It is about providing compassionate and fair and appropriate compensation to people who were injured through no fault of their own and we have to keep our eye on that goal”.

Why did the health minister take his eye off that goal?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all governments in the country that worked together on this difficult problem kept their eye on the goal of doing the right thing in accordance with sound public policy. All governments, all ministers of health, worked together toward showing compassion as the Deputy Prime Minister has said.

We have now created an offer of \$1.1 billion for the direct benefit of over 22,000 victims of this tragedy. That, in the judgment of every government in the country of every political stripe, is the appropriate response to this tragedy.

Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there used to be a day when ministers would actually resign rather than violate the principles.

If the health minister actually believes that this decision should have been based on compassion and morality rather than on legal or accounting arguments, why did he not go in to the Prime Minister and say “these are the principles I am committed to. If you can’t accept them and if the cabinet can’t accept them, then find someone else to do your dirty work?”

If the minister is really committed to compassion and morality, why did he not resign rather than violate those principles?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, is the Leader of the Opposition saying that Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta lacks compassion and morality when he said about this deal, referring to Premier Clark of British Columbia, “Without wanting to sound critical of Premier Clark, it seems to be sort of late in the game to start to change the rules and to express concerns?”

Is he saying that Premier Klein of Alberta lacks compassion?

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, during the health minister’s meetings with victims of hepatitis C he said that he would be their guardian. He said in fact that he would be their champion.

Today those victims ended up here on Parliament Hill and the minister somehow did not meet them. They ended up pounding white crosses into the lawn in front of his office to tell him what they think of him.

• (1120)

Did the minister fail to meet with those victims because he is ashamed to look them in the eye?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that in the course of the past several months I have met with many victims of the tainted blood tragedy, spoke to them directly, spoke to them about the approach being taken toward compensation and personally explained to those victims, as I have in the House of Commons, the reason for the approach taken by all governments in the country toward the issue of compensation.

I explained to them that as the ministers of health looked at the history of these tragic events they found there was a period between 1986 and 1990 when governments could and should have acted and did not, and that is the basis on which compensation is being offered.

Mr. Grant Hill (Macleod, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have a solution for the public relations nightmare the minister is facing.

Oral Questions

B.C. has said that it is ready to move. Saskatchewan is now ready to have a conference call on the issue. Why does the health minister not just lead a new charge for a supplementary compensation package for all the victims of hepatitis C so that he can once again look those victims straight in the eye?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every provincial government stands solidly behind this agreement. Every provincial government respects the agreement that they themselves negotiated, including British Columbia and Quebec. Every province and both territories stand solidly with the agreement that they negotiated.

Last Friday we sat opposite victims, looked them in the eye and told them, as we believed, this was the right approach to the issue.

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[Translation]

OPTION CANADA

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Howard Bullock, Canada's ambassador to China and the senior official responsible for operation unity at the time of the referendum told the Bloc member for Repentigny, currently in China, that the Bloc Quebecois could ask all the questions it likes on Option Canada, it would find out nothing, because it was he who spent the money.

My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. What can the minister, his boss at the time of these events, tell us about Mr. Bullock's statement?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very simple. We, and most Quebeckers and other Canadians, support the Canadian option. The leader of the Bloc Quebecois opposes it and he is mistaken.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister can certainly not justify the expenditure of public funds by not responding to any question on the pretext that he is defending Canada. Is that what I am to understand from his response? It does not make any sense.

I would ask him whether the minister responsible for operation unity at the time, now the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, could confirm that the link between operation unity and Option Canada was such that the senior official of one ordered the other to spend?

Mr. John Godfrey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have already answered all these questions many times. We have submitted over one hundred pages of responses. The matter is totally clear. There are very few responses, because we have already provided the documents required and requested.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the House that Mr. Bullock, now the Canadian ambassador to China, was then director of Operation Unity and therefore reported directly to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Since Option Canada's budgets were apparently spent, as she herself said, by the director of the Operation Unity team, how could the minister claim not to be perfectly aware of how the \$4.8 million given by the federal government to Option Canada right in the middle of the referendum campaign was spent?

Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, the question is based on false premises.

Second, we know that the Standing Orders do not allow ministers to comment on their previous responsibilities.

I repeat, it is too bad, but most Quebeckers and other Canadians support the Canada option and the Bloc Quebecois is opposed to it. Present polls show that the Bloc Quebecois is mistaken in its criticism.

• (1125)

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister's response is also based on false premises.

Since the federal government could already rely on the services of Operation Unity, which had a budget of almost \$12 million at the time, a budget which could easily have been increased if necessary, why did the federal government pay almost \$5 million to a phoney organization like Option Canada, unless it needed a front to get around Treasury Board's usual accounting requirements?

Mr. John Godfrey (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have responded to the criticisms, of the auditor general for instance, by saying that changes will have to be made in future. We then answered the questions asked.

But we also have our own questions. We could also ask the Bloc Quebecois about Plan O, a plan to spend billions of dollars in the event of Quebec's separation. This question should be put to the representatives of Mr. Parizeau in this House.

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[English]

HEPATITIS C

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Whether or not the federal minister likes it, health ministers will hold further talks next week on hepatitis C compensation.

To date the health minister and his cabinet colleagues have closed their eyes to the injustice and inhumanity of not compensat-

Oral Questions

ing tens of thousands of hepatitis C victims. Canadians are watching. What will the health minister take to next week's talks?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is woefully misinformed. Next Monday, Clay Serby, minister of health for the NDP government in Saskatchewan who this year is the chair of provincial ministers, will co-ordinate a conference call among provincial ministers of health to talk about the membership of the board of directors and other details for the creation of the new blood service.

The ministers of health of the governments of the country, all governments of all political stripes, believe strongly that we have an appropriate and a justified approach to the compensation issue. They are solidly behind this deal. The hon. member should not cruelly raise—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Halifax.

Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister can repeat his mantra. He can continue to try to evade his responsibility but it does not change the facts.

Unlike this health minister, some provinces have had the courage to acknowledge that the proposed compensation package does not provide a satisfactory solution for tens of thousands of victims.

Is the minister now prepared to negotiate a new deal? Will he say yes to all victims by bringing more money to the table, or will he continue to say no to fair compensation for all hepatitis C victims?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is simply wrong. If her reference is to Premier Clark, I assume Premier Clark has by now spoken to his minister of health with whom I spoke yesterday and has been reminded that the British Columbia government was at the table, part of the discussions, part of the agreement, and stands solidly with the rest of the governments of the country behind this agreement.

As to responsibility, we did take responsibility as those responsible in government. We considered a difficult matter. We came to a conclusion as to the appropriate response. We announced that decision and we have explained the principles behind it. That is the responsibility of public officials.

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TAXATION

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, small private woodlot owners are being penalized by the federal tax code for following environmentally responsible standards.

The national round table on the environment and the economy report tabled last October recommended that private woodlot

owners be treated as small business owners. This would require a change to the tax code to allow sound forestry management practices and silviculture expenses to be deductible from their taxes against their income.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. What is the government's response to the round table's recommendation, and when can private woodlot owners expect a change?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me advance notice of the question.

It is my understanding that there is a differential between the odd woodlot owner and a woodlot owner who has a business plan and is actually in the business. Owners under the second category are considered to be in the business of operating the woodlot and would be able to claim silviculture expenses.

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his unusually succinct answer.

• (1130)

The national roundtable also recommended that private woodlot owners be provided with the same capital gains tax exemption currently available to farmers. At present if an owner wishes to pass on their woodlot to an heir it is more advantageous to clearcut the woodlot and pay less capital gains tax than manage the woodlot in an environmentally sound manner. The current tax code offers an incentive to prematurely clearcut woodlots rather than use sustainable forestry practices.

When will the government respond to this recommendation?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I guarantee you that if I am given advance notice I can be succinct.

We have again looked at the capital gains tax. The view was that would be a very small part of the solution to the problem of overcutting. We are certainly prepared to sit down with the national roundtable and with the provincial governments and take a look at the overall problem.

The question is simply one of expense versus the cost.

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HEPATITIS C

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Wanuskewin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the health minister says he does not want the government's approach to compensation to set a legal precedent.

It is possible for the government to compensate hepatitis C victims infected before 1986 without admitting legal liability. To use a legal term, it can simply compensate ex gratia, out of grace.

Oral Questions

Why is he inventing a doomsday scenario in order to avoid across the board compensation?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is sound reason for the approach taken by the governments of Canada in dealing with this difficult issue.

I refer the hon. member, for example, to the writing this week of Professor Bernard Dickens of the medical law and ethics faculty of the University of Toronto. He wrote at length an analysis that was published in the popular press about the proper role of government when it comes to a tragedy like this and the distinction between paying compensation based on accepting responsibility and going beyond that and the implications for the health care system.

I urge the member to think through the position he is expressing and its possible consequence for health care in Canada.

Mr. Maurice Vellacott (Wanuskewin, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is a good thing the minister never read that article before the ice storm in January and the Red River flood.

The health minister says the government is not liable for infecting those victims before 1986. He believes it was an unforeseen tragedy. In the last budget the government set up a \$3 billion contingency fund precisely for needs unforeseen by the government.

Why is this minister saying that his compensation plan is the best that can be done?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Speaker, because in our analysis carried out by every government in Canada when we looked at the history of this matter as sketched out in the Krever report and elsewhere, it was clear that in the period 1986 to 1990 something could have been done to manage the risks. Something should have been done to prevent the infections and it was not.

In those circumstances all the governments of Canada agreed that is the appropriate basis on which the public should offer compensation to those who were harmed.

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[Translation]

NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Mr. Ghislain Fournier (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Government of Quebec introduced its new policy of cooperation with Quebec's native peoples, a policy that was very well received by many native leaders, but that requires the cooperation of the federal government.

In a gesture of open-mindedness towards Quebec's native communities, will the federal government agree to match the Govern-

ment of Quebec's contribution of \$125 million over five years for the native people's development fund?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has not been advised of the details of the negotiations to which the hon. member refers in his question.

When we have these details, we will of course duly examine them and reply to the Government of Quebec after careful consideration of the matter.

Mr. Ghislain Fournier (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec has also decided to give Quebec's native peoples an opportunity to collect the QST paid by natives and non-natives on and off reserves.

In order to give Quebec's native peoples greater financial autonomy, is the federal government prepared to allow native communities to collect the GST?

• (1135)

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the federal government has already signed similar agreements with native peoples in other provinces, and we are certainly prepared to sit down with the Government of Quebec and with the native peoples residing in Quebec for the same purpose.

* * *

[English]

HEPATITIS C

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the health minister is running out of excuses. One of the lame excuses he trots out is that if he compensated all the victims it would open up the legal floodgates. He said that anybody who is sick would sue the government. But that is ridiculous.

These victims are not suing because they are sick. They are suing because the government made them sick. It is government negligence that is to blame. That legal precedent has already been set through the treatment of AIDS victims who are now compensated on the principle of negligence.

Why the two tier standard?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I made the point that in the HIV example of 10 years ago the government proceeded on the same principle. It looked at what happened. It found that government should have been more vigilant, should have put surveillance systems in place, should have been more keenly aware of what was going on in Europe and other countries, and did not.

Oral Questions

On the basis of that, compensation was offered. We are using the same principle in this case. It is a sound principle. It is a principle accepted by every government in this country.

Mr. Jason Kenney (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the principle is that when the government is negligent it should pay. The government was negligent because it had a test that could have screened for hepatitis C as far back as 1981. That is when the German government started using the same test to screen for hepatitis C. The facts are irrefutable.

The government should have screened for hepatitis C as far back as 1981 but it did not. That is called negligence. Some people would call it malpractice. I call it just plain wrong.

Why will the health minister not right this wrong? Why will he not compensate the victims?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): First, Mr. Speaker, it is accepted by most commentators who know the history of this file that it was in 1986 that Canada ought to have adopted testing procedures. I rely, among others, on the Krever report in that connection.

The hon. member refers to 1981. Is he now arguing against his colleagues by suggesting compensation should only go to 1981 and not before that? The Reform Party should decide on one approach to this issue because it is contradicting itself.

* * *

[Translation]

ACQUISITION OF SUBMARINES

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

Everyone recognizes that the provinces are having a hard time providing front line health services because of the cuts made by the federal government.

How can the government be preparing to spend \$800 million on submarines, while refusing to return the funds it dramatically cut from health care in recent years?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no connection between the two. The question of the equipment that is necessary for the Canadian forces has been a matter of long discussion. It is a matter of where we deal with these equipment purchases within the budget, within the allocation of funds for defence purposes. It is part of protecting the sovereignty of our country on land, in the air and at sea.

I think the health minister has advised members of the House well with respect to the very fine position the government is taking in dealing with hepatitis C.

[Translation]

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, would the government be preparing once again to make an important decision, such as buying submarines during the parliamentary recess in order to avoid a public debate on its misguided priorities?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the House yesterday, this matter is still under discussion with the British government and until that matter is finalized we are not in a position to announce a decision one way or the other.

* * *

HEPATITIS C

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what is so disappointing here is that the health minister seems to not care. He just goes back on his own words.

• (1140)

In November he told the Ottawa *Citizen* that he did not want to see hepatitis C victims spend their lifetime in litigation.

A few weeks ago he said all victims would receive “compassionate and fair and appropriate compensation”. The minister broke those promises, and all the empty sound bites in the world will not change that.

Just when did he sell out on his principles and was it worth it?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all the health ministers in the country took those same principles to heart as they worked for months toward this compensation package.

As a result of our work and the agreement among all governments over 22,000 Canadians have been spared litigation. Over 22,000 Canadians are going to be the beneficiaries of a compensation offer that totals \$1.1 billion.

For them and their families that is very significant evidence of compassion on the part of governments.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister if he was proud of the fact that he abandoned those people who now will spend their lifetime in litigation, the people who are not being compensated in his package. His package is wrong. He knows it. Other ministers of health in the provinces now know that too.

Is he now saying that he does not care about those excluded hepatitis C victims? Is he saying that he does not care if they spend their lifetime in litigation?

Oral Questions

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have explained, all the governments of Canada brought those same principles of compassion and fairness to the table. We looked at the history of the matter. We proceeded on what we believe is sound public policy.

For example, in the Vancouver *Sun* this week some of these points are made very elaborately confirming the wisdom of the decision of all the health ministers and all the governments of the country supporting it and saying the position is fully justified. Across the country evidence can be seen of people who have thought about this issue agreeing with the position taken by all the governments of the country.

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[Translation]

FISHERIES

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

The Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans harshly criticized the federal government's management of the entire industry. In the meantime, the people in the fishing industry are very anxious and concerned.

I ask the minister to tell us when and more importantly how he plans to decide what is surplus in the fishing industry.

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I have made a series of decisions and statements. Some aspect of almost every one of my announcements concerns fishing and the need to conserve stocks.

I assure him that I will reply in detail to the recommendations of the committee, and he will see what I want to do about each recommendation.

* * *

[English]

PEACEKEEPING

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

As part of a new United Nations peacekeeping mission in order to contribute to the stability of central Africa, the Government of Canada has just announced that it will deploy Canadian troops in support of this operation.

Will the minister advise this House as to the nature of the Canadian forces contribution to this UN mandated mission?

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has again been asked to participate in

peacekeeping by the United Nations. The United Nations pays great tribute to this country's involvement in peacekeeping by asking us to do so. This is a great tribute to our forces.

Our forces will be providing some 45 personnel, 25 of whom will be signals personnel who will be able to manage the communication system on this mission. They will be part of a 1,350 troop mission to help bring peace and security into the central African republic.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the family of Connie and Ty Jacobs broke their silence about the tragic shooting two weeks ago on the Tsuu T'ina reserve. Yesterday they went public asking for help. Connie's sister, Cynthia Applegarth, said "As long as there is poverty on reserves and no economic development you will have deaths, suicides and murders". She wants an independent inquiry into the social, economic and democratic conditions on the Tsuu T'ina reserve.

• (1145)

Why will the Indian affairs minister not listen to Connie's grieving family?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, these questions have been asked repeatedly this week. The hon. member should listen to the answer from the government in spite of the heckling from the Leader of the Opposition who is so undisciplined this morning.

I want to tell the hon. member that the government has taken this issue and issues involving aboriginal Canadians very seriously. He knows of the RCMP investigation. He knows of course of the province's inquiry. He knows that the council of elders can advise the inquiry and he knows that it is led—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Wild Rose.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the government is ignoring the people. It is not the inquiry we are talking about. We are talking about the conditions on the reserve.

Connie Jacobs probably did not donate a lot of money to the Liberal Party, nor golf with the Prime Minister, nor fly with him across the country on trade missions. I do not think she ran in the federal Liberal election.

Chief Roy Whitney does not want an investigation. He is the close friend. He does not want an investigation into the economic, social and democratic conditions on his reserve. Of course not.

Why is the minister listening to Chief Whitney instead of Connie Jacobs' family?

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am a little disappointed in the hon. member taking an unfortunate incident such as this and linking it to such things as political contributions or otherwise. The misfortunes of other people should not be abused by the hon. member across. He knows this as well.

We have been doing a lot of work with respect to the conditions of the aboriginal communities in Canada. The hon. minister today is meeting with aboriginal communities and continues to do excellent work in trying to promote the well-being of aboriginal Canadians.

All the Reform Party wants to do is cut \$1 billion for aboriginal Canadians.

* * *

HEPATITIS C

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health is wrong about the health ministers conference call on Monday. It is our clear indication that this meeting has been established to talk strictly about whether or not all the provinces are still on the same page with respect to the serious issue of compensation. It is clearly a concern that is growing as more information is made available showing that this unjust compensation package is based on false information.

Is the Minister of Health now prepared to go back to the drawing board, re-open discussions with the provinces and come up with a fair and humane compensation package?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people who will be speaking on the phone on Monday are the same people with whom I sat at the table representing governments across Canada who agreed that the approach we are taking to compensation is the right one. Every provincial government stands with us. We stand with them. This is the right thing to do.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, given that these discussions will be taking place on the compensation package, it would be helpful for the Minister of Health to address the real question about whether or not 1986 makes sense at all in terms of liability. We do know as previously mentioned there was a study, a report in 1981 showing that surrogate testing was recommended and the department of health and the Red Cross turned it down because of expense.

Is it the minister's position that the victims who were abandoned back then due to the cost of prevention should be abandoned now due to the cost of compensation?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is possible to find reports, whether here or in other countries, of

isolated suggestions of tests before 1986. There is no question about that. It is referred to in the Krever chronology.

The point is it was in early 1986 that experts agreed it was incumbent upon those responsible in this country to respond and to put the systems in place. They chose not to do so and the consequences were tragic. It is for that reason we have chosen that year.

There is broad support in many circles for that approach. I refer to the Saskatoon *Star Phoenix* editorial of this week which said that the health ministers, who had to evaluate the Krever "recommendations in the context of their ramifications on the entire health system, made a difficult but justifiable decision".

• (1150)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

Last Saturday I had the pleasure of meeting with some members of the Merchant Navy Association in my riding. These men and women along with all merchant navy vets risked their lives during World War II to supply our troops on the front lines with the necessities of battle.

The minister keeps saying that the merchant navy vets are equal under Bill C-84 but there are 40 restrictions applied to them that are not applied to the other vets. Will the minister correct this injustice by enacting legislation that would grant these veterans full veteran status under the act and make them equal?

Mr. George Proud (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her question.

It was the present Minister of Veterans Affairs and other members of the Liberal Party along with Conservative members who brought legislation forward which gave the merchant seamen veteran status under the act. I say to her that they did receive that and they will continue to receive it. There will be further legislation coming later in the year and what that entails I do not know as yet.

Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC): Mr. Speaker, there are 40 restrictions so they are not totally equal. The men and women of the merchant navy have become so disillusioned that they are planning a hunger strike on Parliament Hill for May 12 if they are denied again what is rightfully theirs.

Why now are we failing to help those who gave us freedom? These men and women are requesting a small compensation

Oral Questions

settlement for the many years in which they were not recognized. Is the minister's plan to wait until they are all gone or will he act immediately to correct this injustice?

Mr. George Proud (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the legislation that gave the merchant seamen veteran status came into force in 1992. Therefore everything that was in place then they are eligible for. All of the members who were merchant seamen with high seas voyages qualify for every compensation that is available to every veteran in Canada.

* * *

CHILD LABOUR

Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the use of child labour is a scourge that steals the innocence of childhood and prevents children in many nations from the possibility of an education and ultimately a better life for the future.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs share with the House an explanation of what this government is doing to ensure that Canadian companies do not participate in or benefit from the labour of children forced by circumstances to abandon their childhood?

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have established the child labour challenge fund which rests on a voluntary code of conduct for businesses. It does provide financial inducements to corporations.

We do recognize the need for sanctions. We are negotiating directly with the International Labour Organization in Geneva for a new international convention. We expect it to be completed next year. Implementing legislation by the Canadian Parliament will follow immediately.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I see that the Liberal backbenchers are only allowed to ask those kind of softball questions.

Cynthia Applegarth does not want another cover-up to occur on the Tsuu T'ina reserve. She just wants to know why her sister Connie Jacobs and her son died. She wants to know whether or not the poverty and the social conditions in which they lived contributed to this horrible incident.

Would the government House leader assure the House today that the inquiry into the death of Connie and her son will also include an examination of the social conditions in which the family lived?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the

precise terms of the inquiry have not yet been fleshed out. We will take his suggestion as representation.

I would like him to know that this inquiry is going to be under the direction of a judge of the province of Alberta, Judge Thomas Goodson, an aboriginal judge. I am sure the representation the hon. member is making will be duly noted and will probably assist all those interested.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

In Kelowna, British Columbia, the Heritage Canada office is designated bilingual, but no public servant there is capable of providing service in French. A study was carried out in order to identify those employees suited to learning French. The Kelowna office of Heritage Canada will therefore be providing services in French in two years.

• (1155)

Will the government admit that it must respond to the Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique and provide services in French to the francophones of that province earlier than two years from now?

Hon. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government takes the matter of official languages in Canada very seriously.

Evidence of this is our recent creation of a task force headed by Yvon Fontaine, in response to a recommendation by the Commissioner of Official Languages that the quality of official languages in the public service be improved, particularly in areas involving privatization, but also in all others.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Ms. Wendy Lill (Dartmouth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, over 30 years ago our government set up independent drug testing in the wake of the thalidomide disaster, a disaster which made Canadians realize we needed control over drug safety and that health outranked cost considerations.

Today, rather than protect public safety, the government is interested in the controlling of costs at all costs. To save a few bucks the Liberals threaten to put many more Canadian lives in jeopardy by giving effective control over drug approval to the drug manufacturers themselves. How does the health minister justify substituting commercial and corporate interests for the public interest?

Oral Questions

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for Health Canada, public safety is the bottom line. We have excellent professionals in the department who conduct the appropriate tests and investigations before any drugs are approved.

To remove any doubt and to ensure public confidence in the excellence of their work, I have appointed a science advisory board chaired by Dr. Roberta Bondar, herself a distinguished scientist. They will look at the science capacity in the department. They will report to me and I shall make public their report on the question of whether we have the people we need in the Department of Health to fulfil our important public responsibilities.

* * *

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Mark Muise (West Nova, PC): Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the Liberal government eliminated the feed freight assistance program. This decision has had a serious impact on the hog industry in West Nova. For one farm alone in my riding this decision means an additional cost of \$65,000 per year.

Can the minister of agriculture tell this House if he is prepared to offer hog farmers any assistance with the high cost of freight?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am answering on behalf of the minister of agriculture. The Government of Canada has had a long interest in assisting the agricultural industry in particular with feed freight assistance. As to the detail of the hon. member's question, I will have to note it and the minister of agriculture will respond at an appropriate time.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, March 28, volunteers from the Certified General Accountants Association of Ontario held a tax clinic for seniors in my riding. These dedicated men and women provided an excellent service to over 80 seniors by helping them prepare their tax returns.

Can the parliamentary secretary to the minister of revenue tell the House what Revenue Canada is doing to help seniors and the disabled, those least able to cope with complicated tax procedures?

[Translation]

Mrs. Sue Barnes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his question.

[English]

Revenue Canada does have special programs especially at this time of the year. The community volunteer program has over

15,000 volunteers across the country helping over 282,000 people prepare their tax returns. I stress that Revenue Canada employees, on their time, help train these volunteers. That is very commendable and it works well.

Telefile is enabling about eight million people with very straightforward simple tax returns to do their tax files from their homes.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, why does the minister not just send out a news release?

Does anyone in the government care enough to listen to the message sent by the death of Connie Jacobs and her young son? Her family hopes something good will come out of this tragedy if living conditions on the wealthy Tsuu T'ina reserve can be improved. This is exactly what Bruce Starlight's letter warned the minister about.

● (1200)

The minister ignored Bruce Starlight's warning. Please tell us that the minister will not also ignore the appeals of Connie Jacobs' family.

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and indeed all hon. members opposite know what the government has been doing to assist and to improve the lot of Canadians living on reserves.

The hon. member will know, of course, of the commission of inquiry which has completed its report. She will know that First Nations governments have received assistance from the Government of Canada. She will also know of the progress that has been made in the communities and of our continuing interest in this area.

Cutting a billion dollars from native programs, which is what the Reform Party wants, will not assist anyone.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, despite what the government says, the francophones in Kelowna will have no services in French until two years from now.

How does the government explain its failure to comply with its own Official Languages Act?

Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite knows full well that the government's official languages policy works and works well.

Routine Proceedings

Naturally, there are parts of the country where discrepancies need to be rectified. That is why we have a commissioner of official languages.

I would remind him of the words of his former leader, Lucien Bouchard, who said that the official languages program in Canada was a success. He said that when he was responsible for Canada's Secretary of State.

The Deputy Speaker: That concludes oral question period.

[*English*]

I would like to thank hon. members first for their co-operation and for sticking within the time limits.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Excise Tax Act.

This amendment provides sales tax relief for the purchase of motor vehicles specially equipped to transport persons who use a wheelchair.

I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

* * *

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 84 petitions.

* * *

PETITIONS

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present to the House today. The first petition comes from a number of Canadians, including some from my own riding of Mississauga South.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that the Food and Drugs Act is designed to protect Canadians from

the harmful effects of alcohol consumption and that the consumption of alcoholic beverages may cause serious health problems. In particular, fetal alcohol syndrome and related birth defects are 100% preventable by avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

The petitioners are therefore petitioning parliament to mandate health warning labels on the containers of alcoholic beverages.

FAMILY

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition has to do with the family. The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which is not recognized for its value to our society.

The petitioners particularly point out that the Income Tax Act does not take into account the real cost of raising children for families who provide care in the home to their preschool children.

• (1205)

The petitioners therefore petition parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families who decide to provide care in the home to preschool children.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Mr. Speaker, I rise with pleasure to table a petition pursuant to Standing Order 36 on behalf of the constituents of Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, specifically the Sisters of Bethany in Antigonish.

The petition states the position of the group, which opposes the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. The petitioners caution the government on the mode in which the negotiations have proceeded and request that a moratorium be placed on the ratification of the MAI until full public hearings have been held across the country so that Canadians may have an opportunity to partake in the discussions and put their opinions forward.

BILL S-13

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of Nanaimo—Alberni I have two petitions to present.

In the first petition the petitioners call upon parliament to withdraw Bill S-13 from the House of Commons and to resolve never to consider state sanctioned homicide on the grounds of health, age, illness, disability or any other debilitating infirmity whatsoever from this day on.

DEATH PENALTY

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition contains 389 signatures.

The petitioners request that parliament allow Canadian citizens to vote directly in a national binding referendum on the restoration of the death penalty for first-degree murder convictions.

MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honoured to be able to present a petition on behalf of constituents of mine and other residents of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The petitioners call upon this government to look seriously at its commitment to participate in the development of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. They express serious concerns to this government about the way in which this agreement will jeopardize democracy, sovereignty and our economic and social institutions in this country.

They believe the MAI is fundamentally flawed in that it seeks to protect the rights of investors without providing similar protection for workers through binding core labour standards. They believe that the MAI is undemocratic and that it will tie our hands as elected parliamentarians for 20 years.

They call upon this government to reject the MAI and to look at globalization and international trade deals on the basis of compassion and humanity.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mrs. Karen Redman (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I present to this House a petition carrying the names of residents of Kitchener Centre and surrounding areas calling for action in the situation in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

The petitioners ask parliament to consider the best interests of all citizens of Serbia and to take action toward peace and democracy in that region.

PROSTATE CANCER

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present this morning.

In the first petition the petitioners note that one man in eight will suffer from prostate cancer and that one-third of those sufferers will die of the disease. The cost for treating prostate cancer is very high.

The petitioners request that the sum of \$1 per Canadian per year be made payable to cancer research earmarked for prostate cancer.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition was organized by Mr. Doug Massey of Ladner, British Columbia. The petitioners are residents on lands claimed by Tsawwassen, Musqueam, Sto'lo, Burrard and Katzie

Routine Proceedings

Indian bands. They call on parliament to hold a referendum to seek the consent and authorization of residents prior to beginning negotiations concerning waterways, rights, et cetera.

They further request that a second referendum be held to ratify the final agreement.

YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present three petitions on behalf of the constituents of my riding of Stormont—Dundas.

The first petition calls for a review and a revision of the Young Offenders Act.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is a request for Canada to take a lead role in the campaign to abolish all nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

PUBLIC NUDITY

Mr. Bob Kilger (Stormont—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the third petition calls upon parliament to amend the Criminal Code, specifically subsections 173 and 174, the indecent act and public nudity provisions, to clearly state that a woman exposing her breasts in a public place is an indecent act.

* * *

● (1210)

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. John Cummins (Delta—South Richmond, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on October 28, 1997, I presented Question No. 33 and on December 2, 1997, Question No. 56.

Question No. 33 references the refusal of the Oak Bay Marine Group to supply the Department of Fisheries and Oceans with adequate catch data.

Question No. 56 is with regard to the arrangement between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and sport fishing lodges in 1995 for the provision of daily catch data.

Those questions have not been answered.

In addition, I presented Question No. 51 on December 1, 1997. Question No. 51 dealt with aboriginal fishing activities in British Columbia during the period March 31, 1992 to March 30, 1997.

There have been no responses to these questions and they are long overdue.

Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the department has tried to respond in a timely fashion. I will make note of the hon. member's concerns and pass them on.

Government Orders

Sometimes when members ask questions the information takes a great deal of time because the data has to come from many sources and in some cases it dates back over a long period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PENSION BENEFITS STANDARDS ACT, 1985

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill S-3, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985 and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: When the House broke for question period the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue had 29 minutes remaining in her remarks and she now has the floor.

Mrs. Sue Barnes (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will try to wrap it up a little earlier than the full 29 minutes.

I believe when I left off I was speaking about standardizing pension plan contracts and transferring, especially for the small employer, some plan administration responsibility to financial institutions as a cost reduction measure. The details of this regime will be introduced later through regulations.

I would like to move now to speak about reducing regulatory burden.

Under Bill S-3 the Minister of Finance would be able to enter into a multilateral supervisory agreement that is currently being developed by OSFI and the provincial pension regulators through the Canadian Association of Pension Supervisory Authorities, known as CAPSA.

OSFI has been participating in this development for upwards of two years now. By reducing the number of rules to be complied with the regulatory burden facing multi-jurisdictional plans will be reduced. This goal is consistent with the government's objective of reducing overall regulatory burden.

While a number of issues remain to be worked out it makes sense to include the authority to enter into this agreement now to make way for future reductions in regulatory burden. In drafting this package I should point out that the government reviewed legisla-

tion in other jurisdictions in order to benefit from their experience and to minimize any regulatory differences.

I have highlighted the key principles underlying the proposed legislation and now I want to turn to some of the specifics of Bill S-3 itself.

I will start with OSFI's supervisory focus, wherein Bill S-3 replaces OSFI's obligation to review all plan documents and amendments with the requirement that plan administrators certify at the time of their filing that documents and amendments meet the regulatory requirements.

This change focuses the ultimate responsibility for the plan administration where it belongs, on the plan administrators. In turn, this allows OSFI to allocate resources to solvency concerns or higher risk plans. This refocusing is consistent with the government's intention to further clarify OSFI's mandate. It must also be noted that OSFI retains the right to review documents and amendments on a case by case basis and will do so as appropriate.

• (1215)

As I mentioned earlier, the superintendent currently has very limited powers to take remedial actions with respect to a pension plan. Bill S-3 introduces several specific new authorities and I will only describe the most important of these.

The most significant is the authority to issue directions of compliance to plans regarding conduct which is contrary to safe and sound financial or business practices and for breaches of the act. This is similar to the power in the financial institutions legislation.

Bill S-3 introduces an appropriate due process along with the authority for the superintendent to seek a court order requiring compliance with the direction. In addition, Bill S-3 gives the superintendent the authority to attend and call meetings with an administrator or to require an administrator to call a meeting with members and other professionals in attendance.

This authority could be used when OSFI believes that the pension plan members or all the members of a particular plan's board of trustees are not fully apprised of the problem. The superintendent will also have the authority to obtain independent professional advice at the expense of the plan. Some plans routinely neglect to file reports required by OSFI to adequately monitor plan solvency. This authority will help the superintendent to have these reports prepared.

Finally, the superintendent will be able to remove an administrator and appoint a replacement when a plan is being wound up and circumstances suggest that members' interests are not best served by the incumbent.

I am going to take a minute to cover the funding rules which have been advanced under this bill.

Under Bill S-3 the superintendent must approve any benefit enhancements that reduce the plan solvency ratio below the

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prescribed rates or levels. This reflects the government's belief that it is not appropriate for pension plans already experiencing financial difficulties to make improvements when there is no way for the employer to increase funding.

I have received some concerns, as I am sure my colleagues have, with respect to this approach. It is important for this House to understand what concerns have been voiced and to know that the government is working to address them.

First, we want the House to realize that the concerns being raised relate primarily to the solvency threshold which plans must maintain in order to improve benefits. This bill does not specify that threshold. Those details will be provided in the regulations.

Our original white paper indicated the government was looking at requiring that plans now show a solvency ratio of 105% after an amendment, with this requirement being phased in steadily over approximately a 15 year period. Subsequently a range of experts was consulted on this proposal. Professional and industry groups and unions have pointed out that this threshold may be too high and that more flexibility is desired. Consultation is continuing on the regulation that will provide the details behind this provision while recognizing that it serves pension plan members no great service to be promised benefit improvements that cannot be delivered.

Alternatives are being considered for achieving the same result. This could involve a lower threshold accompanied by realistic commitments from the plan to fund itself in an appropriate manner. There may also be other options that will emerge as this work is further fleshed out. It should be made clear that the government will undertake considerable consultation prior to the issuance of the regulations associated in particular with this provision.

I will spend a couple of moments on the arbitration process for surplus assets. In the white paper interested parties were invited to comment on proposals dealing with entitlement to pension plan surplus assets. Many comments were received but not many concrete suggestions were made. Most comments indicated that this is a difficult area to legislate and any improvement would be welcomed.

The government believes that Bill S-3 facilitates arrangements between employers and employees concerning the use of surplus assets in two ways. It provides a lower cost alternative to going to court and it promotes an environment where employers and employees work toward a mutually satisfactory compromise.

• (1220)

Briefly, Bill S-3 proposes that if entitlement to surplus assets is not clearly demonstrated in the pension plan documents then the employer can propose to the employees a surplus withdrawal.

If more than two thirds of the employees consent and required solvency thresholds are met, the superintendent may approve the

withdrawal. For ongoing plans, if less than two thirds but more than one half of the employees consent, then the employer can opt to seek arbitration.

Originally Bill S-3 provided that for plans being wound up if less than two thirds but more than one half of the employees consented, arbitration would be mandatory. As I noted earlier, the Senate made a few amendments to the bill, all dealing with the surplus issue. The Senate was concerned about certain situations regarding plans in the wind-ups.

From the point of view of pension plan members and retirees, the timely statement, settlement and distribution of surplus assets is a priority. We agree that this is a concern. As such, the original bill had a certain no man's land. No definitive action to deal with surplus assets or surplus was required if less than one half of the employees consented to a proposal.

The Senate passed an amendment that requires arbitration within 18 months after the termination of the plan, irrespective of consent levels achieved for any proposals. The Senate also questioned the intent of the requirement for the superintendent to approve the withdrawal. Clearly the intent is there to ensure that certain minimum solvency thresholds are maintained. Obviously the superintendent is not going to consent to a surplus withdrawal that would jeopardize plan solvency.

The Senate agreed with the intent but perceived that the original drafting of Bill S-3 provided the superintendent with pervasive scope for not consenting to a surplus withdrawal, in particular if the superintendent did not think that the deal was fair.

There was a concern that if an employer went through the rather lengthy consent and arbitration process the superintendent could arbitrarily deny the withdrawal. As such, an amendment was passed by the Senate which requires that the superintendent in deciding whether to consent to a refund must recognize the claim of the employer to the surplus or part of the surplus, as arbitrated under the provisions of the act.

The government believes that the Senate amendments fill gaps in Bill S-3, and we appreciate the additions. Other more technical amendments were also passed.

The measures in this bill are the result of a broad consultation process. When drafting this legislation the comments received on the initial proposals contained in the white paper were considered and the appropriate amendments made. Provincial ministers responsible for the supervision of provincial pension acts were also invited to comment and there was ongoing consultation among pension supervisors throughout CAPSA.

Other proposals in the white paper not addressed in this legislation will be introduced later through regulation. Areas such as

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additional disclosure requirements and funding rules are already dealt with through regulations, and this approach will continue.

In other cases such as planned governance and investments, the government believes it is more appropriate to develop best practices. We recognize that the size and other attributes of individual pension plans will effect governance structures and investment strategies.

Considerable additional consultation will take place prior to the implementation of these regulations and any resulting guidelines.

At this time, on behalf of the government I would like to thank the Senate and the many industry participants and other stakeholders who provided constructive and insightful advice. I can assure them that the government looks forward to additional feedback on its regulations and guidelines in the future.

I have highlighted the important issues dealt with in this legislation. Bill S-3 will enhance the stability of Canada's private pension plan regime to the benefit of plan members throughout Canada. Of that we are confident.

I encourage my hon. colleagues in the House to give speedy passage to this bill and I thank them for their attention.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say at the outset that it is a pleasure for me to rise today to speak to Bill S-3 but it is not. I say that not because I am particularly opposed to this piece of legislation but because I am very much opposed to the way the government has decided to introduce some of this substantive legislation through the other place.

• (1225)

Bill S-3, an act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985 and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Act, accomplishes four things. First, it enhances the powers of the superintendent of financial institutions to supervise a pension plan which includes the authority to issue directions of compliance. Second, it is designed to clarify that the office of the superintendent of financial institutions' focus with respect to the supervision of pension plans is on matters affecting the funding and financial condition of pension plans and not on reviewing the text of all pension plans and amendments that are filed.

Third, it provides a mechanism for an employer to establish entitlement to surplus assets, including obtaining membership consent and access to an arbitration process. Fourth, it authorizes the Minister of Finance to participate in agreements with designated provincial authorities respecting the application of provincial law to any pension plan that is subject to federal jurisdiction.

These changes are intended to improve the supervisory regime for pension plans under the PBSA which regulates approximately 1,100 of Canada's 16,000 pension plans. These changes also reduce the administrative burden regarding private sector pension plans and allows the office of the superintendent of financial institutions to have increased supervisory powers to take action when concern arises over the safety and soundness of a plan.

I will talk about some of the highlights of this bill under two main areas. The first area is that of administrative reductions. Under the amended bill, plan administrators will be allowed to certify that all pension plan amendments meet with the standards of the law. This is instead of the present requirement which states that each change must be reviewed and improved individually. The change will allow for greater time to be spent on other matters.

A new kind of simplified pension plan is also created under Bill S-3. In this plan a small employer can use a standardized plan text administered through a financial institution such as a trust company. This is designed to permit defined benefit plans to be extended to small employers who were formerly frozen out of offering such plans due to the high administrative costs involved in creating a customized plan. This will be an added bonus for these small businesses. This bill will allow employers to act as administrators for plans established under collective agreements.

The second area is increased supervisory powers for the office of the superintendent of financial institutions, OSFI. There are several increased supervisory powers for OSFI. Most of these changes will allow the office of the superintendent of financial institutions greater powers.

Some major changes include the following. The superintendent will have the right to call meetings with plan administrators or to force administrators to call meetings with plan members to discuss problems. The office of the superintendent of financial institutions may enforce changes to a plan before the plan faces bankruptcy. Under existing legislation the superintendent has only two options, to close the plan down or to let it run.

Changes in this bill would also allow the OSFI to expect that the administrator of a plan would use such techniques as diversification and match assets to liabilities to avoid risks. The OSFI may issue directions of compliance, a kind of court order, to prohibit certain actions on the part of individual plan administrators. The OSFI will be given the powers to remove administrators and replace them with a court appointed administrator when a plan is being wound up. The OSFI will also be given the power to administer a new set of rules requiring that surplus assets in the wind-up of a plan will be distributed fairly and in an open manner. A vote must be held among plan members to determine how the surplus will be distributed. In principle I support the bill, as does the official opposition. However, there are some serious concerns

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regarding how the bill came before us today and I mentioned that at the outset.

• (1230)

The bill was introduced and passed by the Senate of Canada and is before us today as the sober second thought before the bill is passed and given royal assent to become law. It is ironic that a bill of this nature, one which would normally be introduced in the other place and then sent to the Senate for final approval, is brought here by the very place that is to provide a second look at legislation normally.

Our House leader, the member for Langley—Abbotsford, raised a question of privilege on this very issue because of the nature of this place. Three of the five political parties did not have the opportunity to discuss the bill in the first instance in the other place. The hon. member also argued that a similar bill, Bill C-85 introduced in the 35th Parliament, received royal assent and did not this time. There were also arguments made that this was a supply or in other words a money bill and we all know from Canadian history and politics courses that bills of this nature are only to be introduced in this Chamber.

The Speaker ruled this was not a question of privilege and that the bill is properly before the House now after being introduced and debated in the other place. I am not arguing with the Speaker's judgement but I am calling into question why the government would have this legislation introduced in the other place.

My main concern comes with the representation of the people of Canada. There will be several individuals affected by this legislation and my concern is why the government introduced this particular piece of legislation in the Senate, an institution that is unelected and unaccountable to the citizens of Canada.

As a member of Parliament I was elected by the people of Prince George—Peace River to represent them. My constituents, knowing their feelings regarding the Senate, an unelected, unequal and what many perceive to be an ineffective institution, would not agree with this practice. Many feel that I am their representative, not an individual appointed by the Prime Minister who may or may not serve the best interests of the province of British Columbia, depending on whether they actually show up for work.

We as the elected members of Parliament need to serve as the first voice for our constituents, not as the sober second thought of legislation. That was the intent of the other place, and so it should remain.

I agree with the intent of the bill before us today but not with the way it came to us to be debated.

Mr. Bob Kilger: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among representatives of all parties.

Some of our colleagues who would have liked to debate this subject matter are not present today but look forward to taking part when we resume the debate at a later date. This is with particular reference to the members of the Bloc Québécois.

I think there would be consent that those who want to participate and are available for debate today do so and that when we return to this subject matter at a later date the representative for the Bloc Québécois, in accordance with Standing Order 74, be given 40 minutes on debate if he or she so chooses.

Mr. Ken Epp: Madam Speaker, I just want the record to clearly show we have agreed to this in an honest attempt to try to keep our House working well together and I would like the record to show that the Bloc owes us one.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Is there agreement to proceed as such?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1235)

Mr. Bill Gilmour (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ref.): Madam Speaker, my discussion will centre not on the bill, because by and large we support portions of the bill, but on the origins of the bill.

The bill originated in the Senate, and this is where the Reform Party has some difficulty. The Senate is unelected, unaccountable, unlike the House of Commons, and we feel bills should be originating in this House. They then should go through the other place for sober second thought. That is fine. We agree with that. However, we have major difficulty with having bills originate in the Senate.

The reason we have the difficulty is the unelected and biased nature of the other place. I would like to go through the appointments the Prime Minister has made to the other place since he came to power.

There are 28 appointments and the reason I wish to go through this list is to show how biased the appointments are and that legislation originating in the other place has to be biased because of the make-up of the Senate.

The Prime Minister's appointments to the Senate were Sharon Carstairs, a former Manitoba Liberal leader; Landon Pearson, who is married to the son of former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson; Lise Bacon, former Liberal deputy premier of Quebec; Jean-Robert Gauthier, a long time Liberal member of Parliament. John G. Bryden was a candidate for Liberal leader in New Brunswick and managed the Prime Minister's 1990 New Brunswick Liberal leadership campaign. The point I am making is that these people are all very biased.

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Rose-Marie Losier-Cool has no patronage connection disclosed; Céline Hervieux-Payette, former Liberal cabinet minister under Prime Minister Trudeau; Marie-Paule Poulin, former deputy secretary to the cabinet in the privy council office. These are all senators appointed by the Prime Minister.

Doris Anderson has no patronage connection that was disclosed; Bill Rompkey, former Liberal cabinet minister in the Trudeau government; Lorna Milne, former Liberal riding president and a Liberal Party worker; Joseph Landry, former Liberal member of the New Brunswick legislative assembly; Shirley Maheu, former Liberal member of this House.

Nick Taylor is a former Alberta Liberal leader; Jean Forest's patronage connection was not disclosed; Eugene Whelan, former Liberal cabinet minister under Trudeau; Leonce Mercier, Quebec Liberal organizer; Wilfred Moore, no patronage connection; Lucie Pépin, former Liberal member of Parliament.

Catherine Callbeck is former Liberal premier of Prince Edward Island; Sister Peggy Butts, no Liberal connection that we could find; Fernand Robichaud, former Liberal MP in the government; Marisa Ferretti Barth, no connection; Serge Joyal, former Liberal MP and prominent Liberal backroom fellow. Thelma Chalifoux has no patronage connection; Joan Cook, failed provincial Liberal candidate and loyal Liberal worker; Archibald Johnstone, no patronage connection.

The last appointment which raised a lot of concern in this House and across the country was Ross Fitzpatrick, prominent B.C. Liberal organizer and golfing buddy of the Prime Minister. In fact, he is a former business associate of the Prime Minister.

The point I wish to make is that 20 of these 28 appointments have blatant Liberal connections. Any bill that originates in the Senate, as Bill S-3 did, and then comes to this House by definition has to be biased.

● (1240)

What these appointments demonstrate is that the Senate is not working and it needs to be reformed. The Senate was set up by the Fathers of Confederation to represent the provinces. That was the original intent of our Senate. Quite clearly from the list I have just read, the majority of senators appointed by the Prime Minister represent not the provinces they come from but the Liberal Party, the party of the Prime Minister.

Again, that is the concern we have with legislation that originates because it is by definition biased. The bill we largely support but we do not support the process. The process is flawed and any bill that comes through the Senate should be looked at. By definition, a money bill cannot come through the House but other

bills we feel should originate with all of us who are elected, accountable.

If we go back to our constituents and they do not like what we have done, we will not be elected in the next election. That is accountability. There is no accountability in that other place. By definition we feel all bills should originate in the House.

Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I ask my colleague to comment on the distribution of the members of the Senate in terms of how many there are from each province relative to the population of British Columbia and so on. I think he is aware of these numbers and he could enlighten us as to how well the Senate does in representing the different population areas of the country.

Mr. Bill Gilmour: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the opportunity to expand on the numbers in the Senate.

When the Senate first started and the country was small, between Upper and Lower Canada or Ontario and Quebec there were 24 senators each. The maritimes have 30 collectively. Where it falls apart is west of the Ontario border because instead of each of the western provinces being given a number of senators equal or in comparison to the other provinces that were already in, the four western provinces got only twenty-four senators, in other words, six for Alberta, six for B.C., six for Manitoba and six for Saskatchewan.

This is a major discrepancy and it is something that will take constitutional change. For example, electing a senator does not take constitutional change. That can be done as was shown with Senator Stan Waters. The difficulty in the numbers is what is going to take quite an arm wrestling match because there is a disproportionate number across the country.

Mr. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, PC): Madam Speaker, Bill S-3 proposes to update the Pension Benefits Standards Act, a law through which the federal government supervises private pension plans.

Canada's system of retirement income has three pillars. The first pillar is the basic old age security paid to all seniors together with the various supplements paid to low income seniors. This first pillar will soon be undermined by the proposed seniors benefits which will result in effective marginal tax rates approaching 70% for some seniors from the combined effect of existing tax rates and the 20% clawback on family incomes above \$26,000.

Retirement savings experts are already telling middle income Canadians over the age of 50 to be wary of savings in RRSPs because what they save now will be most likely eaten up in higher taxes later. This creates a direct disincentive for Canadians to do what is right and that is to save for their own futures and for their retirements.

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The second pillar consists of the employment based Canada and Quebec pension plans. Under the government's reforms to this pillar Canadians will have to pay more to get less.

The third pillar includes retirement savings such as RRSPs and employer pension plans. The government has moved to restrict access to RRSPs by freezing contribution limits and forcing seniors to mature their RRSPs two years earlier.

• (1245)

The legislation deals with the other part of the third pillar, employer pension plans. Most employer pension plans are governed by provincial law, but 500,000 Canadians belong to the 1,000 plans that fall under federal law.

Ten years ago the Progressive Conservative government overhauled the Pension Benefits Standards Act, the law that covers those plans. Significant changes were made to the minimum standards that plans must meet in areas ranging from survivor benefits to information disclosure. The bill before us updates that act.

The goals of the bill are to improve the way that plans are governed, to improve Ottawa's ability to step in when plan administrators do not appear to be following sound financial practices to set up rules for the withdrawal of pension surpluses. It will also allow Ottawa to enter into supervisory agreements with provincial regulators through the Canadian Association of Pension Supervisory Authorities.

Unlike other recent changes to our system of retirement savings, the only parts of the bill to generate even minor controversy are the provisions that pertain to the withdrawal of pension surpluses. Pension fund managers are concerned that the surplus and the wind-up provisions in the bill are weighed heavily against employers.

However, the bill is not particularly controversial. There has been some controversy over the introduction of some government bills in the Senate, a practice which has fallen into disuse in recent years.

Without getting into a debate on Senate reform, if bills are to be introduced in the Senate, Bill S-3 is especially the kind of bill on which the Senate can do solid work before sending it on to the Commons. This is particularly the case given the combination of the technical nature of the bill, the expertise of those on the Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce in the area of corporate governance and the non-partisan spirit of co-operation with which members of this committee approach such legislation.

To not optimize the collective skills, wisdom and experience of these senators is an affront to the Canadian taxpayer. We do have a

Senate. The senators on this committee have demonstrated prowess, ability and expertise in these areas. I would remind my colleagues in the Reform Party that to not optimize this expertise would be denying Canadian taxpayers another level of deliberation on this type of important legislation.

It is an approach that we could use here from time to time when we look at legislation, especially legislation affecting areas of corporate governance where there is a significant amount of institutional knowledge in the Senate.

The Senate banking committee has made six substantive amendments as a result of the testimony it heard from officials and from outside witnesses. The Senate amendments further clarify the rules to be followed when an employer wants to withdraw from the pension surplus. It struck a provision that would have given the Superintendent of Financial Institutions the ability to decide if a particular allocation of a surplus was fair, as the issue of fairness should be left to the employees and employers to be settled, not to a public servant.

It also improved a process for allocating the surplus in cases where a company goes bankrupt or winds down. It is very important that we protect individuals when a company is faced with the types of dramatic downsizing and corporate readjustments that have occurred over the past few years. The legislation will help improve that process.

Those amendments were developed by opposition and government members in the Senate, working in a spirit of co-operation with the officials. A spirit of co-operation might be something that we should try to duplicate in the House periodically when we are working on legislation as important as this legislation.

At the end of the process finance officials conceded that the bill had been improved by the contribution of the Senate. Our colleagues in the other place have done well on this rather technical bill. That does mean that we do not have to do our work or that we do not have further work to do.

I look forward to the committee examination of the bill and to further improving it through contributions by the House.

Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask a question of my colleague who just spoke.

As I understand it, the opposition which my colleagues made to this was the fact that the issuance of the bill that came from the Senate was in violation of Standing Order 80 that says:

All aids and supplies granted to the Sovereign by the Parliament of Canada are the sole gift of the House of Commons—

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• (1250)

Section 53 of the Constitution Act provides that only the House of Commons may table money bills. It goes on to say that bills which require the expenditure of public funds or invoking a tax or an impost. That means fines, levies, duties and penalties. These bills are totally out of order with Standing Order 80 and run opposite to section 53.

Does the member agree that these bills should not originate in the Senate but should come from here first?

Mr. Scott Brison: Madam Speaker, the hon. member would seek to deny Canadians the benefit of the expertise of the Senate on this type of legislation. As a parliamentarian I am quite proud of the spirit of co-operation and the level of expertise that benefited Canadians through the work of the Senate on the legislation. I work alongside senators to provide the good representation Canadians deserve.

Senate reform is another issue. It is arguable that there needs to be some significant Senate reform. It was under a Conservative government that Stan Waters was elected as a senator. While there is a need for Senate reform in the interim we need to maximize both houses. This may mean that some legislation will periodically be introduced in the Senate where more substantive, non-partisan co-operation and expertise can benefit Canadians before it reaches the House.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I will follow up on the issue raised by my colleague. The member rightly points out that there are some very fine, dedicated and capable people serving in the Senate. We could all wish they were more democratically chosen but that does not necessarily reflect on their abilities. That is a good point.

However we have a different problem. We have an issue that lies at the heart of democracy. In a democracy it is the people who rule. When decisions are made with respect to spending their money, shaping their future and ordering their lives, should it not be the people through their elected representatives who bring those measures forward? If we are to endorse a situation where the other place—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): I am afraid I have to interrupt at this point. The question of what emanates from the Senate is a question for the Senate and for the House. As far as the bill being receivable in the House is concerned, the Speaker has already ruled on that matter.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, with respect, that seems to be a very integral part of the bill which goes to the heart of who makes decisions for the people of Canada. If we are not allowed to discuss that issue here then the democratic process is not well served.

While I want to respect the concerns raised by the Chair, I might appeal to the Chair to consider whether we really want to cut off the issue of debate at this time.

• (1255)

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The purpose of the debate is not to question what has already happened. I am prepared to let the debate continue at this time with the understanding that the Senate has to make its own rules.

As far as this is concerned, does the hon. member have a question to ask at this point?

Mr. Jay Hill: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker, on the same question that was raised and for further clarification of where we are coming from here. In the bill there is an enacting clause which says "Her Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Commons".

How can challenging the advice from the other place be out of order when it is in the enacting clause? Not only is the Senate mentioned in the enacting clause of the bill, but the bill was introduced in the Senate and it is the Senate that is asking the House of Commons to consider it.

When a bill is under time allocation it is appropriate to debate the use of time allocation. Time allocation has nothing to do with the principle of the bill. Yet it is fair game to debate it because time allocation was used to advance the bill through parliament.

In this case the government is using the Senate to introduce bills to advance its legislation through parliament. For this reason it should be in order to debate this procedure as it is in order to debate time allocation. How can it be relevant to debate some procedures and not relevant to debate others?

Citation 459(1) of Beauchesne's sixth edition states:

Relevance is not easy to define. In borderline cases the Member should be given the benefit of the doubt—

The case for debating the use of the Senate to introduce legislation must be allowed. You may have some personal doubts, Madam Speaker, but I would suggest that you give the member who is addressing the bill the benefit of the doubt.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The matter has already been ruled on by the Speaker and the purpose of the debate today is to debate the bill.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, Ref.): Madam Speaker, today we are debating a bill that probably does not affect a lot of Canadians, but every legislative procedure which ties the hands of and puts regulations in place for any Canadian is of interest to all of us.

The bill is entitled amendments to the Pension Benefits Standards Act. The bill amends an act that was brought into place some

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time ago. Its purpose is to improve the supervisory regime for pension plans that are regulated under the act, especially private pension plans established for employees who are subject to federal jurisdiction such as in the fields of banking, interprovincial transportation and telecommunications. Provinces have similar legislation to look after private pension plans that fall under provincial jurisdiction.

• (1300)

The whole point of the exercise is to make sure when employees put their hard earned dollars into the hands of their employers on the understanding that they are going to have some pension benefits at the end of the day, that their interests will be protected and looked after. This is so they will not end up 20 years later with the company in bankruptcy and a notice on the door saying sorry but they have no pension.

This is an important bill, not just in the federal jurisdiction. Quite often measures put into place federally are looked at, mirrored and seen as a benchmark for what is done in the provinces.

For at least a decade there has been controversy about actuarial surpluses in private employer-employee pension plans. This is a very nice problem to have. It is wonderful to be a member of a pension plan that actually has more money in the bank than will ever be needed to pay the full pensions of all the people in the plan.

That is such a nice situation one could only very much wish that the same prudence had been exhibited by our federal government with respect to the Canada pension plan. Far from having to worry about who gets a big surplus in the Canada pension fund, we have to worry about who is going to get stuck with paying for a debt in that plan of \$485 billion. The government says it is no problem, that it will just make our kids and our grandkids pay it, so what is there to worry about? The money is not there but the government will just get it from them. That is how our federal public pension plan has been managed.

Fortunately there has been a bit more prudence in some of the private pension plans and there is actually a surplus. One issue which has been raised is what happens to a surplus when there is one. Obviously it should not just sit there for ever and ever. It needs to be allocated in some fair and reasonable manner.

This was not a problem much before the mid-1980s, but there has been spectacular growth in some of the private pension plans over the last few years. One plan we know about enjoyed a 21% growth in 1995, 20% growth in 1996 and 17% growth in 1997. It would be nice to have that kind of return on our Canada pension plan. Instead, our kids are promised less than 2% growth. That is what we are giving our kids but the private pension plans do not seem to have that trouble. It is nice for them. It is too bad the children and the youth of Canada cannot expect that kind of prudent management for their pensions.

If there is a surplus in the millions of dollars in these pension plans, who is entitled to it? One might think that the entitlement would be fairly simple, that it would go back to the people who put it in, the employers and the employees. But there always seems to be some tension.

Is the employer company entitled to the surplus because it managed the plan so well and therefore the surplus should be its reward? Or should the surplus belong to the workers who actually made the capital investment in the first place? These questions in the past have been left to the courts to decide. The judicial part of our system does rule in these kinds of disputes.

This issue was brought to a head in 1986 when the owner of Dominion stores took back \$63 million from three employee pension plans. The employees were not too impressed with this so they went to court. The court ordered the owner of Dominion stores to return the funds to the employees. This caused some concern in the provincial sphere because at that time the province of Ontario had legislation that regulated these funds.

• (1305)

In 1986 Ontario put a moratorium on all the surpluses so they could not be taken or distributed. Although the moratorium has been relaxed somewhat, the provincial rules for division of surpluses are very stringent. There has to be agreement by 90% of the employees before any surplus in private pension funds can be distributed.

The official opposition believes there are some questions in Bill S-3 with respect to accountability. It is our duty, mandate and responsibility on behalf of the citizens of this country to hold the government accountable by being a watchdog to make sure when the government takes steps that it is doing the right thing.

The Reform Party has been playing that role vigorously with respect to the whole issue of payment of compensation to hepatitis C victims. In a host of other issues the official opposition looks at the issue and indicates its concern that the government is not treating citizens of this country fairly.

When this bill goes to committee and at third reading the Reform Party will work vigorously on behalf of Canadian citizens whose moneys are deposited with private pension plans. It is important to make sure that when government brings this legislation forward that we research and understand who it is that stands to benefit from it. There are not many big pension plans in the country. Therefore it is a limited number of people who may or may not benefit or who may or may not be penalized or who may or may not suffer potential loss with this kind of legislation.

The role of the superintendent of pension funds is set out under the Pension Benefit Standards Act which is the act we are talking about amending. The superintendent is supposed to make sure that the private pension plans are well funded. In other words the

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superintendent makes sure that if employees are putting their monthly or weekly contributions into a company pension plan that the company manages those funds in such a way to protect the interests of the employees.

It is unfortunate that the same standard of care and the same vigorous oversight of the Canada pension plan is not in place. There are millions of Canadians in a Canada pension plan that is not funded. Less than 10% of the funds needed to pay pensions under the Canada pension plan are actually in place. Imagine the outcry if private pension plans were allowed to operate with only 6% of the funds that would be needed at the end of the day to pay out pensions actually kept in the fund and the employer spent the rest of the money for its own business purposes. Somebody would be in jail but of course when the federal government does this, nothing happens.

Fortunately for people with private pension plans there is a little more diligence. Somebody does care what private employers do even if nobody seems to care how imprudent the federal government is. The superintendent makes sure that the plan remains solvent and does not hand out surpluses. The courts decide who gets any surplus.

Under these amendments, the role of the superintendent is broadened. If 50% of the employees agree, the superintendent appoints an arbitrator to decide how the surplus in a pension plan is to be distributed. The superintendent did not have this role before.

• (1310)

There is something we are going to be asking some pretty pointed questions on in committee. We understand that under the present act it is very unlikely that the employer would get anything out of a surplus in a private pension plan. Under the new act employers will now have the door opened to recover or to be able to use some of the surplus. Again we wonder whether there is any potential conflict of interest, whether this is appropriate and why this possibility is being opened up at this time. We are going to be asking some questions about that.

Right now an employer might try to approach employees for agreement saying he will get half and they will get half, but they will all get something. Even if the employers and employees agreed, the courts would still be required to give their blessing to any distribution. Under these amendments however, an arbitrator would be appointed by the superintendent who would make that decision. The question in our minds is whether that is a better way to go, whether this is something that is appropriate.

We want to raise this concern at second reading before the bill goes to committee. We want to make sure we do our job, not to just say that it looks like a good idea and modernizes the act so let us just go ahead. We have a responsibility to look into these matters

and we will do that. I want to put on the record that is where we will be going on this.

We want to encourage modernization of some of the measures. We want to reduce administrative burdens where this can be done because it is really the employees, the people who benefit from pension plans, who have to pay those costs. If they can be reduced it is a good thing and we would applaud that.

We would also make sure there continues to be a very high level of supervision of these plans. No one wants to find out at the end of the day that the pension plan they paid into all their working lives and are counting on has gone missing, that the money is not there or has not been managed in a way that makes sure pensions are available.

That is the same concern the official opposition has regarding the Canada pension plan. Down the road we believe our children may say they are not going to pay money for a very low return for themselves and the Canada pension plan will simply not be available for us.

As with many bills, we see some positive measures. We see some benefits for the citizens who are affected. However we also do have some real concerns regarding how much this broadening of the ability outside the courts for the distribution of a surplus should be increased. That is a real concern. I urge other parties in the House to also look closely at this area.

We will continue to study the bill during the committee hearings. Other issues may arise. However we have identified the main one. We believe we need to be vigilant on behalf of Canadians to make sure there are not employers who seek to gain a disproportionate advantage from employees, as was the case with the Dominion stores distribution.

We as official opposition in this second reading stage see some good measures of streamlining in this bill. We also see some areas where we would like to probe a little more deeply, look at some of the winners and losers a bit more carefully.

With those remarks I hope we will be in a position to ensure that in whatever form this legislation comes back at third reading, it will truly be in the best interests of all Canadians, particularly those directly affected by the act.

• (1315)

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Calgary—Nose Hill for her excellent presentation on Bill S-3.

I noted in her speech that she mentioned the modernization of the pension plan regime, and I would like to add to that: What about modernization of the place where the bill originated?

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I would like to clarify that earlier one of my other colleagues, the member for Souris—Moose Mountain, rose on questions and comments. I believe he was not questioning the validity of the Speaker's ruling. When the Speaker ruled that it was in order, that the Senate actually introduced Bill S-3, the bill that we are debating today, I do not believe he was questioning that.

Would the member for Calgary—Nose Hill like to comment on the general practice where a government would continue to introduce legislation through the back door, as it were, through an unelected, unequal and unaccountable Senate?

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy: Madam Speaker, this is an issue that will continue to be of concern to Canadians.

Democracy really means rule by the people. In a democracy, since we cannot all be in Athens and put our black bean or our white bean into the circle, we elect people to represent us in that capacity. We rule through the agent of our elected representatives.

We have another house of government in the country which is not elected and does not have a mandate from the people who are supposed to be the rulers of the country. That being the case, unelected people in a democracy should not be bringing forth measures on behalf of the people. That totally flies in the face of the whole principle of democracy.

When bills are introduced in that way, my position and I believe the position of most Canadians is that is terribly undemocratic. It contravenes some of the most cherished traditions and values of our country.

It must be fought vigorously, not because the people in the Senate are competent as many of them are and not because the people in the Senate do not have levels of expertise sometimes greater than that of many members of the House but simply and solely because senators are not the democratically chosen representatives of the people whose job it is to order their own lives, spend their own money and shape their own future.

We will oppose the introduction of bills at every turn of the wheel.

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak for a moment. I probably will not take my allotted time because the member for Calgary—Nose Hill did a superb job of analysing what is in the bill and how it will affect the lives of a lot of people.

I would like to take a moment to say a couple of words with regard to the Senate. I ask the senators and constituents who are watching this debate on television to hang on to their armchairs because I am about to say something that is very nice regarding the Senate. That is probably a shock to a lot of people.

I want to allude to the fact that the bill originated in the Senate. At the present time a committee of senators are travelling around the country, particularly in the west, meeting with grassroots, hard working farmers regarding Bill C-4 respecting the wheat board. The senators are meeting with these people and I hope they are listening.

I feel it is very efficient for the Senate to be doing that. If someone were to identify it as a job description, a very important part of it would be getting into the country and representing the regional interests of all Canadians.

• (1320)

In this place 104 members of Parliament from Ontario and 79 members of Parliament from Quebec, which constitutes a high majority, voted in favour of a bill that does not affect any of their constituents but has an impact on western farmers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and northern B.C.

I commend the senators for being out there in the region affected by a bill that is being passed. They are making certain that it is in the regional interest. If they are truly listening to the people, I am certain they will come back disillusioned that the House would pass such a bill based on the votes of people who live outside the territory being affected.

Let us look at the types of legislation being put into place in the land. We on this side of the House become quite concerned when decisions are made by judges who are unaccountable, unelected individuals or legislation is brought forward by people who are unelected and unaccountable. It is our duty as an opposition party to question the avenue used by the government to bring in the legislation and to suggest that it should stop.

The people of Canada have elected individuals to come to this place to represent their interests. These interests should be brought to this place by their elected representatives. That is what Canadians expect and that is what they want. They do not want unaccountable judges and unaccountable senators making laws of the land. They want their elected officials to do that task. That is what we were elected for.

I commend my colleagues from Calgary—Nose Hill and Prince George—Peace River for their comments on Bill S-3. I agree fully with their comments. The House can expect support from this side. Our only objection would be to the origination of the bill.

Mr. Bob Kilger: I rise on a point of order. Correct me if need be, Madam Speaker, but I do not believe anyone was rising on debate. We have had some discussion among the parties that if this occurred, before the normal adjournment of the debate, we would agree to adjourn the debate at this time, to see the clock as being 1.30 p.m. and to proceed to the Private Members' Business under the name of the member for Calgary Centre.

Private Members' Business

If you seek unanimous consent, Madam Speaker, you would find that we agree to adjourn the debate and to see the clock as being 1.30 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): Does the hon. member have the consent of the House to proceed in such a fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): It being 1.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1325)

[English]

CRIMINAL RECORDS ACT

Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.) moved that Bill C-284, an act to amend the Criminal Records Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act (offences against children), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to Bill C-284 this afternoon. The bill proposes to amend the Criminal Records Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act with respect to sexual offences against children. I was pleased that the bill was drawn and made votable. I do not buy lottery tickets but I feel like I have won.

The bill addresses some of the very real concerns of parents. It addresses some of the procedural shortcomings of our current policies regarding an individual's criminal record. Essentially the bill allows for the disclosure of an individual's criminal record if the individual has been convicted of a sexual offence against a child and later applies for a position of trust with respect to children. We would think that this would be the current case but it is not.

Before I delve into the details of the bill, I would like to lay out the big picture that lies at its heart. Our families are the building block of society. Children are our nation's future.

As one of the constitutional principles of my party, we "affirm the value and dignity of the individual person and the importance of strengthening and protecting the family as essential to the well-being of individuals in society". Our children are a most precious resource as they are our future. If we protect our children we are protecting the future of Canada.

Reformers are concerned about the safety of our children. Reformers are concerned about ensuring that those responsible for children will not abuse their position of trust. Reformers are concerned about how difficult it is for children's organizations to know whom it is that they are hiring and to be sure that they are not putting children at risk.

Especially with respect to sex offences against children, Reformers and hopefully all of us in the House are concerned about protecting those most vulnerable from the potential sexual predator. We justifiably recoil in horror when we hear some of the stories of children being sexually abused. As parliamentarians in the House we have the responsibility to fulfil the fundamental role of government to ensure the protection of our citizens. This is particularly true for children who are the most innocent and vulnerable in society.

Bill C-284 before us today is designed to help address these legitimate concerns. It would enable those responsible for children to make fully informed decisions about whom they hire. It would help ensure public confidence that those responsible for children or looking after children have not abused this position of authority in the past.

Bill C-284 was based on an earlier bill in the 35th parliament tabled by the Reform member from Fraser Valley, which again underlines our commitment to children and families. His bill was in response to a petition from over 25,000 people across Canada which called for specific changes to prevent those convicted of sex offences against children from holding positions of trust over children. This is what Bill C-284 is concerned about. This could effectively be achieved when Bill C-284 is passed.

Let us look at the mechanics of our current legal system in this regard. It is true that when one is convicted of an offence, including a sexual offence against a child, one receives a criminal record and justifiably so. It is true that if a person applies for a position of authority over children in day care, et cetera, the children's agency may do a record check, flag the fact that the person has been convicted of such an offence and take these facts into consideration when considering a job application. This all makes sense and that is how it should be.

Where is the weakness in our current laws? The weakness occurs when an one's sentence is completed and one receives what is termed a "pardon". Let me be clear that "a pardon does not erase the fact that you are convicted of the offence". This is a direct quote from the pardon application booklet of the National Parole Board. The individual has still committed the offence.

Rather, a pardon allows people convicted of a criminal offence to have their criminal record sealed and effectively erased from the public record. This means once a pardon is awarded for an offence for which one is convicted, any federal agency or department that has records of convictions must keep those records separate and away from the public. Therefore, once a pardon is granted the fact that a person was convicted of a criminal offence will not be disclosed or made accessible to anyone without prior approval of

the Solicitor General of Canada which, for practical purposes, is an impossible process.

• (1330)

Essentially once a person receives a pardon for a previous conviction there is no record accessible to the public that there ever was such a conviction or that the pardon was ever even granted.

I do not want to spend too much time debating the merits of pardons, although I will note that according to the National Parole Board for the last number of years 96% of the total decisions it makes are in favour of granting pardons. Very few are denied. More specifically, in 1996-97 there were 18,294 decisions made and 104 decisions were denial, 1% of the total.

With that background let us go back now to Bill C-284. In the preamble of the bill it recognizes that there are certain circumstances in which it may be appropriate to grant a pardon to a person who has been of good behaviour following a conviction for a criminal offence and a period following the completion of the sentence.

Bill C-284 also recognizes that if a person has been granted a pardon for an offence the record of that offence should be kept separate from other records and access thereto should be given only in cases where public interest overrides the privacy of the record.

Bill C-284 would submit that public interest clearly overrides the privacy of the record in connection with the interests of caring for children, particularly when those responsible for children are reviewing applications for employment in positions of trust regarding children.

However, as I earlier indicated, once a pardon has been granted for any offence, including sexual offences against children, the current official policy is don't ask, don't tell. Employers guided by the Criminal Records Act are not to ask someone to disclose a conviction for which a pardon has been granted or issued.

To rectify the situation Bill C-284 proposes to allow the limited disclosure of an individual's criminal record when an individual applies for a position of trust with respect to children, even where a pardon has been granted.

I hear one member saying that makes good sense. I hope we can all concur and speedily pass it through the House.

Children's organizations would then be able to identify those who are more of a risk of abusing a position of trust with such a disclosure, the end result being better protection of Canadian children.

I think we will all agree that the protection of our children is paramount. Those who have suffered from sexual abuse character-

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ize it as a life sentence. We in Parliament have a responsibility to ensure that when one's child is being placed in the hands of another individual those hands are not likely to be abusive. These are the concerns of Bill C-284.

The bill would enable those responsible for children to make fully informed decisions about who they hire. Bill C-284 would give parents with children in third party care the assurance that those responsible for looking after their children have not abused this position in the past. This is important because all the evidence indicates that individuals who have sexually abused others in the past are at greater risk to repeat this abusive behaviour. I will speak further to this a little later, but first I will summarize the particulars of the bill.

First, it is specific in its intent in order to better protect children from those who have been abusive in the past.

Second, Bill C-284 proposes to allow for the limited disclosure of an individual's criminal record if the individual has been convicted of a sexual offence against a child and later applies for a position of trust with respect to children. Such a disclosure will include an individual's criminal record for a previous sexual offence against a child or children, even if one had served one's sentence and had later received permission to have the notice of a conviction removed from the individual's criminal record.

Bill C-284 does not propose that sex offences against children can never be pardoned, although that might be another reasonable thought. The bill does not propose that if one makes a mistake such as this it should be forever on one's criminal record. Again, that might have merit but that is not what this bill is all about.

• (1335)

Rather, Bill C-284 proposes that if one does sexually abuse children that person could effectively be prevented from holding a position of care or authority over children ever again. Those responsible for children will be able to see that a job applicant has abused such a position in the past and thus be more judicious and wise in their hiring practices.

Why is Bill C-284 necessary? Essentially it sends a message that protecting our children is paramount. Bill C-284 provisions are common sense and because studies have shown that those who abused children sexually once are more likely to do it again. This is not harsh on my part. Those are the facts.

Correctional Service Canada studies have shown that about one third of all sex offenders are convicted of a new criminal offence after release. I am referring to a study done in 1996 by Correctional Service Canada, "Forum on Corrections Research". To reference this same source, according to the offenders intake assessment process most of the 808 recent federal admissions with a sexual offence history had recommitted a sexual offence.

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There are other studies I can quote but for sake of time I am going to move on to one other study which indicated that sexual offenders who had committed sex offences in the past had a subsequent sexual recidivism rate of about 30%. Again, not to use my words, but to quote this study's authors, the strongest predictor of repeating sexual assault crimes was not surprisingly a previous sexual offence.

Bill C-284 would address these troubling statistics by giving responsible agencies the means to deny sex offenders the ability to place themselves in high risk situations ever again. It would be good for both the offender and of course for the children.

What about the right to privacy, some may ask. In a May 1996 discussion paper the privacy commissioner explained the Privacy Act does not prevent the release of personal information if it is in the public interest to release such information. In fact, the act specifically permits the release of personal information in public interest.

The April 1996 RCMP protocol manual defines public interest as "evaluated on the basis of whether it is specific, current and probable, where there is a possible invasion of privacy balanced against a public interest, consideration may be given to who would be receiving the information and whether any controls can be placed on further use or release". That is from the RCMP disclosure of personal information in the public interest document.

I submit the disclosure provisions in Bill C-284 fall well within the accepted protocol for the release of personal information, of which one's criminal record is a part.

It is in the public interest for children not to be exposed to those who have abused them in the past and are more likely to do so again in the future, as the statistics I have quoted so clearly show.

It is in the public interest for parents to have confidence in those who are caring for their children, to evaluate public interest on the basis of whether it is specific, current and probable.

Bill C-284 is specific in that the disclosure takes place only when those responsible for children request the information upon reviewing an individual's job application for a position of trust with respect to children. Therefore it is specific. Bill C-284 is current in that disclosure takes place only if an individual applies for a position of trust over children. If no appropriate application is made, then no disclosure is given.

Bill C-284 is probable in that it allows for disclosure only during the time an individual applies for a job with children and information disclosure is very relevant to the situation.

Overall the bill is important for the protection of our children.

• (1340)

Those who have suffered from sexual abuse characterize it as a life sentence. I am quoting Abby Drover who as a 12 year old was held captive in an underground bunker in 1977.

How can we say no to parents and child care agencies crying out for this simple straightforward tool to protect innocent children? How can we say no to the protection of our children as we look into their eyes, place them in someone else's hands, close the door and drive away? We cannot.

Children and their parents thank members for their anticipated support and speedy passage of this bill.

[Translation]

Mr. Nick Discepola (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-284 introduced by the member for Calgary Centre.

The bill deals with sentencing, release on parole, and Canadians' fundamental rights and freedoms, all topics familiar to us in the House.

Over the last 10 years, various justice ministers have presented a variety of legislative initiatives, some of which were specifically intended to introduce stiffer penalties and delay the release of those convicted of crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children.

In 1992, for instance, the House considered and passed an important bill introduced by the then solicitor general and intended to replace the Parole Act and the Penitentiary Act with the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. I must point out that, after a few years, even this act was constructively amended.

With all due respect for the member who introduced this bill, I cannot understand why the House is devoting time to issues that have recently been extensively debated here and in committee, especially when we know that the time allocated to private members' business is limited.

The proposals have been made, however, and I will take the opportunity available to me for comment.

All Canadians know of examples of terrible crimes and what happened to the victims of these criminal acts. From the comments sent to riding offices, mail received and reports in the media, we know that some of our fellow citizens are living in fear of crime and feel that the government has not been successful at protecting society at a time when people's perception is that the law is being flouted.

Private Members' Business

I would emphasize that this is not a view held by all Canadians. Far be it from me, however to ignore the concerns of individuals and groups wanting us to take a stronger stand against criminals.

Not long ago, the crime rate rose every year. More crimes and different types of crimes were being reported, because victims of domestic violence and sexual harassment were less stigmatized and less afraid to speak out and help in the efforts to bring their aggressors to justice.

However, in recent years, violent crime has declined. Despite the vast media coverage of sensational crimes, the general public must be better informed about the way the justice system works and about the measures taken to reduce crime.

Clearly an informed public is more likely to see the gaps in the system it knows only superficially. Those directly responsible for the security of Canadian communities, from the police through prosecutors, judges and, at the end of the line, the federal and provincial criminal law systems, must respond to the criticisms that arise from increased awareness and greater surveillance. This is the least we can do as legislators.

When we look at the statistics, we can see many factors affecting individuals' vulnerability to crime. For example, geographical location is a factor. More violent crime occurs in urban centres than in the country.

• (1345)

What I want to point out is that crime is not endemic everywhere in the country. I agree that many Canadians have no choice but to live where they are and they never know who they will run into one day.

However, it is also reasonable to think that, for many other Canadians, the only violence they will witness will be what they see on their televisions in the evening.

[*English*]

We must respond to these concerns and we must do so in a very effective manner. In the case of individuals, problems may often be dealt with directly by referring them to community and victim support groups that are available within the Ministry of the Solicitor General, from the Correctional Service of Canada and the National Parole Board regional offices throughout the country.

In addition, most police forces assign officers to community service duties and many courts are monitored by representatives of victims service organizations. This direct intervention by our staff members and constituency offices to provide information and assistance is the most satisfactory and personalized solution to constituents who are feeling baffled or neglected by the criminal justice system.

When protests are prompted by system faults, the system must be changed from within, or if necessary, must be altered through the legislative process.

As is sometimes the case in isolated and regrettable instances, the correctional system's failures can be traced to human error where established policies and procedures that would protect the public are ignored or often misapplied. Extraordinary incidents occur with some tragic unfortunate results.

We must do everything in our power to reduce the number of these incidents, but an ineffective response can be worse than no response at all. Piecemeal legislation change is not a solution to the problems perceived.

I believe Bill C-284 is too narrow in its focus and too punitive. The law must be fashioned to accommodate a range of offenders in any given category. That is not to say that there are good people who commit violent and deplorable acts and bad people who are convicted of the same type of offences. There are however levels within each class of offender that lead us to believe that some may more readily resume a law-abiding lifestyle than would offenders who are serving sentences for similar offences.

[*Translation*]

This bill would reject the guiding principle of correctional services, which is that the public is best served if "the criminal is put back on the straight and narrow". Inmates who react well to the opportunities for treatment, training and education offered by our system can return to society one day as law-abiding citizens.

Regardless of what we do for, or to, them, these individuals will be back in the community one day. Consequently, those who no longer constitute a threat must benefit from all reasonable opportunities, so that they may again be part of society as soon as possible.

Not only would the present bill restrict those opportunities for too many criminals, but it would also lengthen sentences without taking court deliberations into consideration, as well as punishing criminals for what they might do after serving the entire sentence for what they have done.

Now that I have mentioned some of my reservations concerning this bill, I will use the rest of the time allocated to me to remind my colleagues of a related initiative carried out during the last session of Parliament on behalf of the Minister of Justice and the departmental portfolio of the Solicitor General.

Bill C-55, a cohesive and complete set of reforms which came into effect last August, enables the courts to order the surveillance of certain criminals for up to 10 years after the end of their prison sentence.

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In earlier initiatives we also revised the Criminal Code in order to allow the courts to ban persons found guilty of sexual offences involving children from the vicinity of schools, community centres and playgrounds.

In parallel, criminal harassment and stalking have become offences on which it is now easier to act because of certain clauses in the Criminal Code. The efforts expended to tighten up the legislation relating to these categories of criminals may have escaped the notice of the hon. member for Calgary Centre.

• (1350)

That is surprising, because I know that he is greatly interested in this and other related issues. Nevertheless, provisions and proposals of this nature constitute opportunities for frank discussions, in my opinion.

I will be satisfied if, as a result of this debate, the public acquires more knowledge of this part of our correctional system. The hon. member who introduced Bill C-284 obviously shares my opinion, and I congratulate him for his perseverance in bringing criminal justice into the public eye and thus helping to make Canadians better informed.

[English]

Mr. Peter MacKay (Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough, PC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of Bill C-284. I commend the work of the member for Calgary Centre in tabling such an important piece of legislation. Bill C-284 is important in the sense that it focuses on one of the highest priorities, if not the highest priority the criminal justice system should have, which is the protection of children from abuse.

Conservative estimates indicate that one in three girls are sexually abused before the age of 18 while one in six boys are sexually abused before the age of 16. These are tragic and disturbing figures. As a former crown attorney I often dealt with cases that put a human face on these statistics.

Even more frightening is the fact that most abused and neglected children never report these incidents to the proper authorities. This is especially true of cases of sexually abused children since there may be no outward sign of the physical, psychological or emotional harm that has resulted. Furthermore, sexually abused children are often reluctant to report these crimes for they feel intense shame, and secrecy is often the result.

For these and other reasons we must focus our attention and our efforts to combat child abuse at the prevention level. It is a serious matter of public interest which Bill C-284 if passed would help to address.

As outlined by previous speakers in the House, this bill amends two existing statutes, the Criminal Records Act and the Canadian Human Rights Act.

The amendments to the Criminal Records Act would allow for limited disclosure of criminal records of persons pardoned for sexual convictions against a child. This disclosure would occur when the pardoned person applies for a position of trust over a child. The information would be provided to those individuals with responsibility for the child who are considering such an application. Any inappropriate disclosure of information by these individuals would be subject to criminal prosecution or sanction.

Put simply, these changes would give organizations that deal with children an additional tool to scrutinize potential employees or volunteers before they are placed in positions of trust, in positions where children are most vulnerable where a relationship of trust might exist. Groups such as Scouts Canada, Girl Guides of Canada, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Canada and minor sports teams would have access to information that is extremely relevant to the selection process they must undergo.

For those who would object on the grounds of privacy rights for pardoned offenders, I suggest they examine the reality of sexual offenders. Among criminal offenders, those convicted of sexual offences have one of the highest rates of recidivism.

Our children are far too important to risk having repeat offenders enter into positions of authority and trust. We must give child centred and youth centred organizations the tools to prevent further tragedies of sexual abuse. It is a sad irony that we presently have a government that cracks down on law-abiding gun owners and leaves tens of thousands of hepatitis victims twisting in the wind but nevertheless feels that the rights of convicted child sex offenders should take precedence over children's safety.

The second component of Bill C-284 amends the Canadian Human Rights Act. It would permit organizations to refuse to employ individuals in so-called child trust positions on the basis of persons having been pardoned of sexual offences against children. This amendment is a logical step in this bill. Once an organization has access to relevant information, it should certainly be free to act upon that relevant information without fear of reprisals.

• (1355)

I share the view of those who believe that rehabilitation is a laudable goal. I also believe that securing employment for offenders re-entering society is often critical to ensure that they do not become repeat offenders and that rehabilitation can occur. This in turn helps protect public safety and confidence in our criminal justice system which is something that has been sorely lacking in recent years.

However, we need to draw the line at allowing convicted sex offenders irrespective of whether they are pardoned to secretly

enter into positions of trust over children. On balance it is far too important. The consequences and the potential for harm are something we really have to consider in this instance.

Canadians need peace of mind that organizations in which they entrust their children's safety have taken all precautionary steps necessary to protect their children's safety. Bill C-284 gives these organizations another very crucial weapon to fight child abuse. This bill is a reasonable compromise between the rights of offenders and the rights of society, which is something that we always wrestle with in our justice system. In particular this bill protects our most important citizens in this country, our children.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, I urge all members to support this legislation. Let us support our volunteer driven organizations that deal with our children and the future of our country. Let us support our families and the safety of our children. Let us do it and let us do it quickly.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I begin by commending my colleague from Calgary Centre for his wisdom and effort in bringing this legislation before the House for consideration.

Bill C-284 has all the elements that make excellent legislation. First of all it is based on common sense. Our society does not accept child molesters in any position of trust when it comes to the issue of children. Common sense tells us that it is simply too risky and any parent is unwilling to accept that kind of risk when it comes to their children.

This legislation is also simple and direct. It sticks to the very matter at hand and pinpoints a specific flaw in our justice system.

Finally this bill is reasonable and fair. While its central focus is to protect our children, the amendments proposed under Bill C-284 do not flagrantly harass convicted child molesters who have been pardoned. There is absolutely no impact on their search for gainful employment that does not involve children. Unless children are involved, they continue to enjoy the privilege of not being required to divulge their conviction.

This bill closes a loophole and that is one of the things MPs are sent to the House to do. We must close the legal loopholes that jeopardize the safety of Canadians and fail to protect and improve their lives. When we discuss this loophole we are not talking about extreme cases, worst case scenarios or remote odds. We are talking about a common occurrence where a convicted child molester has been given a pardon and is perfectly free to seek a position involving children with no scrutiny and absolutely no questions asked.

Only about 1% of convicted criminals who apply for pardons are refused. That means 99% are pardoned. It is not as though a child

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molester must fight through challenging hurdles in order to get himself or herself into a position of trust over children. The possibility of this happening is very high and very real. Once the pardon is granted, the current laws mean a day care or nursery school is breaking the law to even ask a child molester if he or she has ever been pardoned for a criminal offence against children.

This debate can be boiled down to one central issue, the quest to appear politically correct versus the protection of our children. We are well aware of this government's effort to ensure the rights and freedoms of prisoners and convicted criminals.

• (1400)

They are so very sensitive to the newest theories in criminal rehabilitation. That is all very well and good, but never can these accommodating gestures be made at the expense of victims and potential victims, in this case the most vulnerable in our society, our children.

Which is more important, the right to privacy for a pardoned sex offender or the right to life and safety of a child? I believe Canadians want the law to place children first. As for the privacy and potential harassment of a pardoned criminal, this bill does not advocate pasting their name and photo on every telephone pole, something that has become a great source of controversy in this country and around the world. This legislation is simply designed to prevent and discourage sex offenders from working with children. That is all.

Members of some of the other parties in this Chamber have accused Reformers in the past of sensationalizing crime and inflating the problems in our justice system. In rebuttal I would argue that the only thing Reformers have done has been to raise the unpleasant and horrifying impact of government inaction in rectifying faulty laws, legal loopholes and weak enforcement.

Reform MPs have done many things in Ottawa that members of other parties have not dared to do, things that would disturb the old guard and the status quo. We have dared to bring these preventable crimes to light.

I am not going to relate the horrible tragedies in which convicted child molesters have managed to regain access to children. We all know it happens. We all read the newspapers and watch television. Instead I want to appeal to the mothers and fathers, the grandmothers and grandfathers, the aunts and uncles, the Godmothers and Godfathers and anyone else who is fortunate enough to have a child in their life who they love and who loves them.

Like many children that child will probably at some point in his or her life enrol in a nursery school, a play group, a day care, a sporting activity, a hobby club or a service organization such as Brownies or Scouts.

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Let us take the example of a nursery school. The parents of that child have the right to demand that their two, three or four year old child is not susceptible to sex offenders or child molesters.

To achieve this level of safety the nursery school, like most organizations involving children, requires that any employee, volunteer, or any other individual for that matter, with access to those children while they are under the responsibility of the school undergo a criminal reference check. This would include the nursery school teachers, any assistants or any parents who help with the children's activities.

Individuals obtain from the police documentation stating that they have no criminal record. At this point, if a parent feels certain their child is at no risk of being in the care of a child molester, they are unfortunately misguided. When a convicted criminal receives a pardon for his or her offence the police are required to remove any record of that conviction from their personal records. So, unwittingly, the police may issue a positive criminal reference check for a pardoned child molester. That is certainly not the fault of the police. It is the fault of the law. It is obvious that we need to remedy this horrifying oversight.

I believe Bill C-284 is the ideal solution. It would ensure that organizations like nursery schools do not mistakenly hire a child molester. At the same time the bill offers a reasonable approach.

This fairness can be seen in the following example. Again I will refer to my nursery school scenario.

A father of one of the nursery school's young students is required, along with all parents, to assist the teacher during some classes, or to drive students on a field trip. When this man, now in his late thirties, was 18 years of age perhaps he was involved in a bar room brawl and subsequently received a conviction for assault. It undoubtedly was a stupid thing to do and part of his youth that he is not very proud of, but he has taken responsibility for his actions, served his debt to society and some two decades later has a career and family of his own. He requests, and is granted, a pardon for his assault conviction.

Is it fair that this man be prevented from participating in his own child's nursery school activities? Of course not. He was young and he made a mistake.

• (1405)

Under Bill C-284, with his pardon, this man would still receive a positive criminal reference and be able to fulfil his parental obligations to the nursery school. He poses little risk, if any, to the children and Bill C-284 acknowledges that.

But child molesters do pose a very high risk, a very serious risk to children's safety and they should never, ever, be put in a position of trust over children.

Just how much of a risk do children face? In studies conducted by the Correctional Service Canada, pedophiles were found to have the highest rate of sexual recidivism when compared to other sex offenders.

One such study called "Managing the Treatment of Sex Offenders: a Canadian Perspective" said that "It appears likely that pedophiles, especially those men who offend against young boys, are at greater risk to recidivate sexually than are rapists".

Another study called "Factors Related to Recidivism Among Released Federal Sex Offenders" found that one-third of sex offenders were convicted of a new criminal offence following release. This study also found that pedophiles had the highest rate of sexual recidivism.

Yet another study by the Canada working group found that when sexual aggressors do re-offend they tend to repeat the offence for which they were originally convicted.

It is very fortunate that this bill has been deemed votable. This means that we in this Chamber have the opportunity to enact some very good legislation, the kind of legislation that will reap benefits, restore faith in the justice system and, first and foremost, protect children. Obtaining these goals is part of our job as parliamentarians and I encourage all members of this House to do their job and support Bill C-284.

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I too want to congratulate the member for Calgary South for bringing forward this private member's bill.

He started off his comments by saying he felt he had already won by getting selected in the lottery and, as all members know, that is a matter of being fortuitous.

The more important success the member has achieved is that he has brought an issue before the House which has received the support of a committee of his peers to be votable. I think that is the success, that the bill is before this House and will be subject to a vote of members of Parliament. For that he should be congratulated.

I believe he has brought a matter to the attention of the House which is important for debate. The greatest value of Private Members' Business is that it provides an opportunity for public debate and for consultations among the parties to determine whether or not there is some basis for influencing legislation either directly or indirectly.

Recently we have talked a great deal about the Young Offenders Act and the issue of whether or not the names of young offenders should be disclosed and what impact that may have on their ability to be rehabilitated. I see many parallels between that issue and the issue which the member has brought forward. The only difference is that this bill targets the sexual offenders of children.

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This is one of those issues about which people should be very cautious because of the inherent risks involved. If we had to pit the interests of one against the other, clearly, most people would say that public interest is more important than the interest of the individual who has been convicted of sexual abuse against children. It is a very difficult issue to deal with, but legislators have to deal with difficult issues.

Questions have to be asked whenever we do Private Members' Business. It is a matter of whether legislation should come forward with regard to a certain aspect that we may have identified. Or, has the fact that this has come forward identified other areas? Are other things going on that are related which would provide some synergy or make the legislation even better?

This is always the frustration or the difficulty with Private Members' Business because to get the confidence of members it has to be somewhat straightforward without too many tentacles leading to other areas of other legislation. That is the problem and that is why most Private Members' Business does not pass in this House. I would support changes or some reform to Private Members' Business to allow a better airing of some of these views so that good ideas, such as the one brought forward by the member, do get worthy consideration.

• (1410)

Let me talk for a few moments about the Criminal Records Act. The development of the Criminal Records Act was based on a proposal put forward in the same way as this private member's bill, although the intention of the sponsors of the two private members' bills and their ultimate foundations were somewhat dissimilar.

Private members' bills and initiatives should be taken very seriously. Without such respect, however, we may have some unexpected consequences. I raise the caution from the standpoint of a member who has been very active in private members' bills. I must admit that from time to time issues are raised by other members that I have not contemplated. That is understandable because ordinary members of Parliament do not have the resources to be able to do that exhaustive work.

This member has touched on an area at which I know the government has been looking as well. There are some possibilities which have to be explored.

Obviously the objective before us is to determine how we can improve the Criminal Records Act. It was introduced in June 1996 and referred to the justice committee of the day. It held formal meetings between March and November 1967. The proposed changes were discussed at length and the committee had the opinion of many interested parties. These are the kinds of things that would occur at committee should this matter be referred there.

That justice committee report came back to the House. The government at the time proceeded with a study of the initiative. In the current situation we face the same fundamental question as was posed when the legislation was first discussed some 20 years ago.

The issue is the legitimate balance between the objective of assisting those who have transgressed the law to reform and lead crime-free lives and the equally legitimate needs of the policing authority and the community at large to be protected from a recurrence of criminal activities.

The principal issues obviously extend to others. They include where the line is drawn between individual and collective rights. Is it worth the time of parliamentarians to ensure that all options may have been canvassed and discussed? Should we make one change to a complex piece of legislation that may have some far-reaching implications on other pieces of legislation? Has sufficient study been done?

I do not know whether the process at this point allows for sufficient study to have been done to date. I do know, however, that the House would provide the venue and the envelope in Private Members' Business to have that kind of consultation.

It is true that the ideas for change which led to the passage of the Criminal Records Act were first presented to the House in the form of a private member's bill. The government of the day apparently recognizing the importance of the change in this area encouraged the initiative. I believe the parallel exists here as well.

The bill proposed comprehensive reform and resulted in a consensus among those who had knowledge of the subject. I think it will take some work to get the House up to speed on the sensitive criteria related to it. Thereafter the government bill was sent to committee for additional study. This is certainly something that should be considered in terms of this bill as well.

I understand the officials of the Department of the Solicitor General have had occasion to study the various suggestions our hon. colleague has raised. I think I can conclude that the member has identified a potential weakness in the system. I am not exactly sure whether what he is proposing is precisely the way to do it, but I want to make a recommendation to him with regard to how we proceed from here.

Very often good ideas in Private Members' Business do not receive the confidence of the House in terms of a vote, but there is another opportunity that has happened on many occasions. When substantive issues raised in a private member's bill are valid and enjoy the support of the House, the bill may very well not be voted on and dropped from the order paper. However the member or someone in support of the member can rise in the House and ask that the subject matter of the bill be referred to committee.

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• (1415)

It means that it would still remain alive as an issue. It means that if the government is serious about the issues that he has raised and some ancillary issues this member would still see his initiative go forward in legislation that may be brought in by the government. I ask him to keep that in mind as we move forward.

I would support referral of this matter to the standing committee on justice.

I again congratulate the member. All private members' business deserves our respect and attention. I believe he has done an excellent job in raising this issue. We should be thankful for a fine job on behalf of all private members.

Mr. Roy Bailey (Souris—Moose Mountain, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I too would like to congratulate my colleague from Calgary who has brought this private member's bill in. I too am pleased that it has been drawn as a votable item.

I would like to withhold most of my comments for the second round of debate on this bill because time does not permit it today.

However, there are a number of observations I would like to make. There are a number of suggestions I would like to make to hon. members on the government side.

Members of the Reform caucus do not seek any glorification in winning a so-called political battle in bringing this motion forward. We have but one purpose. We are not vindictive. We do not hold malice. We have one thing in mind. We are not satisfied with the 31% figure of pedophiles coming back to abuse our children.

The hon. member who spoke earlier from the government seemed to suggest that number was satisfactory. I do not think the last member who spoke from the government would agree. He would agree that if we can by any means bring that down to 15% that would be better for all of the people in Canada, never mind this House. We are here because of the people of Canada. This bill came forward because of the children of Canada, whom we want to protect.

My profession has put me front and foremost of watching young people suffer because of sexual molestation. I have watched them struggle through life. I watched them struggle through high school. Now I watch them struggle in adulthood. If there are ways and

means to prevent this, then let us go for it. I say to my hon. colleague who spoke last from the Liberal side of the House we do not care what happens. If he would like to readjust the bill and bring it back in, we would be pleased with that. We are not looking for credit in any way. The hon. member who initiated this bill would be the first to agree to it.

Different organizations have been mentioned. I want to tell members of the difficulties I had hiring teachers on whom I could not obtain the information I should have obtained. They were protected. This led to a disaster. I was the CEO to the board. A bill like this would prevent school boards from becoming trapped in an issue. It would prevent communities that hire recreational directors from becoming trapped. They should have this right. To deny the main purpose of this bill, to deny the main intent of this bill will mean this will go on and on.

Church groups that get young people together for the summer should have this right. They should have the right for limited information to protect not only themselves but the children. They are putting on functions for children because they love children and they want to protect them. The fundamental purpose of this bill, the only purpose, is to provide protection for Canadian youth.

• (1420)

Finally, let us forget about politics. Let us forget about the different parties. Let us forget about our personal viewpoints. Let us work together, whatever it takes. If it means going back to the committee, fine. But let us come up with a more positive solution than we have at the present time or Canadians are going to have less faith in the House for not doing something which is a national problem. We cannot sit by and simply say, as I heard this afternoon, 31% is not a bad figure and it is holding. That is not good enough for us on this side of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault): The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

It being 2.20 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, April 20, 1998 at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2.21 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. PETER MILLIKEN

The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. IAN McCLELLAND

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MRS. YOLANDE THIBEAULT

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. GILBERT PARENT (CHAIRMAN)

HON. DON BOUDRIA, P.C.

HON. ALFONSO GAGLIANO, P.C.

MR. STÉPHANE BERGERON

MR. BILL BLAIKIE

MS. MARLENE CATTERALL

MR. BOB KILGER

MR. PETER MACKAY

MR. PETER MILLIKEN

MR. CHUCK STRAHL

MR. RANDY WHITE

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

First Session – Thirty-sixth Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Abbott, Jim | Kootenay — Columbia | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Ablonczy, Diane | Calgary — Nose Hill | Alberta | Ref. |
| Adams, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Peterborough | Ontario | Lib. |
| Alarie, Hélène | Louis-Hébert | Quebec | BQ |
| Alcock, Reg | Winnipeg South | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Anders, Rob | Calgary West | Alberta | Ref. |
| Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Victoria | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Assad, Mark | Gatineau | Quebec | Lib. |
| Assadourian, Sarkis | Brampton Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Asselin, Gérard | Charlevoix | Quebec | BQ |
| Augustine, Jean | Etobicoke — Lakeshore | Ontario | Lib. |
| Axworthy, Chris | Saskatoon — Rosetown — Biggar | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Winnipeg South Centre | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Bachand, André | Richmond — Arthabaska | Quebec | PC |
| Bachand, Claude | Saint-Jean | Quebec | BQ |
| Bailey, Roy | Souris — Moose Mountain | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Baker, George S. | Gander — Grand Falls | Newfoundland | Lib. |
| Bakopanos, Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Ahuntsic | Quebec | Lib. |
| Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue | London West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Beaumier, Colleen | Brampton West — Mississauga | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bélair, Réginald | Timmins — James Bay | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bélanger, Mauril | Ottawa — Vanier | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bellehumeur, Michel | Berthier — Montcalm | Quebec | BQ |
| Bellemare, Eugène | Carleton — Gloucester | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bennett, Carolyn | St. Paul's | Ontario | Lib. |
| Benoit, Leon E. | Lakeland | Alberta | Ref. |
| Bergeron, Stéphane | Verchères | Quebec | BQ |
| Bernier, Gilles | Tobique — Mactaquac | New Brunswick | PC |
| Bernier, Yvan | Bonaventure — Gaspé — Îles-de-la-Madeleine — Pabok | Quebec | BQ |
| Bertrand, Robert | Pontiac — Gatineau — Labelle | Quebec | Lib. |
| Bevilacqua, Maurizio | Vaughan — King — Aurora | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bigras, Bernard | Rosemont | Quebec | BQ |
| Blaikie, Bill | Winnipeg — Transcona | Manitoba | NDP |
| Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth) | Western Arctic | Northwest Territories | Lib. |
| Bonin, Raymond | Nickel Belt | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bonwick, Paul | Simcoe — Grey | Ontario | Lib. |
| Borotsik, Rick | Brandon — Souris | Manitoba | PC |
| Boudria, Hon. Don, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Glengarry — Prescott — Russell | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bradshaw, Claudette, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation | Moncton | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Breitkreuz, Cliff | Yellowhead | Alberta | Ref. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton — Melville | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Brien, Pierre | Témiscamingue | Quebec | BQ |
| Brison, Scott | Kings — Hants | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Brown, Bonnie | Oakville | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bryden, John | Wentworth — Burlington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Bulte, Sarmite | Parkdale — High Park | Ontario | Lib. |
| Byrne, Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources | Humber — St. Barbe — Baie Verte | Newfoundland | Lib. |
| Caccia, Hon. Charles | Davenport | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cadman, Chuck | Surrey North | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Calder, Murray | Dufferin — Peel — Wellington — Grey | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cannis, John | Scarborough Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Canuel, René | Matapédia — Matane | Quebec | BQ |
| Caplan, Elinor | Thornhill | Ontario | Lib. |
| Carroll, Aileen | Barrie — Simcoe — Bradford | Ontario | Lib. |
| Casey, Bill | Cumberland — Colchester | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Casson, Rick | Lethbridge | Alberta | Ref. |
| Catterall, Marlene | Ottawa West — Nepean | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) | Outremont | Quebec | Lib. |
| Chamberlain, Brenda, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour | Guelph — Wellington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) | Richmond | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Charbonneau, Yvon | Anjou — Rivière-des-Prairies | Quebec | 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 — Mégantic | Quebec | BQ |
| Clouthier, Hec | Renfrew — Nipissing — Pembroke | Ontario | Lib. |
| Coderre, Denis | Bourassa | Quebec | Lib. |
| Cohen, Shaughnessy | Windsor — St. Clair | Ontario | Lib. |
| Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport | Don Valley East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Comuzzi, Joe | Thunder Bay — Nipigon | Ontario | Lib. |
| Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage | Hamilton East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Crête, Paul | Kamouraska — Rivière-du-Loup — Témiscouata — Les Basques | Quebec | BQ |
| Cullen, Roy | Etobicoke North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Cummins, John | Delta — South Richmond | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Dalphond-Guiral, Madeleine | Laval Centre | Quebec | BQ |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | British Columbia | NDP |
| de Savoye, Pierre | Portneuf | Quebec | BQ |
| Debien, Maud | Laval East | Quebec | BQ |
| Desjarlais, Bev | Churchill | Manitoba | NDP |
| Desrochers, Odina | Lotbinière | 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, Hon. Harbance Singh, Minister of National Revenue | Vancouver South — Burnaby | British Columbia | 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 — Soulanges | Quebec | Lib. |
| Dockrill, Michelle | Bras d'Or | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Doyle, Norman | St. John's East | Newfoundland | PC |
| Dromisky, Stan | Thunder Bay — Atikokan | Ontario | Lib. |
| Drouin, Claude | Beauce | Quebec | Lib. |
| Dubé, Antoine | Lévis | Quebec | BQ |
| Dubé, Jean | Madawaska — Restigouche | New Brunswick | PC |
| Duceppe, Gilles | Laurier — Sainte-Marie | Quebec | BQ |
| Duhamel, Hon. Ronald J., Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification) | Saint Boniface | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Dumas, Maurice | Argenteuil — Papineau | Quebec | BQ |
| Duncan, John | Vancouver Island North | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Earle, Gordon | Halifax West | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Easter, Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Malpeque | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| Eggleton, Hon. Arthur C., Minister of National Defence | York Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Elley, Reed | Nanaimo — Cowichan | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Epp, Ken | Elk Island | Alberta | Ref. |
| Finestone, Hon. Sheila | Mount Royal | Quebec | Lib. |
| Finlay, John | Oxford | Ontario | Lib. |
| Folco, Raymonde | Laval West | Quebec | Lib. |
| Fontana, Joe | London North Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Forseth, Paul | New Westminster — Coquitlam — Burnaby | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Fournier, Ghislain | Manicouagan | Quebec | BQ |
| Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women) | Vancouver Centre | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Public Works and Government Services | Saint-Léonard — Saint-Michel | Quebec | Lib. |
| Gagnon, Christiane | Québec | Quebec | BQ |
| Galloway, Roger | Sarnia — Lambton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Gauthier, Michel | Roberval | Quebec | BQ |
| Gilmour, Bill | Nanaimo — Alberni | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Girard-Bujold, Jocelyne | Jonquière | Quebec | BQ |
| Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage | Don Valley West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Godin, Maurice | Châteauguay | Quebec | BQ |
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie — Bathurst | New Brunswick | NDP |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton East | Alberta | Ref. |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board | Wascana | Saskatchewan | Lib. |
| Gouk, Jim | West Kootenay — Okanagan | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Graham, Bill | Toronto Centre — Rosedale | Ontario | Lib. |
| Gray, Hon. Herb, Deputy Prime Minister | Windsor West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Grewal, Gurmant | Surrey Central | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Grey, Deborah | Edmonton North | Alberta | Ref. |
| Grose, Ivan | Oshawa | Ontario | Lib. |
| Guarnieri, Albina | Mississauga East | Ontario | Lib. |
| Guay, Monique | Laurentides | Quebec | BQ |
| Guimond, Michel | Beauport — Montmorency — Orléans | Quebec | BQ |
| Hanger, Art | Calgary Northeast | Alberta | Ref. |
| Harb, Mac | Ottawa Centre | Ontario | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hardy, Louise | Yukon | Yukon | NDP |
| Harris, Dick | Prince George — Bulkley Valley | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Hart, Jim | Okanagan — Coquihalla | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Charleswood — Assiniboine | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Harvey, André | Chicoutimi | Quebec | PC |
| Herron, John | Fundy — Royal | New Brunswick | PC |
| Hill, Grant | Macleod | Alberta | Ref. |
| Hill, Jay | Prince George — Peace River | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Hilstrom, Howard | Selkirk — Interlake | Manitoba | Ref. |
| Hoepfner, Jake E. | Portage — Lisgar | Manitoba | Ref. |
| Hubbard, Charles | Miramichi | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Ianno, Tony | Trinity — Spadina | Ontario | Lib. |
| Iftody, David | Provencher | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board | Bruce — Grey | Ontario | Lib. |
| Jaffer, Rahim | Edmonton — Strathcona | Alberta | Ref. |
| Jennings, Marlene | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce — Lachine | Quebec | Lib. |
| Johnston, Dale | Wetaskiwin | Alberta | Ref. |
| Jones, Jim | Markham | Ontario | PC |
| Jordan, Joe | Leeds — Grenville | Ontario | Lib. |
| Karetak-Lindell, Nancy | Nunavut | Northwest Territories | Lib. |
| Karygiannis, Jim | Scarborough — Agincourt | Ontario | Lib. |
| Keddy, Gerald | South Shore | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Kenney, Jason | Calgary Southeast | Alberta | Ref. |
| Kerpan, Allan | Blackstrap | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Keyes, Stan, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport | Hamilton West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Kilger, Bob | Stormont — Dundas | Ontario | Lib. |
| Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) | Edmonton Southeast | Alberta | Lib. |
| Knutson, Gar | Elgin — Middlesex — London | Ontario | Lib. |
| Konrad, Derrek | Prince Albert | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment | York North | Ontario | Lib. |
| Laliberte, Rick | Churchill River | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| Lalonde, Francine | Mercier | Quebec | BQ |
| Lastewka, Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry | St. Catharines | Ontario | Lib. |
| Laurin, René | Joliette | Quebec | BQ |
| Lavigne, Raymond | Verdun — Saint-Henri | Quebec | Lib. |
| Lebel, Ghislain | Chambly | Quebec | BQ |
| Lee, Derek | Scarborough — Rouge River | Ontario | Lib. |
| Lefebvre, Réjean | Champlain | Quebec | BQ |
| Leung, Sophia | Vancouver Kingsway | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Lill, Wendy | Dartmouth | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Lincoln, Clifford | Lac-Saint-Louis | Quebec | Lib. |
| Longfield, Judi | Whitby — Ajax | Ontario | Lib. |
| Loubier, Yvan | Saint-Hyacinthe — Bagot | Quebec | BQ |
| Lowther, Eric | Calgary Centre | Alberta | Ref. |
| Lunn, Gary | Saanich — Gulf Islands | British Columbia | Ref. |
| MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Labour | Cardigan | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| MacKay, Peter | Pictou — Antigonish — Guysborough | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Mahoney, Steve | Mississauga West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Malhi, Gurbax Singh | Bramalea — Gore — Malton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Maloney, John | Erie — Lincoln | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mancini, Peter | Sydney — Victoria | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry | Ottawa South | Ontario | Lib. |
| Manning, Preston, Leader of the Opposition | Calgary Southwest | Alberta | Ref. |
| Marceau, Richard | Charlesbourg | Quebec | BQ |
| Marchand, Jean-Paul | Québec East | Quebec | BQ |
| Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister for International Trade | York West | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mark, Inky | Dauphin — Swan River | Manitoba | Ref. |
| Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie | Sudbury | Ontario | Lib. |
| Martin, Keith | Esquimalt — Juan de Fuca | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Martin, Pat | Winnipeg Centre | Manitoba | NDP |
| 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. |
| Matthews, Bill | Burin — St. George's | Newfoundland | PC |
| Mayfield, Philip | Cariboo — Chilcotin | British Columbia | Ref. |
| McClelland, Ian, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole | Edmonton Southwest | Alberta | Ref. |
| McCormick, Larry | Hastings — Frontenac — Lennox and Addington | Ontario | Lib. |
| McDonough, Alexa | Halifax | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| McGuire, Joe | Egmont | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| McKay, John | Scarborough East | Ontario | Lib. |
| McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Edmonton West | Alberta | Lib. |
| McNally, Grant | Dewdney — Alouette | British Columbia | Ref. |
| McTeague, Dan | Pickering — Ajax — Uxbridge | Ontario | Lib. |
| McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs | Vancouver Quadra | British Columbia | Lib. |
| Ménard, Réal | Hochelaga — Maisonneuve | Quebec | BQ |
| Mercier, Paul | Terrebonne — Blainville | Quebec | BQ |
| Meredith, Val | South Surrey — White Rock — Langley | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) | Bonavista — Trinity — Conception | Newfoundland | Lib. |
| Milliken, Peter, Deputy Speaker and 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 — East York | Ontario | Lib. |
| Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Parks) | Parry Sound — Muskoka | Ontario | Lib. |
| Morrison, Lee | Cypress Hills — Grasslands | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Muise, Mark | West Nova | Nova Scotia | PC |
| Murray, Ian | Lanark — Carleton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Myers, Lynn | Waterloo — Wellington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development | Kenora — Rainy River | Ontario | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food (Fisheries and Oceans) | Bellechasse — Etchemins — Montmagny — L'Islet | Quebec | Lib. |
| Nunziata, John | York South — Weston | Ontario | Ind. |
| Nystrom, Hon. Lorne | Qu'Appelle | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| O'Brien, Lawrence D. | Labrador | Newfoundland | Lib. |
| O'Brien, Pat | London — Fanshawe | Ontario | Lib. |
| O'Reilly, John | Victoria — Haliburton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Obhrai, Deepak | Calgary East | Alberta | Ref. |
| Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister | Winnipeg North — St. Paul | Manitoba | Lib. |
| Pankiw, Jim | Saskatoon — Humboldt | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Paradis, Denis | Brome — Missisquoi | Quebec | Lib. |
| Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker | Niagara Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Parrish, Carolyn | Mississauga Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Pierrefonds — Dollard | Quebec | Lib. |
| Penson, Charlie | Peace River | Alberta | Ref. |
| Perić, Janko | Cambridge | Ontario | Lib. |
| Perron, Gilles—A. | Saint—Eustache — Sainte— Thérèse | Quebec | BQ |
| Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) | Willowdale | Ontario | Lib. |
| Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development | Papineau — Saint—Denis | Quebec | Lib. |
| Phinney, Beth | Hamilton Mountain | Ontario | Lib. |
| Picard, Pauline | Drummond | Quebec | BQ |
| Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services | Kent — Essex | Ontario | Lib. |
| Pillitteri, Gary | Niagara Falls | Ontario | Lib. |
| Plamondon, Louis | Richelieu | Quebec | BQ |
| Power, Charlie | St. John's West | Newfoundland | PC |
| Pratt, David | Nepean — Carleton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Price, David | Compton — Stanstead | Quebec | PC |
| Proctor, Dick | Palliser | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs | Hillsborough | Prince Edward Island | Lib. |
| Provenzano, Carmen | Sault Ste. Marie | Ontario | Lib. |
| Ramsay, Jack | Crowfoot | Alberta | Ref. |
| Redman, Karen | Kitchener Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Reed, Julian, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade | Halton | Ontario | Lib. |
| Reynolds, John | West Vancouver — Sunshine Coast | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence | Perth — Middlesex | Ontario | Lib. |
| Riis, Nelson | Kamloops | British Columbia | NDP |
| Ritz, Gerry | Battlefords — Lloydminster | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Westmount — Ville—Marie | Quebec | Lib. |
| Robinson, Svend J. | Burnaby — Douglas | British Columbia | NDP |
| Rocheleau, Yves | Trois—Rivières | Quebec | BQ |
| Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Health | Etobicoke Centre | Ontario | Lib. |
| Saada, Jacques | Brossard — La Prairie | Quebec | Lib. |
| Sauvageau, Benoît | Repentigny | Quebec | BQ |
| Schmidt, Werner | Kelowna | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Scott, Hon. Andy, Solicitor General of Canada | Fredericton | New Brunswick | Lib. |
| Scott, Mike | Skeena | British Columbia | Ref. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Province of Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Serré, Benoît | Timiskaming — Cochrane | Ontario | Lib. |
| Shepherd, Alex | Durham | Ontario | Lib. |
| Solberg, Monte | Medicine Hat | Alberta | Ref. |
| Solomon, John | Regina — Lumsden — Lake Centre | Saskatchewan | NDP |
| Speller, Bob | Haldimand — Norfolk — Brant | Ontario | Lib. |
| St. Denis, Brent | Algoma — Manitoulin | Ontario | Lib. |
| St-Hilaire, Caroline | Longueuil | Quebec | BQ |
| St-Jacques, Diane | Shefford | Quebec | PC |
| St-Julien, Guy | Abitibi | Quebec | Lib. |
| Steckle, Paul | Huron — Bruce | Ontario | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Christine, Minister of the Environment | Northumberland | Ontario | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Brant | Ontario | Lib. |
| Stinson, Darrel | Okanagan — Shuswap | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville — Eastern Shore | Nova Scotia | NDP |
| Strahl, Chuck | Fraser Valley | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Szabo, Paul | Mississauga South | Ontario | Lib. |
| Telegdi, Andrew | Kitchener — Waterloo | Ontario | Lib. |
| Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole | Saint-Lambert | Quebec | Lib. |
| Thompson, Greg | Charlotte | New Brunswick | PC |
| Thompson, Myron | Wild Rose | Alberta | Ref. |
| Torsney, Paddy | Burlington | Ontario | Lib. |
| Tremblay, Stéphan | Lac-Saint-Jean | Quebec | BQ |
| Tremblay, Suzanne | Rimouski — Mitis | Quebec | BQ |
| Turp, Daniel | Beauharnois — Salaberry | Quebec | BQ |
| Ur, Rose-Marie | Lambton — Kent — Middlesex | Ontario | Lib. |
| Valeri, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance | Stoney Creek | Ontario | Lib. |
| Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Prince Edward — Hastings | Ontario | Lib. |
| Vautour, Angela | Beauséjour — Petitcodiac | New Brunswick | NDP |
| Vellacott, Maurice | Wanuskewin | Saskatchewan | Ref. |
| Venne, Pierrette | Saint-Bruno — Saint-Hubert | Quebec | BQ |
| Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health | Eglinton — Lawrence | Ontario | Lib. |
| Wappel, Tom | Scarborough Southwest | Ontario | Lib. |
| Wasylycia-Leis, Judy | Winnipeg North Centre | Manitoba | NDP |
| Wayne, Elsie | Saint John | New Brunswick | PC |
| Whelan, Susan | Essex | Ontario | Lib. |
| White, Randy | Langley — Abbotsford | British Columbia | Ref. |
| White, Ted | North Vancouver | British Columbia | Ref. |
| Wilfert, Bryon | Oak Ridges | Ontario | Lib. |
| Williams, John | St. Albert | Alberta | Ref. |
| Wood, Bob | Nipissing | Ontario | Lib. |
| VACANCY | Port Moody — Coquitlam | British Columbia | |

N.B.: Under Political Affiliation: Lib.—Liberal; Ref.—Reform Party of Canada; BQ—Bloc Québécois; 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

First Session — Thirty—sixth Parliament

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ALBERTA (26) | | |
| Ablonczy, Diane | Calgary—Nose Hill | Ref. |
| Anders, Rob | Calgary West | Ref. |
| Benoit, Leon E. | Lakeland | Ref. |
| Breitkreuz, Cliff | Yellowhead | Ref. |
| Casson, Rick | Lethbridge | Ref. |
| Chatters, David | Athabasca | Ref. |
| Epp, Ken | Elk Island | Ref. |
| Goldring, Peter | Edmonton East | Ref. |
| Grey, Deborah | Edmonton North | Ref. |
| Hanger, Art | Calgary Northeast | Ref. |
| Hill, Grant | Macleod | Ref. |
| Jaffer, Rahim | Edmonton—Strathcona | Ref. |
| Johnston, Dale | Wetaskiwin | Ref. |
| Kenney, Jason | Calgary Southeast | Ref. |
| Kilgour, Hon. David, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) | Edmonton Southeast | Lib. |
| Lowther, Eric | Calgary Centre | Ref. |
| Manning, Preston, Leader of the Opposition | Calgary Southwest | Ref. |
| McClelland, Ian, Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole | Edmonton Southwest | Ref. |
| McLellan, Hon. Anne, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Edmonton West | Lib. |
| Mills, Bob | Red Deer | Ref. |
| Obhrai, Deepak | Calgary East | Ref. |
| Penson, Charlie | Peace River | Ref. |
| Ramsay, Jack | Crowfoot | Ref. |
| Solberg, Monte | Medicine Hat | Ref. |
| Thompson, Myron | Wild Rose | Ref. |
| Williams, John | St. Albert | Ref. |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA (34) | | |
| Abbott, Jim | Kootenay—Columbia | Ref. |
| Anderson, Hon. David, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Victoria | Lib. |
| Cadman, Chuck | Surrey North | Ref. |
| Chan, Hon. Raymond, Secretary of State (Asia—Pacific) | Richmond | Lib. |
| Cummins, John | Delta—South Richmond | Ref. |
| Davies, Libby | Vancouver East | NDP |
| Dhaliwal, Hon. Harbance Singh, Minister of National Revenue | Vancouver South—Burnaby | Lib. |
| Duncan, John | Vancouver Island North | Ref. |
| Elley, Reed | Nanaimo—Cowichan | Ref. |
| Forseth, Paul | New Westminster—Coquitlam— Burnaby | Ref. |
| Fry, Hon. Hedy, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism)(Status of Women) | Vancouver Centre | Lib. |
| Gilmour, Bill | Nanaimo—Alberni | Ref. |
| Gouk, Jim | West Kootenay—Okanagan | Ref. |
| Grewal, Gurmant | Surrey Central | Ref. |
| Harris, Dick | Prince George—Bulkley Valley | Ref. |
| Hart, Jim | Okanagan—Coquihalla | Ref. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Hill, Jay | Prince George—Peace River | Ref. |
| Leung, Sophia | Vancouver Kingsway | Lib. |
| Lunn, Gary | Saanich—Gulf Islands | Ref. |
| Martin, Keith | Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca | Ref. |
| Mayfield, Philip | Cariboo—Chilcotin | Ref. |
| McNally, Grant | Dewdney—Alouette | Ref. |
| McWhinney, Ted, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs | Vancouver Quadra | Lib. |
| Meredith, Val | South Surrey—White Rock—Langley | Ref. |
| Reynolds, John | West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast | Ref. |
| Riis, Nelson | Kamloops | NDP |
| Robinson, Svend J. | Burnaby—Douglas | NDP |
| Schmidt, Werner | Kelowna | Ref. |
| Scott, Mike | Skeena | Ref. |
| Stinson, Darrel | Okanagan—Shuswap | Ref. |
| Strahl, Chuck | Fraser Valley | Ref. |
| White, Randy | Langley—Abbotsford | Ref. |
| White, Ted | North Vancouver | Ref. |
| VACANCY | Port Moody—Coquitlam | |

MANITOBA (14)

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|
| Alcock, Reg | Winnipeg South | Lib. |
| Axworthy, Hon. Lloyd, Minister of Foreign Affairs | Winnipeg South Centre | Lib. |
| Blaikie, Bill | Winnipeg—Transcona | NDP |
| Borotsik, Rick | Brandon—Souris | PC |
| Desjarlais, Bev | Churchill | NDP |
| Duhamel, Hon. Ronald J., Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development)(Western Economic Diversification) | Saint Boniface | Lib. |
| Harvard, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Charleswood—Assiniboine | Lib. |
| Hilstrom, Howard | Selkirk—Interlake | Ref. |
| Hoepfner, Jake E. | Portage—Lisgar | Ref. |
| Iftody, David | Provencher | Lib. |
| Mark, Inky | Dauphin—Swan River | Ref. |
| Martin, Pat | Winnipeg Centre | NDP |
| Pagtakhan, Rey D., Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister | Winnipeg North—St. Paul | Lib. |
| Wasylcia-Leis, Judy | Winnipeg North Centre | NDP |

NEW BRUNSWICK (10)

| | | |
|--|------------------------|------|
| Bernier, Gilles | Tobique—Mactaquac | PC |
| Bradshaw, Claudette, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Cooperation | Moncton | Lib. |
| Dubé, Jean | Madawaska—Restigouche | PC |
| Godin, Yvon | Acadie—Bathurst | NDP |
| Herron, John | Fundy—Royal | PC |
| Hubbard, Charles | Miramichi | Lib. |
| Scott, Hon. Andy, Solicitor General of Canada | Fredericton | Lib. |
| Thompson, Greg | Charlotte | PC |
| Vautour, Angela | Beauséjour—Petitcodiac | NDP |
| Wayne, Elsie | Saint John | PC |

NEWFOUNDLAND (7)

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------|
| Baker, George S. | Gander—Grand Falls | Lib. |
|------------------|--------------------|------|

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Byrne, Gerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Natural Resources | Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte | Lib. |
| Doyle, Norman | St. John's East | PC |
| Mathews, Bill | Burin—St. George's | PC |
| Mifflin, Hon. Fred, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) | Bonavista—Trinity—Conception | Lib. |
| O'Brien, Lawrence D. | Labrador | Lib. |
| Power, Charlie | St. John's West | PC |
| NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (2) | | |
| Blondin—Andrew, Hon. Ethel, Secretary of State (Children and Youth) | Western Arctic | Lib. |
| Karetak—Lindell, Nancy | Nunavut | Lib. |
| NOVA SCOTIA (11) | | |
| Brison, Scott | Kings—Hants | PC |
| Casey, Bill | Cumberland—Colchester | PC |
| Dockrill, Michelle | Bras d'Or | NDP |
| Earle, Gordon | Halifax West | NDP |
| Keddy, Gerald | South Shore | PC |
| Lill, Wendy | Dartmouth | NDP |
| MacKay, Peter | Pictou—Antigonish—Guysborough | PC |
| Mancini, Peter | Sydney—Victoria | NDP |
| McDonough, Alexa | Halifax | NDP |
| Muise, Mark | West Nova | PC |
| Stoffer, Peter | Sackville—Eastern Shore | NDP |
| ONTARIO (103) | | |
| Adams, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Peterborough | Lib. |
| Assadourian, Sarkis | Brampton Centre | Lib. |
| Augustine, Jean | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | Lib. |
| Barnes, Sue, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue | London West | Lib. |
| Beaumier, Colleen | Brampton West—Mississauga | Lib. |
| Bélair, Réginald | Timmins—James Bay | Lib. |
| Bélanger, Mauril | Ottawa—Vanier | Lib. |
| Bellemare, Eugène | Carleton—Gloucester | Lib. |
| Bennett, Carolyn | St. Paul's | Lib. |
| Bevilacqua, Maurizio | Vaughan—King—Aurora | Lib. |
| Bonin, Raymond | Nickel Belt | Lib. |
| Bonwick, Paul | Simcoe—Grey | Lib. |
| Boudria, Hon. Don, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | Lib. |
| Brown, Bonnie | Oakville | Lib. |
| Bryden, John | Wentworth—Burlington | Lib. |
| Bulte, Sarmite | Parkdale—High Park | Lib. |
| Caccia, Hon. Charles | Davenport | Lib. |
| Calder, Murray | Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey | Lib. |
| Cannis, John | Scarborough Centre | Lib. |
| Caplan, Elinor | Thornhill | Lib. |
| Carroll, Aileen | Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford | Lib. |
| Catterall, Marlene | Ottawa West—Nepean | Lib. |
| Chamberlain, Brenda, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour | Guelph—Wellington | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Clouthier, Hec | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | Lib. |
| Cohen, Shaughnessy | Windsor—St. Clair | Lib. |
| Collenette, Hon. David M., Minister of Transport | Don Valley East | Lib. |
| Comuzzi, Joe | Thunder Bay—Nipigon | Lib. |
| Copps, Hon. Sheila, Minister of Canadian Heritage | Hamilton East | 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 of National Defence | York Centre | Lib. |
| Finlay, John | Oxford | Lib. |
| Fontana, Joe | London North Centre | Lib. |
| Galloway, Roger | Sarnia—Lambton | Lib. |
| Godfrey, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage | Don Valley West | Lib. |
| Graham, Bill | Toronto Centre—Rosedale | Lib. |
| Gray, Hon. Herb, Deputy Prime Minister | Windsor West | Lib. |
| Grose, Ivan | Oshawa | Lib. |
| Guarnieri, Albina | Mississauga East | Lib. |
| Harb, Mac | Ottawa Centre | Lib. |
| Ianno, Tony | Trinity—Spadina | Lib. |
| Jackson, Ovid L., Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board | Bruce—Grey | Lib. |
| Jones, Jim | Markham | PC |
| Jordan, Joe | 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—Middlesex—London | Lib. |
| Kraft Sloan, Karen, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment | York North | Lib. |
| Lastewka, Walt, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry | St. Catharines | Lib. |
| Lee, Derek | Scarborough—Rouge River | Lib. |
| Longfield, Judi | Whitby—Ajax | Lib. |
| Mahoney, Steve | Mississauga West | Lib. |
| Malhi, Gurbax Singh | Bramalea—Gore—Malton | Lib. |
| Maloney, John | Erie—Lincoln | Lib. |
| Manley, Hon. John, Minister of Industry | Ottawa South | Lib. |
| Marchi, Hon. Sergio, Minister for International Trade | York West | Lib. |
| Marleau, Hon. Diane, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie | Sudbury | Lib. |
| McCormick, Larry | Hastings—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington | Lib. |
| McKay, John | Scarborough East | Lib. |
| McTeague, Dan | Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge | Lib. |
| Milliken, Peter, Deputy Speaker and 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—East York | Lib. |
| Mitchell, Hon. Andy, Secretary of State (Parks) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Lib. |
| Murray, Ian | Lanark—Carleton | Lib. |
| Myers, Lynn | Waterloo—Wellington | Lib. |
| Nault, Robert D., Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development | Kenora—Rainy River | Lib. |
| Nunziata, John | York South—Weston | Ind. |
| O'Brien, Pat | London—Fanshawe | Lib. |
| O'Reilly, John | Victoria—Haliburton | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Parent, Hon. Gilbert, Speaker | Niagara Centre | Lib. |
| Parrish, Carolyn | Mississauga Centre | Lib. |
| Perić, Janko | Cambridge | Lib. |
| Peterson, Hon. Jim, Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) | Willowdale | Lib. |
| Phinney, Beth | Hamilton Mountain | Lib. |
| Pickard, Jerry, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services | Kent—Essex | Lib. |
| Pillitteri, Gary | Niagara Falls | Lib. |
| Pratt, David | Nepean—Carleton | Lib. |
| Provenzano, Carmen | Sault Ste. Marie | Lib. |
| Redman, Karen | Kitchener Centre | Lib. |
| Reed, Julian, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade | Halton | Lib. |
| Richardson, John, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence | Perth—Middlesex | Lib. |
| Rock, Hon. Allan, Minister of Health | Etobicoke Centre | Lib. |
| Serré, Benoît | Timiskaming—Cochrane | Lib. |
| Shepherd, Alex | Durham | Lib. |
| Speller, Bob | Haldimand—Norfolk—Brant | Lib. |
| St. Denis, Brent | Algoma—Manitoulin | Lib. |
| Steckle, Paul | Huron—Bruce | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Christine, Minister of the Environment | Northumberland | Lib. |
| Stewart, Hon. Jane, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Brant | Lib. |
| Szabo, Paul | Mississauga South | Lib. |
| Telegdi, Andrew | Kitchener—Waterloo | Lib. |
| Torsney, Paddy | Burlington | Lib. |
| Ur, Rose-Marie | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Lib. |
| Valeri, Tony, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance | Stoney Creek | Lib. |
| Vanclief, Hon. Lyle, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food | Prince Edward—Hastings | Lib. |
| Volpe, Joseph, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health | Eglinton—Lawrence | Lib. |
| Wappel, Tom | Scarborough Southwest | Lib. |
| Whelan, Susan | Essex | Lib. |
| Wilfert, Bryon | Oak Ridges | Lib. |
| Wood, Bob | Nipissing | Lib. |

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)

| | | |
|--|--------------|------|
| Easter, Wayne, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans | Malpeque | Lib. |
| MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence, Minister of Labour | Cardigan | Lib. |
| McGuire, Joe | Egmont | Lib. |
| Proud, George, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs | Hillsborough | Lib. |

QUEBEC (75)

| | | |
|---|--|------|
| Alarie, Hélène | Louis-Hébert | BQ |
| Assad, Mark | Gatineau | Lib. |
| Asselin, Gérard | Charlevoix | BQ |
| Bachand, André | Richmond—Arthabaska | PC |
| Bachand, Claude | Saint-Jean | BQ |
| Bakopanos, Eleni, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada | Ahuntsic | Lib. |
| Bellehumeur, Michel | Berthier—Montcalm | BQ |
| Bergeron, Stéphane | Verchères | BQ |
| Bernier, Yvan | Bonaventure—Gaspé—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—Pabok | BQ |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Bertrand, Robert | Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle | Lib. |
| Bigras, Bernard | Rosemont | BQ |
| Brien, Pierre | Témiscamingue | BQ |
| Canuel, René | Matapédia—Matane | BQ |
| Cauchon, Hon. Martin, Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) | Outremont | Lib. |
| Charbonneau, Yvon | Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies | Lib. |
| Charest, Hon. Jean J. | Sherbrooke | PC |
| Chrétien, Right Hon. Jean, Prime Minister | Saint-Maurice | Lib. |
| Chrétien, Jean-Guy | Frontenac—Mégantic | BQ |
| Coderre, Denis | Bourassa | Lib. |
| Crête, Paul | Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup— Témiscouata—Les Basques | BQ |
| Dalphonde—Guiral, Madeleine | Laval Centre | BQ |
| de Savoye, Pierre | Portneuf | BQ |
| Debien, Maud | Laval East | BQ |
| Desrochers, Odina | Lotbinière | 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—Soulanges | Lib. |
| Drouin, Claude | Beauce | Lib. |
| Dubé, Antoine | Lévis | BQ |
| Duceppe, Gilles | Laurier—Sainte-Marie | BQ |
| Dumas, Maurice | Argenteuil—Papineau | BQ |
| Finestone, Hon. Sheila | Mount Royal | Lib. |
| Folco, Raymonde | Laval West | Lib. |
| Fournier, Ghislain | Manicouagan | BQ |
| Gagliano, Hon. Alfonso, Minister of Public Works and Government Services | Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel | Lib. |
| Gagnon, Christiane | Québec | BQ |
| Gauthier, Michel | Roberval | BQ |
| Girard—Bujold, Jocelyne | Jonquière | BQ |
| Godin, Maurice | Châteauguay | BQ |
| Guay, Monique | Laurentides | BQ |
| Guimond, Michel | Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans | BQ |
| Harvey, André | Chicoutimi | PC |
| Jennings, Marlene | Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine | Lib. |
| Lalonde, Francine | Mercier | BQ |
| Laurin, René | Joliette | BQ |
| Lavigne, Raymond | Verdun—Saint-Henri | Lib. |
| Lebel, Ghislain | Chambly | BQ |
| Lefebvre, Réjean | Champlain | BQ |
| Lincoln, Clifford | Lac-Saint-Louis | Lib. |
| Loubier, Yvan | Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot | BQ |
| Marceau, Richard | Charlesbourg | BQ |
| Marchand, Jean-Paul | Québec East | 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—Maisonnette | BQ |
| Mercier, Paul | Terrebonne—Blainville | BQ |
| Normand, Hon. Gilbert, Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food) (Fisheries and Oceans) | Bellechasse—Etchemins— Montmagny—L'Islet | Lib. |
| Paradis, Denis | Brome—Missisquoi | Lib. |

| Name of Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Patry, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development | Pierrefonds—Dollard | Lib. |
| Perron, Gilles—A. | Saint—Eustache—Sainte—Thérèse | BQ |
| Pettigrew, Hon. Pierre S., Minister of Human Resources Development | Papineau—Saint—Denis | Lib. |
| Picard, Pauline | Drummond | BQ |
| Plamondon, Louis | Richelieu | BQ |
| Price, David | Compton—Stanstead | PC |
| Robillard, Hon. Lucienne, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration | Westmount—Ville—Marie | Lib. |
| Rocheleau, Yves | Trois—Rivières | BQ |
| Saada, Jacques | Brossard—La Prairie | Lib. |
| Sauvageau, Benoît | Repentigny | BQ |
| St—Hilaire, Caroline | Longueuil | BQ |
| St—Jacques, Diane | Shefford | PC |
| St—Julien, Guy | Abitibi | Lib. |
| Thibeault, Yolande, Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole | Saint—Lambert | Lib. |
| Tremblay, Stéphan | Lac—Saint—Jean | BQ |
| Tremblay, Suzanne | Rimouski—Mitis | BQ |
| Turp, Daniel | Beauharnois—Salaberry | BQ |
| Venne, Pierrette | Saint—Bruno—Saint—Hubert | BQ |

SASKATCHEWAN (14)

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|------|
| Axworthy, Chris | Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar | NDP |
| Bailey, Roy | Souris—Moose Mountain | Ref. |
| Breitkreuz, Garry | Yorkton—Melville | Ref. |
| Goodale, Hon. Ralph E., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board | Wascana | Lib. |
| Kerpan, Allan | Blackstrap | Ref. |
| Konrad, Derrek | Prince Albert | Ref. |
| Laliberte, Rick | Churchill River | NDP |
| Morrison, Lee | Cypress Hills—Grasslands | Ref. |
| Nystrom, Hon. Lorne | Qu'Appelle | NDP |
| Pankiw, Jim | Saskatoon—Humboldt | Ref. |
| Proctor, Dick | Palliser | NDP |
| Ritz, Gerry | Battlefords—Lloydminster | Ref. |
| Solomon, John | Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre | NDP |
| Vellacott, Maurice | Wanuskewin | Ref. |

YUKON (1)

| | | |
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| Hardy, Louise | Yukon | NDP |
|---------------|-------|-----|

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of April 3rd, 1998 — 1st Session, 36th Parliament)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Chairman: Guy St-Julien

Vice-Chairmen: John Finlay
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(23)

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HON. GILBERT PARENT

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The Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole

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The Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MR. IAN McCLELLAND

The Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees of the Whole

MRS. YOLANDE THIBEAULT

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According to precedence

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| The Right Hon. Jean Chrétien | Prime Minister |
| The Hon. Herb Gray | Deputy Prime Minister |
| The Hon. Lloyd Axworthy | Minister of Foreign Affairs |
| The Hon. David M. Collenette | Minister of Transport |
| The Hon. David Anderson | Minister of Fisheries and Oceans |
| The Hon. Ralph E. Goodale | Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board |
| The Hon. Sheila Copps | Minister of Canadian Heritage |
| The Hon. Sergio Marchi | Minister for International Trade |
| The Hon. John Manley | Minister of Industry |
| The Hon. Diane Marleau | Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie |
| The Hon. Paul Martin | Minister of Finance |
| The Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton | Minister of National Defence |
| The Hon. Marcel Massé | President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure |
| The Hon. Anne McLellan | Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada |
| The Hon. Allan Rock | Minister of Health |
| The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay | Minister of Labour |
| The Hon. Christine Stewart | Minister of the Environment |
| The Hon. Alfonso Gagliano | Minister of Public Works and Government Services |
| The Hon. Lucienne Robillard | Minister of Citizenship and Immigration |
| The Hon. Fred Mifflin | Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency) |
| The Hon. Jane Stewart | Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development |
| The Hon. Stéphane Dion | President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| The Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew | Minister of Human Resources Development |
| The Hon. Don Boudria | Leader of the Government in the House of Commons |
| The Hon. Alasdair Graham | Leader of the Government in the Senate |
| The Hon. Lyle Vanclief | Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food |
| The Hon. Harbance Singh Dhaliwal | Minister of National Revenue |
| The Hon. Andy Scott | Solicitor General of Canada |
| The Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew | Secretary of State (Children and Youth) |
| The Hon. Raymond Chan | Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) |
| The Hon. Martin Cauchon | Secretary of State (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec) |
| The Hon. Hedy Fry | Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) |
| The Hon. David Kilgour | Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa) |
| The Hon. Jim Peterson | Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions) |
| The Hon. Ronald J. Duhamel | Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) (Western Economic Diversification) |
| The Hon. Andrew Mitchell | Secretary of State (Parks) |
| The Hon. Gilbert Normand | Secretary of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food)(Fisheries and Oceans) |

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Rey D. Pagtakhan | to Prime Minister |
| Ted McWhinney | to Minister of Foreign Affairs |
| Stan Keyes | to Minister of Transport |
| Wayne Easter | to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans |
| Gerry Byrne | to Minister of Natural Resources |
| John Godfrey | to Minister of Canadian Heritage |
| Julian Reed | to Minister for International Trade |
| Walt Lastewka | to Minister of Industry |
| Claudette Bradshaw | to Minister for International Cooperation |
| Tony Valeri | to Minister of Finance |
| John Richardson | to Minister of National Defence |
| Ovid L. Jackson | to President of the Treasury Board |
| Eleni Bakopanos | to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada |
| Joseph Volpe | to Minister of Health |
| Brenda Chamberlain | to Minister of Labour |
| Karen Kraft Sloan | to Minister of the Environment |
| Jerry Pickard | to Minister of Public Works and Government Services |
| Maria Minna | to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration |
| George Proud | to Minister of Veterans Affairs |
| Bernard Patry | to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development |
| Paul DeVillers | to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs |
| Robert D. Nault | to Minister of Human Resources Development |
| Peter Adams | to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons |
| John Harvard | to Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food |
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